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Indigenous-led grassroots engagements with oil pipelines in the U.S. and Russia: the NoDAPL and Komi movements

Maria S. Tysiachiouk, Leah S. Horowitz, Varvara V. Korkina, and Andrey N. Petrov

ABSTRACT
Networks play an important role in the Indigenous rights movement’s strategies and in Indigenous groups’ engagements with industry actors, the State, and NGOs. We seek to extend the concept of Governance Generating Networks (GGN) to incorporate Indigenous grassroots movements, and evaluate multiscale interactions and processes of network-generated governance across scales. We compare the NoDAPL movement led by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in the U.S. with grassroots Indigenous-environmentalist networks of water defenders in the Komi Republic, Russia. These GGNs emerged to protest oil pipelines within two contrasting sociopolitical systems, yet demonstrate substantial similarities in respect to local grievances and global engagement. We find that the resonance of these movements across scales was substantial. These reactions exhibited dissonance between scales, when national and regional actors responded in diverging ways. The two Indigenous-led movements were also able to amplify their agendas and transfer strategic alliances to other places and issues.

KEYWORDS Indigenous protests; non-governmental organizations; global governance; governance generating networks; social movements; governance of transnational corporations

Introduction
Indigenous communities around the world, facing unprecedented pressures from expansion of industrial infrastructure (Arsenault et al. 2019), are responding with resistance. While grassroots environmental and Indigenous rights movements remain locally rooted, they have frequently become globally...
connected networks by appealing to global governance institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) (Keck and Sikkink 2014, Ignatow 2008, Pierk and Tysiachniouk 2016), especially when national policy contradicts the interests of the social movement and/or when this policy is not clearly defined (Rootes 2013).

Such transnationalization occurs when movements have little power and few political opportunities in their home states (Rucht 1999, Keck and Sikkink 2014, Tormos-Aponte and García-López 2018, Bourne 2018), or when local and transnational civil society networks reinforce each other (Kraemer et al. 2013). While mobilization of national and transnational activists’ networks against corporate behavior has been well-studied, there is a knowledge gap regarding the impacts of globalized Indigenous-led environmental grassroots movements on the relationships between actors and institutions involved in resource extraction governance.

Using Governance Generating Networks (GGN) and ‘politics of scale’ framing, this study aims to understand how Indigenous-led grassroots resistance can shape the governance of large industrial operations at a range of scales. We analyze two anti-pipeline Indigenous-led water protector movements: No Dakota Access Pipeline (NoDAPL), led by members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST) in North and South Dakota; and resistance to outdated oil pipelines, led by the Komi-Izhemtsy People in the Komi Republic, Russia. Despite developing in distinct sociopolitical settings, both cases provide vivid illustrations of global-to-local connections made by Indigenous-led grassroots movements and their impacts at various scales. The research questions are:

- (1) How do Indigenous-led environmental resistance movements and their globalization affect relationships between actors and institutions at different spatial scales?
- (2) What are the commonalities and differences between the influence of Indigenous-led environmental resistance movements in Russia and the U.S. in shaping governance of the oil sector?

**Theoretical framework**

‘Politics of scale’ involve spaces in which power and authority are exercised. ‘Scale frames’ reflect discourses of actors seeking to change policy (Edge and Eyles 2014). In the transnational sociology of networks and flows, scale is a space of interaction between actors not limited to a nested hierarchy, e.g. from local to national to global (Spaargaren et al. 2006, Tysiachniouk 2012). Scalar boundaries may be contested and determined by power and authority of various actors (Mansfield and Haas 2006). Moving beyond strict scalar hierarchies, we follow Castells (2013) in distinguishing between *spaces of places* (geographically-determined sites of implementation) and *transnational spaces* (human interactions that occur at a distance). Often, spaces – both
transnational and embedded in local specificities, stretching across scalar hierarchies – have gained particular importance in governance and policy studies (Pries 2005, Sassen 2008). The Governance Generating Network (GGN) concept used here builds on theoretical developments around the ‘politics of scale’ and operationalizes the sociology of networks and flows to analyze particular extractive sector activities and their outcomes. GGN focuses on how new governance frameworks are generated through networks, while capturing new places and scales (Tysiachniouk 2012).

GGNs set new global agendas and/or develop global regulatory products using global standards, rules, or recommendations. GGNs link transnational spaces with spaces of places. Local actors can initiate bottom-up GGNs: NGO-led campaigns direct grievances toward global institutions to set new global agendas (Tysiachniouk 2012). Networks may emphasize the interests emerging at the local scale, while in the long term, policies and standards develop at the global scale (Merk 2009). In turn, actors operating transnationally create top-down GGNs to foster institutional changes in spaces of places by implementing global standards locally (Tysiachniouk et al. 2018b, Tulaeva et al. 2019). Bottom-up GGNs’ petitions to the global scale also may involve actors, networks, and institutions at national and regional scales, as well as those operating across scales. The resultant multiscale GGNs manifest through structurally-connected transnational nodes of global governance design, fora of negotiation, and sites of implementation. Some GGNs are characterized by two-way exchange of information through organized interactions between local and transnational actors (Tysiachniouk and McDermott 2016) [see Figure 1]. Therefore, GGN framing is well-suited for analyzing efforts undertaken by networks of actors seeking vertical coherence between globally-agreed rules and existing local practices, e.g. policy implementation patterns (Eimer and Bartels 2020).

Transnational nodes of governance design include global institutions that develop or facilitate frameworks for interaction between Indigenous Peoples, businesses, and states. For instance, the UN, the World Bank, and the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative all develop guidelines for oil companies to ensure the sustainability of oil production and protect Indigenous rights.

Governance decisions are made not only in the nodes of design, but also in fora of negotiation and sites of implementation (Tysiachniouk 2012). In addition to global fora, national, regional, and local fora can take place, e.g. at public hearings or resistance camps. Fora involving multi-scalar actors may reinforce power of existing elites or, less likely, empower Indigenous and/or local communities (Eimer and Bartels 2020). Sites of implementation are geographic places that exert impacts on local and Indigenous communities.

Our work enriches the GGN framework by incorporating insights from the ‘politics of scale’ literature (Griffin 2009), which highlights how actors build links between sites of implementation, where contested issues emerge, and other scales, at which grievances could be addressed and new policies
created. Stakeholders and their networks impose differing scalar interrelationships that lead to rescaling of decision-making processes, to scales that were not previously involved (Griffin 2009). When protesters connect with multiple groups of activists with diverse agendas loosely related to the original conflict, they acquire new allies, with different grievances, possibly resulting in ‘scale shifts’ (McAdam et al. 2001, Rootes 2013). Even if the campaign tackles only the global scale directly, effects may occur at other scales. Therefore, ‘scale shifts’ of protestor networks’ grievances toward the global scale in GGN may result in processes that we label resonance, dissonance, and amplification. These ‘scale shifts’ do not necessarily resolve local issues, yet involve interactions and changes at other scales.

Resonance describes effects across scales. Local actions produce effects at regional, national, and international scales, through bottom-up flows of information and pressure; in turn, global actions produce top-down effects at other scales. Effects may include legislative changes, acknowledgement and/or repression of Indigenous rights, development of new rules and/or guidelines for extractive industries, etc. Dissonance is a type of resonance that occurs when institutional actors at different scales respond to local actions in contradictory ways. Finally, as a grassroots movement grows, it may exhibit amplification, in which additional actors with similar interests support the movement, deliberately through frame alignment processes (Snow 2013, Snow et al. 2018) or inadvertently as outsiders discover the movement. Amplification may also involve the movement’s incorporation of issues beyond its original agenda, or inspiration of similar movements in other localities.

We compare two bottom-up, Indigenous-led GGNs that emerged around water protection issues as a response to acts of ‘infrastructure violence’ (Rodgers and O’neill 2012) through pipeline construction and operation in Russia and the U.S. We analyze the dynamics that unfold as place-based
actors attempt to influence the behavior of others through transnational resistance networks, in which multiple negotiations occur on both transnational and local levels. We examine the interrelations of GGN actors, which represent multilevel and multifactor global assemblages, operating at different scales (Tysiachniouk and McDermott 2016).

**Methods**

For the Komi study, we conducted three focus groups (10–12 participants in each) with activists and 48 in-person semi-structured interviews, as well as two online interviews, between February-April 2015, January-February 2016, and December 2019-January 2020 with NGO members, Indigenous rights activists, regional and national government officials, and company representatives. The NoDAPL study consisted of 39 in-person semi-structured interviews in July 2017, May-June 2018 and April-June 2019, with Tribal members, Tribal government officials, law enforcement officers, NGO representatives, government officials, and lawyers, in addition to 20 telephone and online interviews between 2017–2020, with lawyers, activists, current and former government officials, and academics. We also conducted participant observation. In Russia, in February 2015, we observed one meeting between Indigenous rights and environmental grassroots groups, and another between activists and local citizens. At the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, in January 2017, we observed meetings run by experts from the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, and the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), collecting testimonies on human rights violations during the NoDAPL movement. In both cases, interviews and observations focused on the Indigenous-led movements’ engagements with companies, NGOs, and government agencies.

**The NoDAPL Movement**

The Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, which stretches from south-central North Dakota to north-central South Dakota (see Figure 2), is home to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST), a federally recognized U.S. tribe with a trust land base of 841,700 acres and an estimated enrollment of 15,568 members (Indian Affairs n.d.), most of whom identify as Lakota or Dakota (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe n.d.). The Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution and Federal Indian Law recognize tribal sovereignty and the federal government’s trust responsibility, while restricting states’ authority (Newton et al. 2019). Conversely, tribes have limited power over state governments despite a significant land base (Schroedel and Aslani 2015, Stambaugh 2019). This creates complicated entanglements, compounded by historical legacies, where one party may question the other’s authority.
Over half of North Dakota’s daily production currently flows through the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a subterranean 1,172-mile pipeline owned by Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners (ETP), which extends from North Dakota to southern Illinois. DAPL’s 3.7 USD billion price tag was financed by a 17-bank consortium, with a 2.5 USD billion loan to Energy Transfer Partners. Lead lenders were Citibank, TD Securities, Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ, and Mizuho Bank (Simon 2018).

DAPL runs one-half mile from the Reservation’s boundary, within unceded Indian territory under Article 16 of the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) (Ostler and Estes 2017). The SRST Tribal Council voiced opposition to the pipeline when ETP representatives visited the Tribe in September 2014, and continued communicating their opposition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), charged with permitting the project (Whyte 2020). In April 2016, SRST members initiated a protest camp near where the pipeline would cross under the Missouri River, the Tribe’s only water source. Nonetheless, USACE permitted DAPL in
July 2016 under Nationwide Permit 12, circumventing extensive environmental review or public consultation, although the Missouri River crossing would require an additional easement. Immediately, SRST sued USACE, citing a lack of adequate consultation and violation of the National Historic Preservation Act, as DAPL threatened important cultural sites. Meanwhile, protest camps continued to attract Native activists, primarily from North and South Dakota. In September 2016, ETP began construction through a location where Tribal archeologists had identified cultural sites. Tribal members approached the bulldozers and were attacked by security officers’ dogs. This event generated extensive media attention and attracted additional allies from other states and countries. Rejecting the term ‘protestor’, activists became known as Water Protectors. The camps swelled to approximately 10,000 persons (Eid 2018).

The NoDAPL movement built an extensive social media presence (Boscarnino 2020). Confrontations with county police were repressed with increasing violence and physical injury to activists throughout October and November 2016; ultimately, nearly 800 people were arrested. In February 2017, all remaining campers were evicted, and oil commenced flowing in June. However, the fight continued in the U.S. court system, and on 25 March 2020 a U.S. federal judge ruled that ACE had violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in granting DAPL a permit in 2016 and ordered the Corps to re-examine the risks and prepare a full environmental impact statement (SRST v. USACE, 2020a). On 6 July 2020 the same court ordered the halt of pipeline operation for the duration of the impact assessment (SRST v. USACE, 2020b), although an appeals court allowed oil flow to continue.

**Resonance and dissonance at the state and national scales**

The NoDAPL movement resonated on both state and national scales in contradictory ways, generating dissonance. North Dakota state authorities and the Obama administration disagreed over how the protests should be handled. In November 2016, President Obama decided to monitor the situation while encouraging USACE to explore rerouting the pipeline. This prompted the chairman of the Morton County commission to accuse the President of ‘creating further uncertainty’ and ‘putting lives in danger’ (Levin 2016). Morton County’s police department, with support of the North Dakota government, which recruited officers from other states, responded to the protests with mass arrests, rubber bullets, and spraying water in subfreezing temperatures. According to an IWGIA expert, the ‘most shocking’ ‘was this use of what they call non-lethal weapons, which wouldn’t be allowed and are against the Geneva Convention’ (Interview, 25 January 2020). In December 2016, the Department of the Army announced that it would deny ETP a permit to cross under the Missouri River and would seek alternative routes. However, a freshly-inaugurated President Trump issued an executive memorandum urging the Corps to reverse its decision and expedite the permitting process, which it did. The earlier dissonance
between state and federal governments may reflect North Dakota’s heavy economic reliance on oil extraction as well as expected state-level tax revenue and job creation.

The protests’ long-term ramifications also resulted in dissonance between state and national scales. In October-November 2016, the U.S. Departments of Justice, the Interior, and the Army consulted with 59 Tribes and eight organizations representing Tribal interests on how to allow more ‘timely and meaningful Tribal input’ into federal ‘decision making on infrastructure and related projects’ (DoI et al. 2017, p. 2). In January 2017, this process resulted in a report (DoI et al. 2017) outlining ‘Key Principles’ for building productive relationships with tribes toward effective consultation processes. At the request of members of Congress, the Government Accountability Office conducted further interviews with Tribal officials and federal agencies and, in March 2019, published a report outlining ‘key factors [...] that hinder effective consultation on infrastructure projects’ (Mill 2019, p. 20). While a connection to the NoDAPL movement was never explicitly articulated, the timing suggests that this revisiting of Tribal consultation processes occurred in response to the SRST protests, exemplifying resonance from the grassroots to higher scales of authority.

At the state level, rather than revisiting its consultation practices, North Dakota institutionalized ‘infrastructure securitization’ (Bosworth forthcoming) and passed four anti-protest bills between 2017 and 2019. Other states followed suit; at the time of writing, 25 states had enacted ‘critical infrastructure’ laws (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) 2019), which make protesting near oil and gas infrastructure a felony, with jail-time penalties.

**Resonance at the international scale**
The movement appealed to several UN bodies, achieving global resonance with assistance from the IITC and the Indian Law Resource Center. Through these alliances ‘we were able to galvanise international attention by utilizing the United Nations’ (Interview, IITC representative, 27 July 2020) to place SRST on the global human rights agenda and build a direct connection with the UN, a global node of design. The Tribe and its allies appealed to four Special Procedures mandate holders in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, namely, Special Rapporteurs on: the situation of human rights defenders, human rights and the environment, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. The last two visited SRST, as did Chief Edward John, Expert Member of the UNPFII (2016), and the Chair of the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises (IITC 2017). SRST’s case appeared in several UN reports and statements, including statements by the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Kiai 2016) and the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples (Tauli-Corpuz 2016), endorsed by other
aforementioned Rapporteurs. The Tribe presented their case at UN fora of negotiation (e.g., UN Human Rights Council, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues [UNPFII]). However, a UN official lamented that while his visit notes ‘were included in the official report of our group for the General Assembly … unfortunately our work was not as successful as people from Standing Rock expected.’ (Interview, 2 December 2019).

UN recognition has been instrumental in propagating SRST’s message and fostering international awareness. This elevated attention evoked inquiries and support from global institutions and organizations, and prompted international discussions at global fora of negotiation such as the UNPFII (University of Arizona Law 2018) and COP22 Marrakech-International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change, in 2016 (Grassroots Global Justice Alliance 2019). For example, in December 2016, after Special Procedure mandate holders reported on the use of excessive police force against demonstrators, the U.S. Government responded by referring to the additional Tribal consultations held in October-November and to the government’s planned participation in a hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN Human Rights Council 2016). In other words, grassroots appeals resonated at the global scale, which resonated back to the national scale.

The NoDAPL movement also invoked UN concepts in lobbying investors, achieving resonance within the banking sector. Although the U.S. does not fully recognize the right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as articulated in the UNDRIP (United Nations 2007), which they view as aspirational and nonbinding, water protectors reached out to the banks financing DAPL, arguing that ETP had not obtained FPIC (Investor Statement 2017). This pressure, along with the fact that protests directly cost investors around 750 USD million (Eid 2018), prompted a coalition of concerned investors to work hand-in-hand with activists in the Investors and Indigenous Peoples Working Group (IIPWG). Over 500 NGOs collected over 700,000 signatures, resulting in the closure of bank accounts worth over 4 USD billion, and over 160 investors (managing over 1.7 USD trillion combined) signed a statement urging the banks financing DAPL to support the SRST’s request for a reroute (Investor Statement 2017). Three banks divested from DAPL: BNP Paribas, DNB, and ING (Simon 2018), and the Seattle City Council severed ties with Wells Fargo Bank because of its financing of the pipeline.

The NoDAPL movement’s targeting of specific banks resonated to the entire banking sector, stimulating reform. In May 2017, ten major banks publicly expressed concerns that the Equator Principles – a framework for financial institutions to identify and manage environmental and social risk – needed revision to ‘avoid similar situations in the future’ (ABN AMRO et al. 2017). In November 2019, the Equator Principles Association finalized
a revised set of principles specifically strengthening commitments on human rights and FPIC, effective July 2020 (Equator Principles 2019).

**Amplification**
Amplification of the NoDAPL movement happened in several ways. First, the struggle attracted support from other Indigenous groups within the U.S. and around the world. By August 2016, over 87 U.S. and Canadian Tribal governments had passed resolutions, issued proclamations, or sent letters in support of SRST (ICTMN 2016). Representatives from many Indigenous ethnicities, from North America and across the globe, traveled to North Dakota to join the resistance camps.

Non-Indigenous persons and organizations also joined NoDAPL, contributing to the movement in a variety of ways, including legal support, provision of goods and services, advocacy, and participation in camp activities. Many of these groups had their own agendas, amplifying the movement beyond the original focus on Indigenous sovereignty and Environmental Justice, particularly toward the fight against fossil fuels as a cause of climate change. However, while some SRST activists embraced the anti-fossil fuel agenda, others resented what they saw as co-optation of their struggle for sovereignty and protection of their water source:

All the environmentalists that came, they were no better than the government. They didn’t want to listen to the wishes of the local people. What we wanted to do, they forgot. They all had their own little causes: keep it in the ground, wind energy, solar energy … and then pretty soon they forgot about the pipe[line]. And we were fighting them as well. (Interview, 27 May 2018)

Concurrently, NoDAPL influenced similar, ongoing Indigenous-led resistance to pipelines in places such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, and Louisiana, and even other countries. According to an IITC representative (Interview, 27 July 2020), the Yaqui Tribe in northern Mexico directly relied on SRST’s experiences to fight Sempra Energy’s Agua Prieta pipeline in their homelands. Additionally, activists, both Lakota/Dakota and non-Indigenous, who had been involved with the movement, brought the knowledge gained through their experiences to other environmental struggles: ‘For all these people that came here to help us, I wanted to give something back to them, whether they’re Indigenous or not, so when I went to Massachusetts, that was non-Indigenous people’ (Interview, 3 June 2018).

**The protest against oil infrastructure in the Komi Republic**
Russia’s socio-economic system, since 2000, has been characterized as ‘state capitalism’ with consolidation of state control over political and economic
spheres (Aslund 2007). Russia’s economic development is highly dependent on oil and gas. Oil spills frequently happen in places with outdated pipeline infrastructure, such as Komi Republic. Russian law on ‘foreign agents’ (2012) facilitated the prosecution of NGO and Indigenous associations critical of the state, especially those that make international appeals. Despite this unfavorable context, federalism allows for variation in relationships between Indigenous associations, NGOs and the state (Tysiachniouk et al. 2018). Cooperative relations are common between civic activists and regional authorities. In the Komi Republic, social movements have persisted for several decades (Pierk and Tysiachniouk 2016).

Oil is the Komi Republic’s main export; along with coal and gas, oil generates 50% of Komi’s GDP (Alexander 2009). Lukoil-Komi, the largest oil and gas company in Komi, plays a significant role in the region’s oil industry (Staalesen 2014). Komi-Izhemtsy are involved in reindeer herding and are recognized as Indigenous by the Indigenous Peoples’ association RAIPON, but not by the Russian state (RAIPON 2014).

The anti-pipeline movement in Komi arose during Perestroika. The Save Pechora Committee (SPC), an environmental grassroots group named after the local river, formed in 1989 (Pierk and Tysiachniouk 2016). After a 1994 oil spill near the town of Usinsk, SPC and the Komi-Izhemtsy Indigenous organization, Izviatas, started fighting outdated pipeline infrastructure. The chairperson of Izviatas claimed that ‘a better situation can only be achieved by the resistance of the people’ (Interview, 20 February 2015). According to a village-based activist, ‘the spills have caused health problems among the population, as well as economic problems, constraints on livelihoods and a feeling among the population of betrayal by the government’ (Interview, 21 February 2015).

Although Lukoil has stated that it plans to modernize all pipelines by 2025, local activists doubt this (Wilson and Istomin 2019). One activist stated: ‘Local villagers are poorly informed about future plans, for example, oil infrastructure was built within 1.5 km of a school in Krasnobor in the Izma district, and in other places near water wells’ (Interview, 20 February 2015). Grievances related to oil spills, as well as the lack of recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ rights, led to an Indigenous/environmental movement stretching from grassroots to global level. SPC organizes protests against outdated oil infrastructure, monitors the implementation of environmental legislation, and advocates for the legislation to ban aging oil pipelines. In December 2017, SPC members staged a week-long protest in Ust-Usa and Novikboz, villages affected by oil exploration (see Figure 3). In 2018, members protested new construction planned in the Pechora River floodplain, but ultimately, this new infrastructure was built. SPC has closely cooperated with Izviatas, Greenpeace and the youth volunteer organization, Stopoilspills.
Dissonance results from dissimilarities in the regional and national governments’ responses to the protests. The Komi Republic government was generally collaborative with the protesters and cooperated on oil spill monitoring. The federal government, in contrast, proceeded with its consistent policy to disempower Indigenous organizations and limit international human rights activists’ access to them (Rohr 2014).

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Komi Republic acknowledged that eighty percent of Lukoil pipelines are outdated and shared the social movement’s concerns. Therefore, they allowed Greenpeace to organize summer camps for volunteers in Usinsk and have local volunteers search for oil spills. The Ministry collaborated with Greenpeace and SPC to create an oil-leak database (Pierk and Tysiachniouk...
2016). However, this collaboration did not result in any legislation to ban worn-out pipelines as the movement advocated.

In contrast, federal authorities viewed the Komi protests as an element of the national Indigenous protest movement, which they were repressing across the country. One tactic was labelling Indigenous associations and environmental NGOs ‘foreign agents,’ a status that imposes fines and restricts activities of civil society actors that receive foreign grants. (Tysiachniouk et al. 2018). Another tactic was to foster leadership change. In RAIPON, Yasavey, and Izviatas, state officials replaced Indigenous leaders, converting Indigenous associations to state policy promoters. Therefore, Komi-Izhemtsy protesters were not reaching out to global fora through RAIPON, but developed alliances with global organizations, such as IWGIA. The federal government, in turn, suppressed these allies’ appeals to the UN, e.g. banning an IWGIA expert from visiting Russia for fifty years after he exposed violations of Indigenous Peoples’ rights in Komi.

**Resonance at the international scale**

Despite the federal government’s attempts to limit international support, Izviatas collaborated with Greenpeace International and IWGIA in its struggles with the oil company and in its fight for Indigenous status (Rohr, 2014). By developing alliances with these international NGOs, Komi-Izhemtsy were able to access nodes of global design, such as the United Nations. IWGIA tried to pressure the Russian government by publishing reports about the Russian state’s repression of Indigenous Peoples, directed to several UN committees, including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This direct local-to-global interlinking brought international attention to the Komi-Izhemtsy People’s struggle leading to discussions at UNPFII and other Indigenous Peoples’ fora. IWGIA argued that the Russian state was denying Indigenous Peoples the right to practice traditional livelihoods, including failure to obtain consent before beginning extractive activities (CERD 2008). Russia formally responded by denying any discrimination.

Meanwhile, Lukoil-Komi’s activities have resonated to global Internet spaces. An international NGO, Bankwatch, monitors companies that received European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) loans, including Lukoil-Komi. Bankwatch reported that Lukoil-Komi blocks information about its environmental violations through ‘fee-based contracts’ with ‘members of the mass media’ (CEE Bankwatch Network 2008, p. 2), and that in May 2006, Lukoil-Komi bought out an entire edition of the newspaper Novyi Sever after the newspaper published an article on the company’s environmental violations. As a condition of its loans, EBRD has required Lukoil to improve its environmental performance in 2007, in exchange for a loan of 300 USD million, Lukoil
committed to ‘inter alia pollution cleanup, pipeline replacement, gas flaring reduction, health and safety measures, and social infrastructure’ (EBRD 2007). EBRD also required Lukoil to compensate Khanty, Mansi and Nenets Peoples, who the Russian Federation recognizes as Indigenous. In contrast, in Komi, Bankwatch filed an appeal to EBRD, but received little traction (Tysiachnouk et al. 2018b) mainly because the Komi-Izhemtsy Peoples are not federally-recognized.

**Amplification**

The SPC-Izviatas social movement’s experience has been shared globally and in other regions of Russia. Representatives of Izviatas participated in the 2015 Arctic Council meeting in Iqaluit, Canada, where Izviatas advised the Nunavut people to ban drilling around the region (Pierk and Tysiachniouk 2016). Greenpeace sponsored SPC to share experiences of Komi protests with Indigenous Peoples in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug and in Taimyr. The SPC shared the Komi resistance story at a gathering of Saami reindeer herders in Sweden. Stopoilspsills volunteers spread information about practices of oil extraction in the Komi Republic to youth in Russian big cities.

SPC engages in protests on other issues such as fighting landfills and climate change. Throughout 2019, they participated in actions against the Shies Landfill slated for construction at the border between the Komi Republic and the Arkhangelsk Oblast (Chmel et al. 2020). In September 2019, SPC, Greenpeace and Stopoilspsills participated in the Worldwide Climate Week protests to raise public awareness about the impacts of oil development in Komi.

**Discussion**

Existing literature demonstrates that through application of globally developed standards, such as forestry certification, GGNs generate new policies and practices in places around the globe, and more territories are becoming involved in sustainability-oriented governance arrangements (Tysiachniouk and McDermott 2016). The same tendency can be seen in oil sector GGNs when companies take loans from lenders that adopt global standards (Tysiachniouk et. al 2018a). This paper’s case studies, however, demonstrate that even if governance of pipelines remains unchanged locally, new governance may be generated at other scales. This new governance arrangement may enhance or impede Indigenous rights, as it plays out differently in divergent local contexts.

The Komi and DAPL cases manifest important similarities. Although in both cases the movements’ original goals were not achieved, they instigated transformations both locally and at state/regional, national, and global scales involving both ‘politics of scale’ and ‘scale frame’ controversies in the GGNs (Edge and Eyles 2014, Neville and Weinthal 2016). Both protests recruited
Indigenous and environmental NGOs with broader interests than place-based activism. By forging local-to-global networks and appealing to global organizations and fora, both movements were able to ‘jump’ scales, challenging national laws and institutions (Smith 1992). By mobilizing Indigenous solidarity and enlisting global NGOs, these localized Indigenous Peoples’ movements resonated and amplified their message and transformed community-government-company relationships. Furthermore, these movements stimulated broader discussions around the issues of Indigenous rights, water quality, climate change, extractive capitalism and sustainability, both at the global scale and within nation-states.

However, the case studies also indicate limits to resonance. Appeals to the global level led neither company to change its practices. This contrasts with most studies of GGN in the forestry and extractive industry sectors, in which companies changed their practices to respect Indigenous and local communities’ rights and engage in benefit-sharing in conformance with global standards (Spar and La Mure 2003, Kortelainen et al. 2010, Pierk and Tysiachniouk 2016, Tysiachniouk et al. 2018a, Van Rooy 2004).

Despite divergent political, economic, and geographic contexts, a variety of factors underpin similarities between these two movements. First, the protests focused on issues common to Indigenous Peoples’ struggles around the globe, e.g. land stewardship, cultural vitality, spirituality, heritage and Indigenous rights (Horowitz 2017, Zanotto 2020). Gaps in legislation, poor implementation of laws, lack of recognition, unresolved property rights, problematic historical legacies, and other compounding factors are creating highly contested spaces of governance, where the resultant conflict is unresolvable at the local scale. In response, emergent GGNs appeal to other scales attempting to establish new governance frameworks and introducing resonances, dissonances, and amplifications.

At the same time, the differences between the two case studies are also very telling. The dissonance between the regional and national scales in the U.S. and Russia played out differently. NoDAPL attracted opposition from the state and general support from the Obama-era federal government and the international community. Although the GGN in the Komi movement formed around similar grievances, regional and federal authorities exhibited dissonance in an opposite manner, with the regional government supporting the movement while federal authorities attempted to suppress it.

The Commerce Clause of the US Constitution and Federal Indian Law (Newton et al. 2019) prescribe government-to-government relationships with Tribes and delineate responsibilities of the federal government towards Tribes. States’ authority over Indian affairs is very limited, and states have no trust responsibility to tribes; moreover, they may challenge the notion of tribal sovereignty (Rome 2018). DAPL was planned on treaty lands as described in the Fort Laramie Treaty, which North Dakota did not recognize
(Bell 2017, Mengden 2017). Because of this treaty, the Tribe sees the conflict as being between two sovereign nations: themselves and the U.S. Additionally, North Dakota was expecting to receive considerable revenues from the operation of the pipeline, and thus had an economic interest to suppress the protest movement.

In contrast, in Russia, land belongs to the state, and Indigenous Peoples’ sovereignty is not recognized; therefore, Indigenous associations are treated like other NGOs. Moreover, when Indigenous associations receive foreign money and participate in political activity, they are subjected to the ‘foreign agent’ law and their ability to influence policy is diminished (Tysiachniouk et al. 2018). In addition, the Russian state does not formally recognize the Komi-Izhemtsy Indigenous People, further undermining their rights. Meanwhile, relationships between regional governments and Indigenous associations and NGOs have been cooperative. One reason was that regional authorities were incentivized to record environmental violations in order to combat oil spills and receive pipeline operator fines.

Amplifications in the two cases were also different. While the Komi movement embraced a broader environmental agenda and expanded to another geographical location, specifically protests against the Shiyes Landfill in a nearby region, SRST members often expressed reservations about the attempt by some allies to inject broader issues, such as the fight against the fossil fuels, into NoDAPL.

In both cases, it was hard to legally contest oil infrastructure construction. This can partly explain the emergence of a bottom-up GGN in each case, involving outreach to global UN-based institutions. In Russia, similar appeals of Indigenous groups from other regions to the UN also did not deliver positive results, limiting resonance (Tulaeva et al. 2019). This can be linked to repressive state policy. In addition, the Komi campaign was smaller and had fewer resources than NoDAPL, which also limited its resonance.

We expanded GGN theory, which previously focused mostly on local and global scales (see Figure 1), by demonstrating resonances, dissonances, and amplifications at the national and regional scales, as illustrated by both case studies (see Figure 4). In other words, our extended GGN conceptualization highlights the multiscalarity and dynamism of GGNs and articulates the role of national and regional scales in GGNs alongside the global and local ones.

Each vertical network, including the state and company, has both top-down and bottom-up mechanisms of transmitting information, such as grievances from the bottom to the top, or enforcement of global standards from top to bottom. Civil society/Indigenous networks in Komi and SRST precipitated grievances that traveled from the local to global levels. At the same time, activities from the bottom resonated regionally and nationally. Different levels of governance reacted in opposite ways, exhibiting dissonance. The movements operated
under different political, economic, and social contexts, which led to different types of dissonance between federal and state/regional governments.

**Conclusions**

In the NoDAPL and Komi movements, grassroots bottom-up grievances generated GGNs with appeals to global nodes of design. Although these processes did not necessarily change local practices in the sites of implementation, they produced effects at different governance scales and geographical locales, namely amplification, resonance, and dissonance. These in turn became drivers of change in policies and interactions among actors involved at different levels of governance. Although both the NoDAPL and Komi movements protested locally and appealed globally and affected policies on national and regional levels, the pipeline construction continued in North Dakota and oil spills persisted in the Komi Republic. At the federal level, the Russian state ignored appeals to global institutions and suppressed Indigenous associations and their transnational NGO allies. In contrast, the U.S. acknowledged the need for more consultations with Indigenous people affected by oil infrastructure. However, at the regional level, North Dakota did not recognize Indigenous treaty lands and enacted anti-protest legislation to preserve its economic interests. On the contrary, in Russia, the Komi government collaborated with NGOs and Indigenous people to combat oil spills. Therefore, while both movements produced resonance across multiple scales, the nature and scope of these effects were markedly
different because of social, political, and economic context, as well as the protests’ scope and resources.

While Indigenous protest movements and struggles can be examined from a variety of theoretical perspectives, the GGN framework appears to be particularly helpful in these two cases because it illuminates and explains networked interactions between diverse actors at and across different scales. The GGN lens enables us to elucidate how globally-connected networks often attempt to deal with well-recognized causes of discontent and contestation, such as legislative gaps and inconsistencies, controversial historical legacies, unresolved political conflicts, etc. by engaging alternative scales of governance and creating alternative governance frameworks that circumvent, complement, or contest existing arrangements. The GGN approach delineates the structure and agency in the global/local interplay of actors operating across scalar hierarchies and exercising power and authority while engaging in ‘politics of scale.’

Future work needs to investigate evidence of GGN formation and operation, as well as GGNs’ impact across scales of governance and geographical spaces, by analyzing more cases in diverse sociopolitical contexts and locations. Revealing these experiences will help understand grassroots Indigenous movements, their dynamics, effectiveness, and ability to promote ecological democracy in the overall decline of liberal democracy (Eckersley 2020). As extractive and other industrial activities continue to spread across Indigenous Peoples’ homelands, this knowledge will be instrumental in promoting more balanced and sustainable development in these areas based on fair and equitable sharing of benefits and recognition of globally enacted Indigenous rights.

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