

TENSIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE OF RURAL WATER SANITATION SERVICES IN PERI-URBAN TERRITORIES (CHILE)¹

TENSIONES DE LA GOBERNANZA COMUNITARIA DE
SERVICIOS SANITARIOS RURALES EN TERRITORIOS PERIURBANOS (CHILE)

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A diferencia del modelo de concesión privada aplicado en zonas urbanas, los servicios sanitarios de las zonas rurales en Chile son gestionados por comités o cooperativas de agua potable rural (APR), bajo un modelo de gobernanza comunitaria. El presente artículo busca comprender cuáles son las tensiones que enfrenta la gobernanza comunitaria de APR en territorios periurbanos de capitales regionales y que constituyen la frontera del modelo de gestión privado del agua potable. A partir de un enfoque de ecología política y gobernanza híbrida, la investigación plantea la hipótesis de que, ante la expansión urbana y la creciente escasez de agua, el marco institucional neoliberal vigente en Chile tiende a favorecer una gobernanza del agua potable de corte mercantil en los territorios periurbanos. Con el fin de demostrar dicha hipótesis, se aplicó entrevistas semiestructuradas a informantes clave, como también observación participante, focalizándose en tres casos de APR ubicados en zonas periurbanas de la ciudad de Talca. El estudio realiza un análisis crítico del discurso de gestores comunitarios y reguladores gubernamentales, identificando sus percepciones y posiciones respecto de las transformaciones socio-ecológicas en curso y las tensiones en la gobernanza comunitaria. En congruencia con lo planteado, del análisis de discursos es posible inferir potenciales riesgos de privatización derivados de la implementación de la Ley N°20.998, que regula los servicios sanitarios rurales.

Palabras clave: Territorio, gobernanza, agua potable, servicios sanitarios rurales, Ley 20.998.

Unlike the private concession model applied in urban zones, rural water sanitation services in Chile are managed by rural drinking water (RDW) committees or cooperatives, under a community governance model. This article seeks to understand the tensions and conflicts faced by RDW community governance in the peri-urban territories of regional capitals, which are at the frontier of the private drinking water management model. Based on a political ecology and hybrid governance approach, this research proposes the hypothesis that, on facing urban expansion and water scarcity, the neoliberal institutional framework tends to favour drinking water market governance in peri-urban territories. With this aim, and through semi-structured interviews and participatory observation, focusing on three RDW cases located in the peri-urban zone of Talca, this study develops a critical discourse analysis of community managers and government regulators, identifying their perceptions and positions on current socio-ecological transformations, and community governance tensions. Consistent with the proposed hypothesis, from discourse analysis, it is possible to infer the potential risks of privatization, derived from the implementation of Law No. 20,998, which regulates rural water sanitation services.

Keywords: territory, governance, drinking water, rural water sanitation services, Law 20,998.

I. INTRODUCTION

Water is an essential element for the vitality of ecosystems and for the health, production and social activities of human beings. For this reason, access to quality drinking water has been at the heart of social development policies since the second half of the 20th century.

In Chile, water is regulated by the Civil Code and the Water Code of 1981. The latter legal body allowed the privatization of this vital element, generating a great conflict between water as a human right, and water as a market commodity (Bauer, 2015; Larrain & Poo, 2010).

Currently, the main cities of Chile are supplied with drinking water through a sanitary infrastructure concession model with private companies, regulated by the Ministry of Economy, Development, and Tourism, under the supervision of the Sanitary Services Superintendence (SISS, in Spanish). However, the management model of drinking water in rural areas is different. The State retains its investor role, and transfers the operation of sanitary infrastructure to rural drinking water (RDW) committees and cooperatives, under mutual support and solidarity criteria, thus expressing a community-type governance (Fuster, Jara, Vidal & Abellá, 2016; Villarroel Novoa, 2012).

The setting up of the first RDW cooperatives harks back to the 1960s, with the adoption of the Basic Rural Sanitation Plan, financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), within the framework of the International Commitments taken on by the State of Chile in sanitary policy matters. Later stages of this IDB-financed program would take place under the Dictatorship, which promoted the creation of community organizations called RDW Committees, led by the local councils (Villarroel Novoa, 2012).

Since 2002, the Rural Drinking Water Program has been part of the Hydraulic Works Direction of the Ministry of Public Works. However, the roles and attributions related to the organization and supervision of RDW, would remain distributed among several regulatory bodies and public agencies. This situation was offset and regularized by Law N°20.998 of 2017, which regulated rural sanitary services (SSR Law). This law, defined the mission of these services in terms of "capturing, purifying, and administrating the distribution service, and in some cases, collecting and treating wastewater (Nicolas-Artero, 2016, p. 166). A formal service exclusive territorial concession mechanism was set up, alongside a regulated tariffing system, and a set of operation and quality standards, subject to inspection by SISS. The SSR Law, anticipating the governance issues these changes could generate, opened up the possibility that private companies could manage the service, if the committees and cooperatives were to fail to comply with the new legal regulations.

This scenario of institutional change overlaps with the scenario of global climate change and socio-territorial transformations, experienced by different Chilean rural localities. In this sense, alongside the historical phenomenon of population concentration in Santiago de Chile, an internal migratory process from smaller cities and rural areas to regional capitals has been strengthening for several decades (Maturana Miranda, 2017). In this way, these cities have been left subject to multiple transformation dynamics in their spatial and social structure, one of which is the emergence of peri-urban areas as a new type of territory, where forms of urban life spill over into rural spaces (Ávila Sánchez, 2009).

Said peri-urbanization dynamics can be seen in the Maule Region, which has a fifth of the homes served by RDW in Chile. In particular, since the passing of the latest Talca Regulation Plan, in 2011, the regional capital has tripled its urban area, adding some 20,000 people a year (Figure 2). In spatial terms, this demographic growth has followed an extensive pattern of urban land use, evidenced by the surge of new lots and gated communities in rural areas (PLADECO, 2017). In water terms, this rise in the peri-urban population has increased the demand for drinking water within the RDW, which has awoken the interest of the private drinking water concessionary of Talca, regarding the extension of its operation area, defined today by the urban limit.

In this context, this article seeks to understand the tensions and conflicts that the community governance of RDW face, starting from three RDW case studies located in the peri-urban areas of the city of Talca, the capital of the Maule Region. This research is based on the hypothesis that, on facing urban expansion and a shortage of drinking water, the neoliberal institutional framework in place in Chile tends to favor a market-cutoff drinking water governance in peri-urban territories. Considering this, and based on semi-structured interviews with key informants, and participant observation, an analysis was made of the discourse of the governmental regulators and managers of the RDW, identifying their perceptions and positions regarding the ongoing socioecological transformations.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to look at the background information and the problems related to the impact of the environmental, socio-territorial, and political transformations on the community governance of RDW, the theoretical framework was based on the contributions of political ecology to the territorial analysis and on those that focus from the hybrid governance approach, applied to the analysis of organizational, institutional, and resource tensions. First of all, the political ecology approach arose to analyze the processes of meaning, valuation, and appropriation of nature, that is not resolved either by the means of the economic valuation of the nature, nor by assigning

ecological standards to the economy (Leff, 2003). Thus, political ecology addresses nature and the environment as consubstantially politicized objects of study (Ávila-García, 2016). In this sense, the territories are considered as relational, social, historical, and spatial constructs, subject of dispute between different social groups, who seek the validation of certain discourses/works and the institutionalization of socio-environmental arrangements (Boelens, Hoogesteger, Swyngedouw, Vos & Wester, 2016). Upon studying the assigning of the collective practices and ways of life in their territorial dimension, the political ecology approach looks to overcome the interpretation of the territory as a simple “scenario” for collective life (Neil, 2013; Porto-Gonçalves, 2009), establishing the relationship and exchange between economic practices, shared meanings, and the means of identification with the territory where they take place, as an object of study. From this point of view, it is possible to articulate the structural and agential dimensions present in the territories, observing the tensions and conflicts between the hegemony of certain dominant socioeconomic models, and their dynamics of de-territorialization, on one hand, and the established praxis of the social players in the territories, on the other (Castoriadis, 1975).

Applied to the field of the water resources of a territory, political ecology looks to decipher the nature of the relationships of power between individuals and social groups, manifested materially, discursively, economically, politically and/or culturally. In this way, it allows finding the social players who, ultimately, hold the power, according to the control or access, and whoever is excluded from decision-making on water governance (Swyngedouw, Kaïka & Castro, 2016). This makes it possible to address the phenomenon of the neoliberalization of water, present in Latin America and in Chile since the 1980s, pointing out the policies based on market development, and the legitimacy of the private company as the most rational force to assign water use.

As a complement to political ecology, the theoretical approach of governance allows considering the ways in which institutions, as well as public and private players, intervene in the formulation and application of public policies (Cerrillo & Martínez, 2005). According to Manganelli, van der Broeck and Moulart (2020), governance is defined as any means of continuous coordination of social relationships, characterized by a reciprocal and complex interdependence. This seeks to account for all types of initiatives and interventions by the different socio-political players (public and private, guided by their own interests, and rationalities), at different geographical scales (from the local to the global), to govern the social problems. Along this vein, Swyngedouw and Jessop (2006) distinguish four main forms of

governance: (i) the anarchy of mercantile exchange; ii) the hierarchy of imperative coordination in and through organizations, including the State (Kooiman, 2005); iii) the network heterarchy of self-organizations; and iv) the unconditional commitment associated to community love, loyalty, and solidarity. These ways of governance are not expressed as pure matters, but rather tend to coexist in complex social systems, under dynamics of conflict, mediation, synergy, co-construction, or destruction, leading to forms of hybrid governance.

According to Manganelli *et al.* (2020), the hybrid nature of governance is at the center of the different tensions reported in the literature, classified as organizational, institutional, and of resources. Concretely, organizational tensions emerge from the needs of administrative rationalization and the greater professionalization of management, that face horizontal and participative forms of governance. At the same time, the institutional tensions refer to the relationships between different sociopolitical regimens, corporate structures, political agendas, and organizational and community cultures. Finally, the tensions of resources arise from the need to access and guarantee scarce resources for the operation, development, and scaling of the organization in a context of competence and dispute over said resources.

As for the water resources, the governance model allows analyzing the interaction between the political, social, economic, and administrative players/systems of the territory and the environment, for the provision of drinking water. For said governance to be real and effective (i.e. good governance), it is necessary to have organizations that regulate and manage the drinking water supply service, under a suitable legal framework, so that this meets the environmental, economic, social, and political needs of the territory (Dupuits, 2014; Zurbruggen, 2014). This requires a more horizontal and decentralized point of view in decision-making, which involves different areas of the Government that can directly or indirectly condition water policy (Dupuits, 2014; Nicolas-Artero, 2016).

III. CASE STUDIES

This research focuses on three RDW case studies, located in the peri-urban area of the city of Talca (Figure 2), namely: the San Valentín de Lircay RDW Committee, the Marta-Mata Oriente RDW Committee, and the Huilquilemu RDW Committee. These RDWs were chosen using three criteria: i) the high growth rate in the number of homes supplied; ii) the location within the urban expansion area of Talca; and iii) the high growth rate in the number of dwellings of the surrounding territory. An analysis of secondary

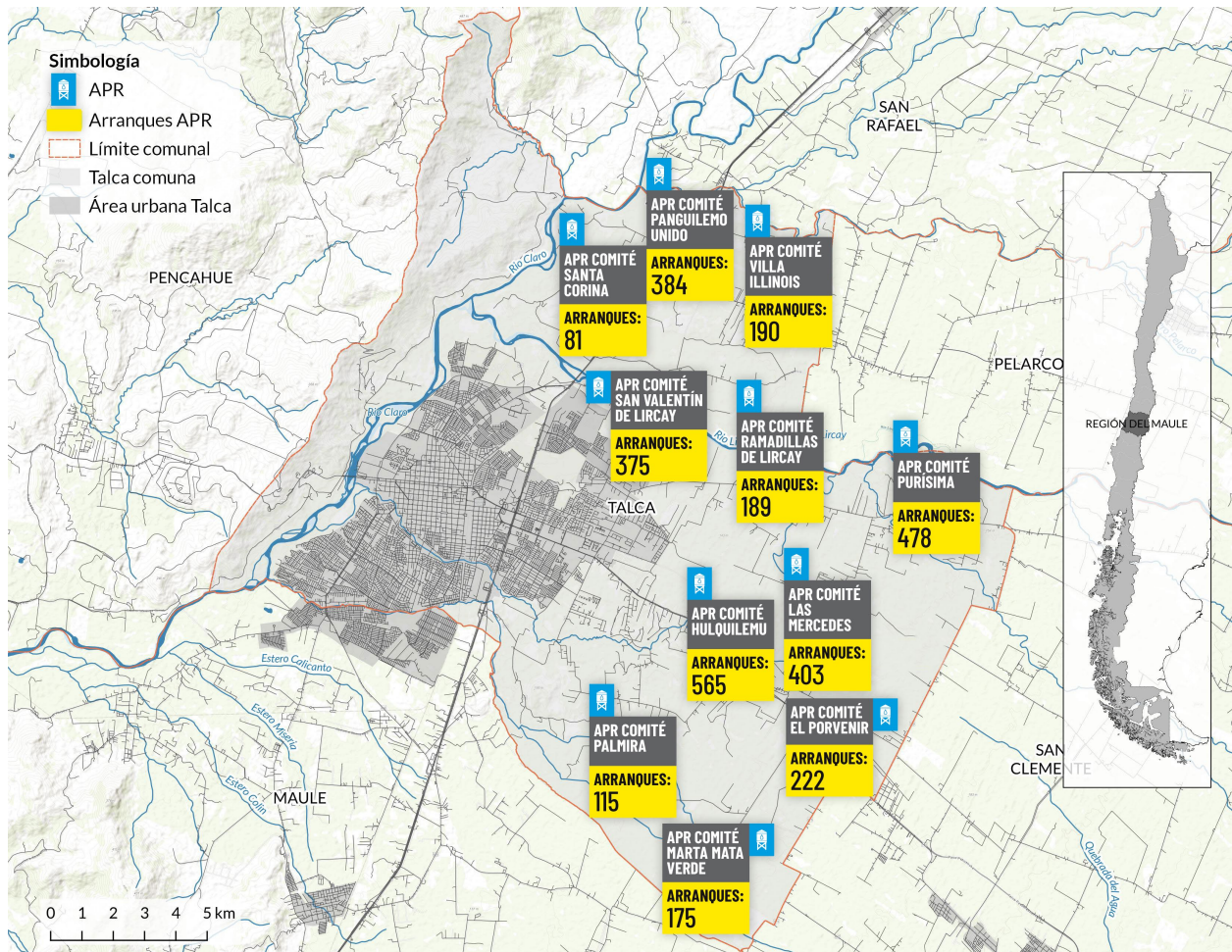


Figure 1. Map of the Rural Drinking Water Committees of the commune of Talca by 2017. Source: Preparation by the Authors based on information from the National Statistics Institute (INE) and Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI).

information was made for the selection process, based on a longitudinal comparative and observational design (Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado & Baptista Lucio, 2003), using data spatialization techniques (Santos Preciado, 2020), and the ArcGIS geographic information system.

The localization of the different RDW committees of the commune of Talca is presented in Figure 1, with the corresponding number of rural drinking water household connections by 2017 (i.e. homes supplied). The polygon marked out by the red line represents the administrative boundaries of the commune.

Figure 2 illustrates in blue, the three committees chosen as case studies. In each case, the percentage variation of the number of homes supplied by each rural drinking water system between

2011 and 2017 has been highlighted. The urban expansion area of this period, authorized by the Talca Regulatory Plan approved in 2011, is shown in pink. Likewise, the dates of the Decrees ruling this a drinking water shortage area, established by the General Water Direction for the northeast and south areas of the commune of Talca, are pointed out.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The research aimed at understanding the perspective and position of the players related to the RDW on the peri-urban transformations of the city of Talca, and their consequences in the governance of drinking water, delving into their experiences, opinions, and meanings. That is to say, in the way they subjectively build their reality (Hernández Sampieri *et al.*, 2003,

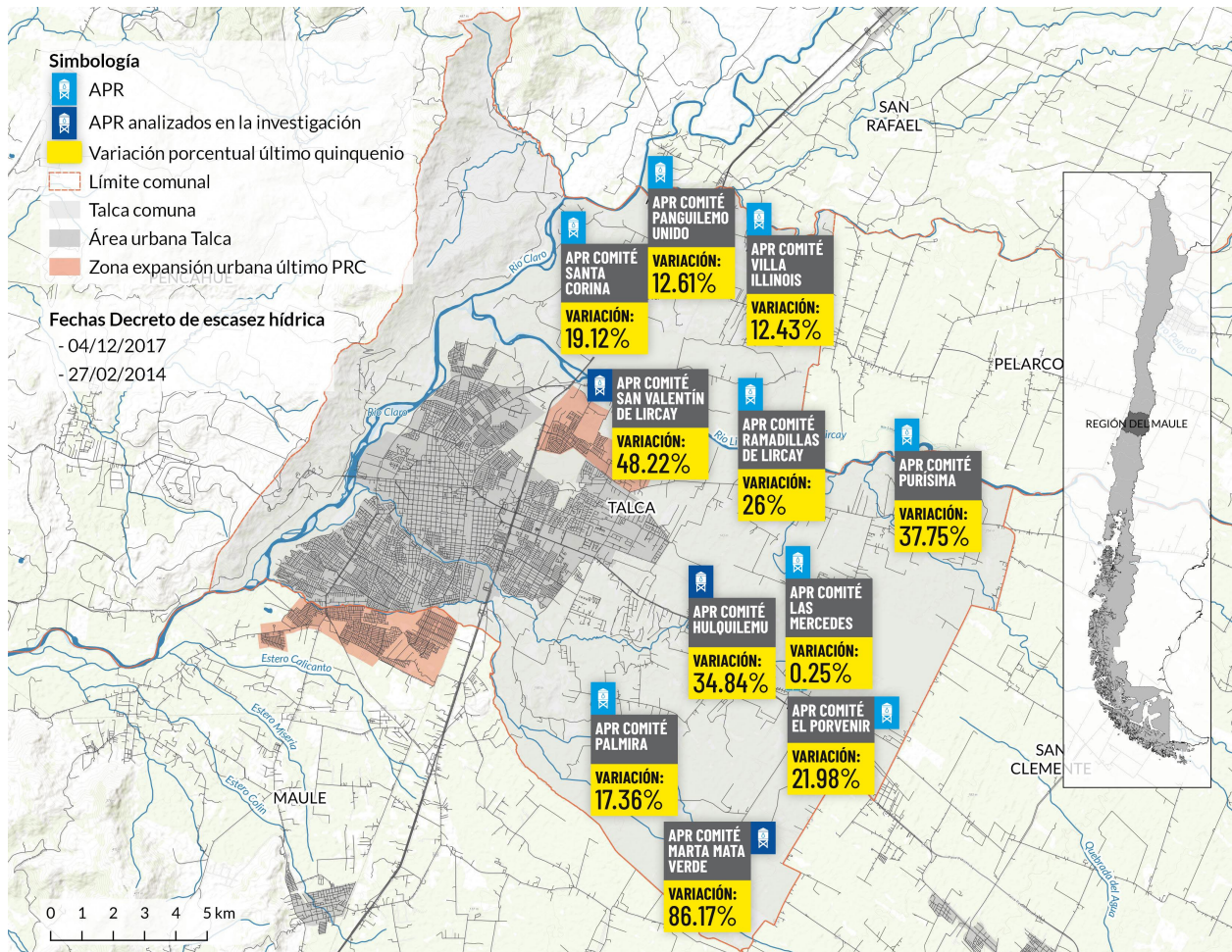


Figure 2. Map of the case studies and the demographic and water transformations of the commune of Talca between 2011 and 2017. Source: Preparation by the Authors using data from the National Statistics Institute (INE, in Spanish), the Municipality of Talca, the General Water Direction (DGA, in Spanish), and the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI).

p. 364). A qualitative approach was used for this task, using an observational design applied to the three case studies, based on in depth interview techniques, participative and non-participative observation (Rodríguez Gómez, Gil Flores & García Jiménez, 1996).

The choice of the players for the semi-structured interviews responds to a non-probabilistic and by convenience standard sampling (Hernández Sampieri *et al.*, 2003), that sought to collate the perceptions of RDW managers and regulators. Interviews were made in this way, to two people who worked as RDW regulators in the General Water Direction (DGA) and in the Hydraulic Works Direction (DOH, in Spanish) of the Ministry of Public Works (MOP, in Spanish). On the other hand, in the case of the managers, the Presidents of the RDW committees considered as case studies, were interviewed. In addition, a conversation was

held with the Manager of the Cumpeo RDW, who coordinates the federative process of the RDW.

The participative observation consisted of two workshops for the constitution process of a regional RDW federation, to which 20 organizations attended. The non-participative observation consisted in attending an Assembly of the Huilquilemu RDW, with the participation of the board and 30 partners. Table 1 outlines the sample used.

The processing of the semi-structured interviews was done using the Nvivo software, which allowed categorizing the discourse elements, considering the environmental, socio-territorial, and political dimensions. The critical analysis of the discourse was done using the 3D model of the discourse proposed by Fairclough (2013), considering the descriptive, interpretative, and explicative perspectives.

Technique	Institution/Space	Number of Participants / Interviews
Participative Observation	Workshop 1 – RDW Federation Workshop 2 – RDW Federation	15 RDW Presidents of the Maule Region 20 RDW Presidents of the Maule Region
Non-Participative Observation	Half-yearly assembly – HUILQUIEMU RDW	RDW President Former RDW President RDW Secretary 30 RDW members/users
Semi-structured interviews	Cumpeo RDW HUILQUIEMU RDW Marta-Mata Verde RDW San Valentín de Lircay RDW DGA (MOP) DOH (MOP)	1 RDW federative process coordinator 4 RDW Presidents 2 Regulators

Table 1. Sample summary. Source: Preparation by the Authors

V. RESULTS

Problems regarding water shortage and the valuation of drinking water

In general, it is possible to state that both the regulators and the managers identify shortage as a problem, and they associate it to drought and climate change. They state that, although there are no supply issues in the territories they represent, the level of the current wells has dropped, and they have a lower volume of water than in previous years due to less rainfall recorded in the area. On the other hand, the managers perceive that there is a sustained increase in water consumption due to the rise in population in peri-urban sectors, and the higher consumption in the homes. Facing this unsustainable equation in time, the Committee Managers have turned to holding talks in assemblies, and in local schools, to sensitize the population about the use of drinking water for human consumption, and so they avoid using it to water gardens and to fill swimming pools. In the case of the regulators, they acknowledge the bad practices generated within the communities, stating that people do not care about the value of water, given that its cost is very low, although this attitude is starting to change. For example, this is what an official of the General Water Direction stated: "As I told you, the drought effect is across the board, and this is due to the lack of rainfall, and that the fact that the aquifers have not had water is an enormous issue. Today, the population is noticing this because it is on the media" (Regulator 2, General Water Direction; free translation).

Territorial and demographic transformations in peri-urban areas of the commune of Talca

In general terms, both the regulators and the managers interviewed acknowledged the changes in the peri-urban

territories of Talca, based on a reconfiguration of the rural areas that goes hand in hand with the expansion of the Regulatory Plan. Facing this, most of the interviewees highlighted the arrival of new users in recent years, which has led to an increase in the drinking water demand, and that leads to the need of new feasibility studies and to the appearance of supply network extension projects. Along these lines, a manager of the Marta-Mata Verde RDW commented the following:

"With the issue of the lotting and new roads, we know that new partners will come. That is what we have foreseen, and for this reason, our committee is always looking to the future" (Manager 1, Marta-Mata Verde RDW, free translation).

These latest actions have been complicated due to a series of problems, among which the following stand out: i) the long wait (8 to 10 years) and the bureaucratic weight to make studies and projects; ii) the limited proactive behavior and the prioritization of the needs of the committees, and iii) the lack of coordination with the institutions responsible for implementing these.

Social transformations: individualism and low participation in community processes

The aforementioned territorial and demographic transformations are also expressed in changes in the type of population living in peri-urban areas. In this way, it is possible to identify two different social groups living in the same territory: a historic "older" group with low resources, and a recently arrived or "newer" group, with greater purchase power who generally emigrate from the suburbs. In the eyes of the managers, these groups are clearly differentiated. On one hand, practices of over-consumption of drinking water are seen among the new users, even doubling the volume

consumed by the older families. On the other hand, they have a low participation in assemblies and in activities within the community, along with a reluctance to take on any role in the organization. In this sense, the new partners-users limit their role to that of a consumer of drinking water services, typical of a standard mercantile governance. In this same vein, most of the managers interviewed highlighted being concerned for the generation that will replace the current RDW leaders, characterized on being elderly volunteers who often take on more than two roles at a time. Along these lines, a manager of the San Valentín de Lircay RDW stated the following:

“Those of us who are members of the Board have to use our own time for the community activity, which in my case is not a major issue because all citizens should be available to work with one another. But this doesn’t always happen and it is a weakness that we’ve begun to talk about, about the lack of people, those who are not available to do anything, the next generation. It is hard to stay afloat when there is no interest at play” (Manager 3, San Valentín de Lircay RDW, free translation).

Ambivalence facing the changes in the rural drinking water regulation

The acknowledgment for the dedication and the work of RDWs has been highlighted by all those interviewed. In particular, their history, their low costs, and their personalized and more human attention, among other aspects, is valued. However, facing the changes introduced by the SSR Law, important discrepancies were expressed between the community managers and the regulators interviewed. The community managers stated that, although the SSR Law has been promoted, the institutionality has major issues. In particular, they highlight the lack of training to be able to face the changes in the administration of the RDWs. Meanwhile, the regulators consulted indicated that the State is aware of the difficulties that RDWs face, especially regarding the changes within the SSR Law. Likewise, they acknowledge that there are few professionals available to work onsite to accompany the RDWs in the region.

Facing this scenario, the RDW managers have expressed some uncertainty and insecurity towards the future of their organizations and the community governance. They indicate certain “legal loopholes” that would allow “turning the RDWs into a business”, facilitating their later transfer to profit-making companies. Specifically, they see how the scenario of the SSR Law frames out new concerns and demands for the leadership roles and that, on being performed *ad honorem*, they imply a disincentive for community participation. In this regard, a leader of the Marta-Mata Verde RDW stated the following:

“The people are not prepared. If you have an *ad honorem* role, and the people recognize you, they can’t demand more than what they are able to do. For example, I resigned in February, I will not assume the responsibilities of the Law. They changed things and gave more responsibilities to the leaders, giving them nothing in exchange, they are just demands, and there’s not even a salary”. (Leader 1, Marta-Mata Verde RDW, free translation).

In the case of the regulators, they are sure that the SSR Law provides greater representativity and institutionality to the RDWs, which have not been achieved for many years. On the other hand, they see in the regulation of the prices, and in the changes in the administration, an opportunity to improve current procedures, both in the management, and in the drinking water distribution, consumption, and treatment in rural areas. For this, an official of the General Water Direction outlines the following: “What is happening is that I think that today the Law will give the Committees strength to become small sanitary companies. They’re going to become small companies... perhaps this will happen in the future”. (Regulator 2, General Water Direction, free translation).

Finally, the managers and regulators evoked very different perceptions regarding the ties that are generated within rural drinking water governance in the commune of Talca. In particular, the managers have characterized the ties to the State and the sanitary companies as bureaucratic, neither participative nor cooperative. Considering this, they demand greater participation of the State and, therefore, they have taken on self-management of their different problems. This lack of articulation is also expressed in the conflicts between the community governance of the RDWs and the hierarchical governance of the State Bodies like the Housing and Urbanism Service (SERVIU, in Spanish), which drives the construction of housing without consulting the respective RDWs about the feasibility of supplying these dwellings. Bearing this in mind, a leader of the Huilquilemu RDW mentioned the following:

“What SERVIU does is mess up the system for the RDWs. They think that it’s easy for them to build houses, and for us to provide the water. They don’t care nor ask if there’s water there or not. All that weight falls upon us. They put the cart in front of the oxen, as a human settlement needs water before it’s set up”. (Leader 2, Huilquilemu RDW, free translation).

VI. DISCUSSIONS

Using the critical analysis of the discourse contained in the interviews made to managers and regulators, it is possible to uncover inter-textual and contextual elements that can be organized along three lines: i) the institutional

and resource governance tensions, generated by peri-urban socio-territorial and environmental transformations; ii) the organizational governance tensions, derived from the need to rationalize or modernize RDWs management, as a result of the implementation of the SSR Law; and iii) the tensions of institutional governance, arising from the projections of the SSR Law, and the implicit risk of privatization of the RDWs. Each one of these aspects is elaborated below.

Governance tensions generated by peri-urban transformations

As it was laid out, the intra-regional migration, the extensive growth of housing, and the modifications in the Talca Regulatory Plan, together with the dynamics of climate change, have led not just to an increase in drinking water demand, but also to an important social transformation in the peri-urban sectors of the city, expressed in the ways in which the new peri-urban inhabitants perceive, appropriate, and live in their own territory (Beck, 2002).

Therefore, while the increase of drinking water demand generates governance tensions related to guaranteeing the water resource (for example, between the RDWs and SERVIU), the appearance of individualist and instrumental cut-off behaviors and logic expresses an institutional-type governance tension, that weakens the current community governance in favor of a mercantile cut-off one.

Governance tensions derived from the implementation of the SSR Law

On seeing the discourses and perceptions towards the implementation of the SSR Law, an organizational tension emerges, derived from the need to professionalize the management to assume more complex tasks, reducing the historic role taken on voluntarily by local social leaders in these tasks. Other studies on RDW had already targeted the issues of limited technical competences, old age, and difficulties to find people willing to take on organizational roles based on voluntary work (Fuster *et al.*, 2016).

Governance tensions derived from the projections of the SSR Law

Regarding the projection of the SSR Law, the differences of opinion among the interviewees shows a clear institutional tension. On one hand, the State regulator agents point out the improvement and modernization of the RDWs with the new Law, representing the perspective of a hierarchical subsidiary-type governance, which has marked the guidelines in most of Chilean public policy in recent years (Saldomando, 2009). The business and State players meet under this model, where the management skills in the commercial area are guarantees of competence for the public administration, thus consolidating a neoliberal technocracy that started with the Dictatorship. On the

other hand, from the perspective of the community managers, the recent SSR Law introduces new standards and regulations that, according to the managers, could lead to the "conversion into businesses" of the RDWs, opening the door to the possibility of being replaced by private sanitary companies that operate in the urban areas under concession. Facing this, some RDWs have reacted defensively, suggesting the need to create a Federation of Rural Sanitary Services that would allow having an influence on regional public investment decisions, and also developing actions of common interest, looking to face the new regulatory framework.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, the tensions that RDWs community governance face for environmental, socio-territorial, and political transformations of the peri-urban territories have been problematized. In this way, starting from three case studies, the critical analysis methodology of the discourse has allowed describing and contrasting the perspectives of the RDW managers and regulators, unveiling the differences regarding how these players conceive the present and the future of these services. They especially highlight different tensions between community, hierarchical, and mercantile governance, both at a resource and at an organizational and institutional level.

From this point of view, although the RDWs have managed to meet their goal of supplying drinking water in rural areas since their creation in the last century, and have continued to be highly valued by their respective communities, the ongoing transformations are opening the door to an insecure scenario for the community governance of RDWs. This is mainly due to the weakening of the social fabric of the RDWs and the projections and challenges from the implementation of the SSR Law, with its underlying risks of privatization. In this sense, the SSR Law appears to be strengthening the centralizing guidelines of the State, starting from a greater regulation and control of the management and administration of the RDWs, based on the model of the private concessionary companies, of urban sanitary services. It is from this context that the defensive strategies promoted by the RDW managers in the SSR Law are explained, which show a clear willingness to maintain their autonomy and their community governance model.

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