

The overarching theme of the 1st World Congress in Environmental History is “Local Livelihoods and Global Challenges: Understanding Human Interaction with the Environment.” The following sub themes of the Congress are presented as examples of the range of papers that are welcome. Any area of environmental history is welcome, especially papers that foster comparative studies across time, geographies, disciplines, and cultures. Such sub themes may include but not be limited to:

- ***Methods and Approaches in Environmental History*** – Environmental history addresses the interactions between nature and culture and the making of human societies as well as evolving concepts of nature. In attempting to understand the human interaction with the environment it grapples with challenges of spatial and temporal scale and strives to reconcile the critical examination of varying documents and sources.
- ***Cross-disciplinary landscapes*** - Environmental history is a product of a transforming intellectual landscape. From the first it has experienced shifts in scholarly emphasis, intensified interactions with other disciplines, from cultural and urban studies to the natural and social sciences, each of which has helped reinvigorate this still-young field.
- ***Environmental perceptions, ideas and sciences*** – Human understanding of the environment and how it describes the environment and environmental concerns through time is reflected in literature, art, and the development of environmental sciences. Exploring the evolution of these cultural representations in their varying historical contexts can inform our current global challenges of sustaining local livelihoods.
- ***Traditional knowledge*** – While passed from generation to generation informally over centuries, only recently has traditional knowledge of environmental systems, land-use, medicinal use of plants, and other knowledge been recognized as valuable to current and future decision-making. Can traditional knowledge contribute to poverty alleviation and sustainable management?
- ***Historical Geography*** – Geographical concerns regarding interactions between people and their natural and built environments range in scale from urban spaces and movement patterns to global environmental systems. Strong comparative works can situate both teaching and research in an interregional and global context that focus on historical transformations in landscapes and associated changes in human-environment relations.
- ***Cross geographical and transnational boundaries*** - Landscapes do not necessarily recognize political boundaries but are often determined by them. Issues such as pollution, wildlife, global climate, population, forest conservation, fire, among others, ought to be discussed across boundaries and borders.
- ***Water and watersheds*** – The impact of rivers on settlement and industrial development of the world has been immense. River systems have profoundly influenced the course of life within their bioregions and technology and sanitation have likewise affected water sources.
- ***Agriculture, land-use and landscape histories*** - Land-use histories are some of the most useful points of reference that inform present decision-making. A growing international focus on valuing cultural and historical landscapes is sure to affect political discussions. The economic and environmental dimensions of agricultural systems, natural resources, technologies and modes of production affect livelihoods and sustainable approaches.

- ***Forest history and forest policy*** – Forests are central to most all environmental histories. Forest use and policy as it historically has affected related resources such as wildlife, mining, grazing, and agriculture can make excellent comparative studies. The forest's interaction between peoples and water resources, flora and fauna, global climate, science and technology are of critical issue today.
- ***Energy*** – There are many ways to think about energy including historical experiences ranging from the exploitation of resources through time to the application of resources to settle and develop lands or to restore damaged landscapes.
- ***Atmospheric Sciences and Global Climate*** – historical climatologists, atmospheric scientists, oceanographers, and other modelers are front and center in debates about the range of historical climate variability and the viability of models to predict future global climate change. A historical look at past climatic trends and extremes, variability in measurements, and societal impacts can inform both public understanding and policy development.
- ***Biodiversity*** – Historical cases of use, domestication, transfer, acclimatizing and conservation of flora and fauna have had significant economic, environmental and social impact on humans and the environment. Extinction of species, invasiveness, and conservation biology are critical global issues today that affect local communities.
- ***Disease and Pollution*** – In understanding the relationship of the human body to the environment, environmental history can help reduce the burden of human illness and disability by understanding how the environment and human action influence the development and progression of human disease.
- ***Environmental History and Education*** – How can environmental history education take advantage of both case studies and the broader theory and social sciences to become more relevant to human and ecological communities? Also, how best can we communicate environmental history to public audiences, through museum exhibits, zoological parks, botanical gardens, nature trails, interpretive centers, and other historical sites?