

Call for Papers

Transformations of the Ecology Movement. From the 'Limits to Growth' (1972) to the Rio Conference (1992)

Organisers: **Green Memory Archive (Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis) of the Green Political Foundation (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung), Berlin**

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Deadline for the Call for Papers: 15 June 2014

The years around 1970 have frequently been described as the time of the environmental revolution. They mark the beginning of a new era of ecological thought, the rise of environmental movements and environmental policy. This revolution – which went hand in hand with the rise of political ecology - was a global phenomenon. International organizations such as the United Nations (UN), NATO or the European Communities, but also national governments – such as in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany, started environmental policy initiatives and international cooperation on these issues. Based on the latest computer-generated simulations, the study 'Limits to Growth' of 1972 popularized a central tenet of the new ecological worldview, which fell on fertile ground in the context of the first UN conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm 1972.

Twenty years later, representatives of 178 states met in Rio de Janeiro for the UN conference on the Environment and Development in 1992. World leaders agreed on the Agenda 21, an ambitious action programme, aiming at what came to be called "sustainable development" to overcome the conflict between environmental concerns and development goals. With the emergence of the issue of global warming, Rio marks an important milestone in the history of environmental policy and a transition to our present.

The ambition of this workshop is to explore the development of the new environmental movement and the modernisation of the nature conservation movement in Germany during the two decades between the two events. The goal is to explore continuities and change with a view to the issues and concerns of the environmentalists, their interaction at and across different levels of policy-making e.g. with policy-makers, media and society, as well as the organisational structures of the environmental movement and the various groups and actors it consists of.

First, while anti-nuclear protest and the demand for an energy transition have been centre stage, we know relatively little about environmentalists' engagement with other concerns, which however many local initiatives engaged in. These include waste, transport and city or regional planning, (potentially dangerous) chemicals and genetically manipulated organisms (GMO), the pollution of water, air and soil, as well as human relations with animals and plants.

Secondly, the 1970s and 1980s are commonly considered the heyday of the environmental movement. However, movements at the national level are embedded in a larger global context of action. Environmental movement groups and activists interact across different levels – from the local and regional to the national and transnational levels. At the same time, environmentalists challenge and cooperate with different types of actors from media and the public sphere, public administration, industry, political parties and governments, and the European Communities.

Thirdly, the environmental movement faced various challenges with a view to its organisational structures – relations between grass-roots local activists and the need for (and dynamic of) professionalization and institutionalisation.

What we know so far about the environmental movement is frequently based on specific cases situated in time and space. Longer term trends and trajectories, as well as factors and elements of change have so far remained unexplored. This conference seeks to shed new light on developments over time, within these two decades, in order to enhance our understanding of the environmental movement, with a view to a history of the present. This overarching question is reflected in the five main issue areas we propose to explore.

1. **Between global problems and local initiatives: how did the perception of environmental problems change between the publication of the "Limits to Growth" report and the UN conference on Environment and Development in 1992?**
What role did the new issues and global concerns about limited resources, limits to growth and the conflict between environment and development play for the emerging environmental movements on the ground? To what extent is protest and activism motivated by the new ecological worldview? How does the environmental movement frame and define its goals and claims? Which solutions seem sensible and acceptable?
2. **Between environmental protest and alternative solutions:** how did the new environmental movement, its groups and umbrella organizations such as the Federation of Citizen Action Groups (Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz [BBU]) or the Union for the Environment and Nature Conservation Germany / Friends of the Earth Germany (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz [BUND]) deal with the local grassroot environmental issues in the 1970s and 1980s – nuclear power and energy concerns, pollution of the soil, air and water, transportation and regional planning, chemicals, GMO and waste? Which alternatives did the social movement advocate?
3. **Between left and right: old and new parties in the context of the new environmental movement.** How did the environmental movement fall within or cut across existing cleavages? In particular, what is the relationship with the social democratic party as well as the emerging green party.
4. **Between civic engagement and professional environmentalism:** how did groups, initiatives and organisations deal with the dynamic of professionalization and institutionalization? How did they juggle the contradictions between the commitment to grass-roots democracy and

the need to get organised and acquire know-how to be effective? What is the role of science and expertise in this process? The roles of ecological think tanks and of environmental NGOs in this process might be cases in point.

5. **Between the public sphere and activism:** media and the environmental movement. Which role did the media, their agenda setting and the scandalization of environmental problems play for the fledgling environmental movement? Conversely, how did the environmental movement use the media? Which networks emerge between the media and the environmental movement? What is the role of alternative media – in the age before the internet?

Environmentalism, environmental movements and environmental policy cut across borders. They are by no means a German, let alone a West-German phenomenon, even if many of the questions raised above are informed by the West German experience. Thus we are particularly interested in contributions considering the history of the German environmental movement in a comparative and/or transnational perspective. We particularly encourage the submission of contributions studying developments, change and continuity over time, covering this period.

We are planning to publish (a selection of) the contributions to this conference in due course.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation kindly sponsors reasonable travel costs, accommodation and catering.

Languages: German and English. Papers may be presented in either language.

Please send your abstract (200 -250 words, with a reference to your empirical basis or sources, in German or English) and a short biographical note (three – five lines, possibly including 2-3 relevant publications)

until **15 June 2014**,

reference "Transformations of the Ecology Movement"

to both becker-schaum@boell.de and jhmeyer@gmx.de .

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