

*Affect, Relationality and Discourse: Ways of Languageing Landscapes in Policy,
Participatory Experiences, and Protests*

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In the context of the many crises that our planet's self-sustaining systems face, there seems to be a growing awareness that the relationship between humans and the natural world needs to be fundamentally rethought, re-evaluated, and reimagined. Can we re-language our relationship with landscapes to recultivate lost forms of connections? How can we re-configure our socio-political ways of knowing, thinking, and being to have a possibility at a better way of inhabiting this world? With these questions in mind, this project sets out to explore affect's key role in resisting our dominant systems of knowledge-making, reconfiguring our ways of languageing—and practices of inhabiting—landscapes.

By analyzing ecological discourses in India in three spheres of activity—namely, environmental policy rhetoric, everyday participatory experiences, and protests, and employing conceptual resources from affect theory, ecocriticism, and relational onto-epistemology—this project delves into, firstly, how the language of dominant discourses when driven only by context-averse quantifiability, countenancing a landscape only as a resource renders all that inhabits the landscape vulnerable to erasure, and secondly, the nuanced ways in which evocative ways of languageing inflect affective people-landscape relationships, give form to emotional geographies and offer resistance against the erasure faced by these landscapes on account of extractive models of development.