



COLLABORATION *for* A BETTER WORLD

Prof. William San Martín

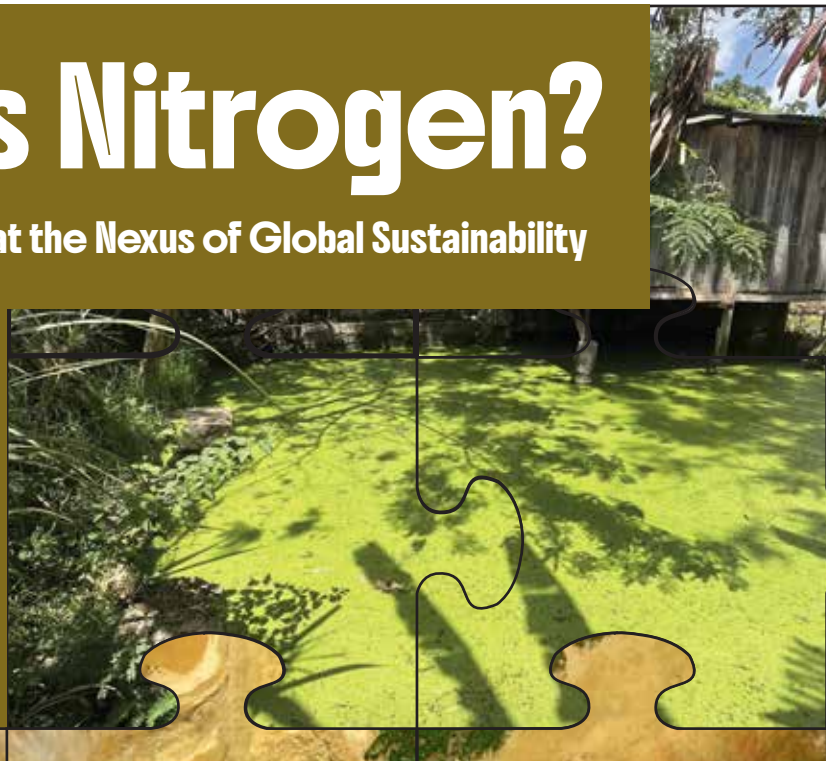
William San Martín is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrative & Global Studies at WPI. He co-leads the NSF-funded International Nitrogen Network (iN-Net) and chairs its Governance Working Group, which brings together 30+ experts across academia, government, and civil society. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of California, Davis, and completed postdoctoral fellowships at MIT and the Rachel Carson Center for Environment & Society.

Who Governs Nitrogen?

Community Knowledge, Science, and Policy at the Nexus of Global Sustainability

**Gordon Library
Conference Room 301**

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2 pm**



Abstract

Nitrogen is central to the world's most pressing sustainability challenges. Synthetic fertilizers revolutionized food production, but overuse has driven climate change, water pollution, biodiversity loss, and human health threats. Meanwhile, many farmers lack access to nutrients and suffer from declining soil fertility. Recent fertilizer crises have made these tensions harder to ignore, highlighting the social vulnerabilities of global food-energy systems. However, nitrogen governance problems are often seen as issues of scientific knowledge, technological innovation, and better policy. What happens when farmers, scientists, and policymakers understand the nitrogen problem differently? Drawing on collaborative research in Chile, Kenya, and the U.S., as well as work with the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and international science-policy networks, this talk examines the tensions that emerge when diverse knowledge and practices meet across communities, disciplines, and scales. It asks what these tensions can teach us about governing global environmental problems that are simultaneously ecological, technological, political, and deeply social.



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