



Environment
and Society

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

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Dear Colleagues,

I hope that you and your loved ones remain safe and well, and that you, like me, have allowed yourself to become excited about our upcoming 4th World Forum of Sociology, which is right around the corner. I am just so incredibly impressed with the commitment of our members to sharing the important work they do despite the turbulent times we live in, and the many trials and tribulations we have confronted in our shift to a virtual conference. RC24 will have 23 Regular Sessions in the Forum program, as well as a co-sponsored Common Session. It will be a busy week I know; many of us will be fitting the Forum into busy teaching, administrative, and family schedules, but I plan to set up a snack cart and coffee pot next to my computer and listen in on as many sessions as I can. Who knows? Maybe your presentations will inspire my eavesdropping daughters to become environmental sociologists! If you have not had a chance to register for the Forum yet, registration will remain open right up to the event. **Our Business Meeting will be held Thursday, February 25, at 4:00PM Porto Alegre time, and I strongly encourage members to attend so we can hear from you.**

In addition to our regular sessions at the Forum, RC24 is hosting a Pre-Conference titled Climate Justice and the Global South. This event is intended to highlight the research conducted by our members in Brazil, in other parts of South America, and across the Global South. This event is an important opportunity to draw attention to the unique attributes and challenges of pursuing sustainability in countries like Brazil, and the valuable knowledge and insights offered by our members who focus their scholarship there.

I am also very pleased to invite your participation in two additional upcoming virtual RC24 Events, including an Interactive Workshop for Early Career Researchers, to take place on April 9 of this year, and focusing particularly on mental health and wellbeing. Dr. Catherine Mei Wong has spearheaded this initiative, and I am very much hoping all of our emerging RC24 scholars take advantage of this opportunity.

Meanwhile, RC24 members Lotsmart Fonjong, Frank Matose, and David Sonnenfeld have been working together to produce a Virtual Symposium on African Environmental Politics. They will continue to accept abstracts for this event until February 28, see further details below.

If you have an idea for a virtual event in the coming year and would like to engage RC24 members, please let us know!

A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

Henrike Rau
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Dear RC24 members,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those of you who contributed to this latest RC24 newsletter. It is truly uplifting to see so much dedication and commitment to high-quality research, student-centered teaching and effective and engaging science communication.

Our next newsletter will be published in June 2021. Please send me your contributions by 15th May 2021. In addition to information about new publications and upcoming workshops and conferences, I very much welcome research notes, workshop summaries or news of awards received (max. 200 words).

Last but not least - I wish us all an intellectually stimulating and inspiring ISA World Forum!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

RC24 SYMPOSIUM (VIRTUAL) Weathering extremes: African environmental politics in a destabilized world, May 2021 (tbc)

Faced with multiple, overlaying global, regional, and local crises, how are environmental policymakers, advocates, practitioners, citizens, and other stakeholders taking up environmental concerns across Africa today? Climate change, coastal and riparian flooding, drought/ water scarcity/ water pollution, locust invasions, agricultural crop failure, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and soil degradation and loss represent just some of the continent's pressing environmental issues. These are exacerbated by pandemics, authoritarianism, extremism, civil strife, climate-induced migration, urbanization, economic devastation, gender inequality, and poverty, to name just a few. As African states and citizens try to address this challenging moment, this symposium provides an opportunity for African scholars and others to examine and interrogate current trends, dynamics, policies, and developments in African environmental politics, at multiple levels of analysis, and from various disciplinary perspectives.

Prospective symposium participants should submit an abstract (200-300 words) of their proposed contribution, to each of the organizers listed below. No registration fee.

Deadlines: 28th February 2021 (Abstracts), 15th May 2021 (Complete Papers)

Publication: The organizers aim to publish revised papers in a special issue of a high-impact, international, peer-reviewed social science journal, and possible edited volume.

Organizers:

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RC24 Pre-Conference (VIRTUAL), 20th February 2021, Porto Alegre, Brazil

RC24 is pleased to announce that we will be hosting a special Pre-Conference at the ISA Forum 2021 in Porto Alegre. Details have already been circulated to the list of members.

RC24 Workshop for Early-Career Researchers - “Mental health and well-being in academia” – 9th April 2021 (virtual)

RC24 will be hosting a Workshop for Early Career Researchers this spring. This interactive workshop addresses the practical aspects of academic mental health and well-being, with a focus on two areas: burn out and secondary trauma. The aim is to provide you with a safe space to share some of your experiences and to learn from your peers and invited speakers about coping mechanisms. There will be a combination of small-group and large-group discussions with guest experts who have provided academic counselling and have had first-hand experience in dealing with burn out and secondary trauma.

We are currently looking for two volunteers to help with the implementation of the workshop. Interested members can contact Dr. Catherine Wong at cmlwong@nus.edu.sg

20th European Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production, September 8 – 10, 2021, Graz, Austria

Deadline for abstracts: 28th February 2021

<https://erscp2021.eu/>

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability World Congress 2021-22, Malmö, Sweden (Two parts, virtual/in person)

<https://worldcongress2021.iclei.org/>

Please see also <https://conferenceindex.org/conferences/environmental-sociology> for additional conferences dedicated to environmental sociology.

RECENT MEMBER ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH NOTES

Pandemics and Global Warming

Raymond Murphy, School of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Ottawa, Canada
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Epidemiological science long predicted that an eruption anywhere of lethal, infectious viruses jumping between species could be rapidly carried worldwide by some of the four billion passengers flying annually, and transformed into fossil-fuel propelled pandemics. Impact scientists documented that combustion of jet fuel powering those heavy planes results in massive greenhouse-gas emissions, over 400 pounds of CO₂ equivalent *per passenger* for the short flight from London to Berlin, which remain in the atmosphere a century causing climate change. Both are threats to everyone, with the poor being most vulnerable, particularly the 80% of the world's population too poor to fly. Fossil fuels are cheap for users because their full costs are paid belatedly by others, including future generations, in the form of expensive extreme weather and pandemics. Scientifically documented dangers of global warming and pandemics are discounted by the same groups. Most people have not yet personally experienced slow-onset harm, so they believe rationalisations that preserve their practices in what Beck aptly called the death reflex of normality. Societies rely on faith in future technological fixes, such as vaccines and hydrogen fuel-cell-powered planes.

The 2020 pandemic was bad for the economy and social practices, but fossil-fuelled climate change will be much worse if scientific warnings remain discounted and available remedies not

implemented. There are lessons from that pandemic for mitigating global warming. Don't rule out low probability, high impact risks, such as worldwide pandemics and fossil fuel combustion tipping the planet into an irreversibly degraded habitat for humanity. Discontinuities do occur, so don't depend on extrapolations from what succeeded in the past; be informed by the best available impact science. States with foresight reduced risk by changing social practices, whereas those that discount danger suffer costly, disruptive consequences.

With fossil-fuelled aviation transporting billions of passengers annually, conditions have been constructed for more viral outbreaks becoming pandemics and the worsening of the climate crisis, thereby excluding future generations from a safe, supportive natural environment. I invite environmental sociologists to integrate Shove's social practices framework and my social closure framework to analyse problematic interactions with nature's dynamics and assess solutions, which I started for climate change in my new book indicated below.

Everday practices during the COVID 19 pandemic: Evidence from Europe

Henrike Rau, LMU Munich (Germany), henrike.rau@lmu.de

Efforts are currently underway to document and analyse the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on everyday practices and potential implications for current and future efforts towards greater sustainability. An international team of social scientists from Europe, Asia and North America have investigated changes in food, mobility and leisure practices. The results of this project will be presented at various sociological and interdisciplinary conferences throughout 2021. Details can be found here: <https://everydaylifeinapandemic.wordpress.com/>

Taking refuge under *Arthashastra* in the present times

Meenakshi Sinha Swami, Delhi University, Delhi, India, meenakshi.sinhaswami@gmail.com

Arthashastra is a magnum opus written in the 4th Century India, by Kautilya, the intellectual. *Arthashastra* literally means 'the science of prosperity'. *Arthashastra* as a term is used for Economics in the Hindi language (a language widely used by Indians and the Government of India). *Arthashastra* was translated from Sanskrit to English only in the beginning of the 19th century. Many consider Kautilya to be the father of modern economics. When Sihag's book titled 'Kautilya – The True Founder of Economics' came into my hand, I was reintroduced to the depth of economic research ideas that *Arthashastra* had heralded and can herald.

Arthashastra guides us on our journey towards taking our planet back to sustainability. Disruptive, dislocating and damaging changes in economies have reawakened nations on their vicissitudinous economic journey, to hold the rein with a sustainable grip.

Kautilya had proposed *Yogakshema* in his book, 'all round well-being of everyone, especially of the weak', a precursor to the inclusive growth theories, postulating many of today's sustainable

development goals. *Yogakshema* promotes both *Artha* (material prosperity) and *Dharma* (righteous behaviour) as a consistent whole and repudiates any divergence from it.

Kautilya's proposed framework and action-oriented approach relied on market mechanism, with government intervention limited to excesses. With government support and facilitation, a mixed economy with private dominance, was proposed by him in this book. The sustainability factor was emphasised, as Kautilya embraced the Vedic philosophy 'Live and help others live' wholeheartedly. Sihag's book stresses Kautilya's ethic-intensive economics approach termed as *Dharmanomics* that is economics imbued with ethics. Vedic philosophy has many verses for respecting the biodiverse planet, thus highlighting the interdependency of humans and nature.

Kautilya postulated an ethical approach to economic issues as he considered moral codes essential for nation building. He did not want economic well-being to function under moral restrictions but wanted to relax constraints for 'expanding the opportunity set' by engendering trust and cooperation. "Kautilya recommended vaccinating children with a healthy dose of ethics, to protect them and the society against debilitating personal vices and social ills".

PUBLICATIONS

- Abi, M., Kessler, A., Oosterveer, P. and Tolossa, D. (2020) How farmers' characteristics influence spontaneous spreading of stone bunds in the highlands of Ethiopia: a case study in the Girar Jarso woreda. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 22(1): 317-335.
- Alita, L.D. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Vegetable Safety in China, addressing "Supermarketization" and its Limits. *British Food Journal* 122(11): 3433-3449.
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/BFJ-08-2019-0627/full/html>

Winner of the 2020 Environmental Sociology Early Career Prize

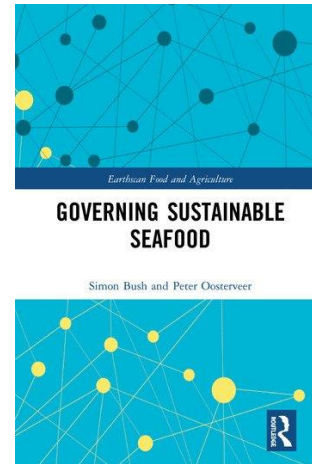
Bacon, J.M. (2019) Settler colonialism as eco-social structure and the production of colonial ecological violence. *Environmental Sociology*, 5(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2018.1474725>

- Béné, C., Fanzo, J., Haddad, L., Hawkes, C., Caron, P., Vermeulen, S., Herrero, M. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Five priorities to operationalize the EAT–Lancet Commission report. *Nature Food*, Volume 1, 457–459 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-020-0136-4>
- Blue, G. and Davidson, D.J. (2020) Advancing a transformative social contract for the environmental sciences: From public engagement to justice. *Environmental Research Letters* 15(11) 5008 <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/abbf14>
- Blue, G. and Davidson, D.J. (2021) Co-producing uncertainty in public science: The case of genomic selection in forestry. *Public Understanding of Science*.
- Bottema, M., Bush, S. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Territories of state-led aquaculture risk management: Thailand's Plang Yai program. *Environment and Planning C*, DOI: 10.1177/2399654420965241/ ID: EPC-19/175.R2

- Brons, A., Oosterveer, P. and Wertheim-Heck, S. (2020) Feeding the Melting Pot: Inclusive strategies to feeding the city. (AHUM-D-19-00405R2) *Agriculture and Human Values*, 37: 1027-1040.
- Brons, A., Wertheim-Heck, S. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Inconspicuous sustainability in food practices of Dutch consumers with type 2 diabetes *Environmental Sociology*. *Environmental Sociology*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2020.1841371>

Bush, S. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Governing Sustainable Seafood. New York and London: Routledge (now also available in paperback).

Taking a social science approach, this book explores the governance of sustainable seafood, which is fundamental to food and nutrition security as well as being an important source of income and employment in many regions.



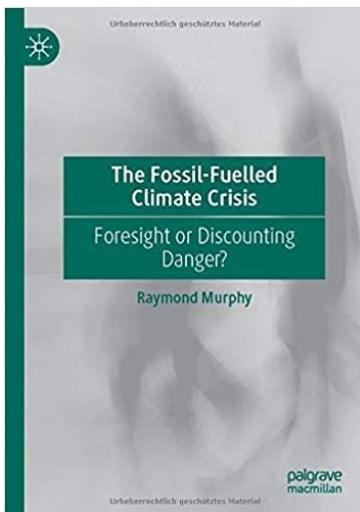
- Davidson, D.J. (forthcoming) Speech is silver, silence is gold in the fracking zone. In K. Legun, J. Keller, M. Carolan and M. Bell (Eds.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Environmental Sociology*, Vol. 2, Cambridge University Press.
- Degli Innocenti, E. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Opportunities and Bottlenecks for Upstream Learning within RSPO Certified Palm Oil Value Chains: A Comparative Analysis between Indonesia and Thailand. *Journal of Rural Studies*, Volume 78, August 2020, Pages 426-437. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0743016719312628>
- Degli Innocenti, E., Oosterveer, P. & Mol, A. (2020) Breaching the Black Box: the Role of Ramps in Thai Sustainable Palm Oil Certification. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 61(1): 85-101. doi.org/10.1177/0963662520982540
- Dunlap, R.E. and Brulle, R.J. (2020) Sources and Amplifiers of Climate Change Denial. In D. C. Holmes and L. M. Richardson (eds.) *The Research Handbook on Communicating Climate Change*. Cheltenham, UK: Edgar Elgar, pp. 49-61. [preprint available on ResearchGate; willing to share pdf of published version privately].
- Guber, D.L., Bohr, J. and Dunlap, R.E. (2020) Time to Wake Up': Climate Change Advocacy in a Polarized Congress, 1996-2015. *Environmental Politics*. doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2020.1786333
- Gupta, A., Boas, I. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Transparency in Global Sustainability Governance: To What Effect? *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 22(1), 84-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2020.1709281>

- Haberl, H., Schmid, M., Haas, W., Wiedenhofer, D., Rau, H. and Winiwarter, V. (2021) Stocks, flows, services and practices: Nexus approaches to sustainable social metabolism. *Ecological Economics*. OPEN ACCESS: [https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S0921-8009\(21\)00007-0](https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S0921-8009(21)00007-0)
- Heinrichs, H. (2021) Aesthetic Expertise for Sustainable Development: Envisioning Artful Scientific Policy Advice. *World*, 2(1): 92-104. <https://doi.org/10.3390/world2010007>

Winner of the 2020 Environmental Sociology Best Paper Prize

Hoover, E. (2018) Environmental reproductive justice: intersections in an American Indian community impacted by environmental contamination. *Environmental Sociology*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2017.1381898>

- Howe, A.C., Stoddart, M.C.J. and Tindall, D.B. (2020) Media Coverage and Perceived Policy Influence of Environmental Actors: Good Strategy or Pyrrhic Victory? *Politics and Governance* 8(2): 298-310.
- Jenkins-Smith, H. C., Ripberger, J.T., Silva, C.L., Carlson, D.E., Gupta, K., Carlson, N., Ter-Mkrtchyan, A. and Dunlap, R.E. (2020) Partisan Asymmetry in Temporal Stability of Climate Change Beliefs. *Nature Climate Change* 10:322-328. doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0719-y



Murphy, R. (2021) *The Fossil-fuelled Climate Crisis: Foresight or Discounting Danger?* London: Palgrave Macmillan Springer Nature.

<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030533243#reviews>

Raymond Murphy did a “Meet the Author” session about the book on February 11th at the Fifth Energy and Society virtual conference of the European Sociological Association. The session will be recorded and posted on its website later in February.

<https://webmagazine.unitn.it/evento/sociologia/70872/fifth-energy-and-society-conference>

Also the second chapter entitled ‘Cooperation Between Natural Science and Social Science’ was among the Springer Nature 2020 Highlights – a selection of the most popular articles and book chapters published last year and reflecting top research that made an impact.

- Murphy, R. (2020) Murphy on Translating Climate Science into a Practical Understanding. *Social Science Matters*. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/blogs/social-sciences/murphy>

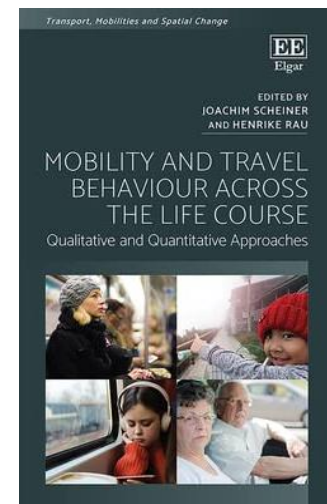
- Oosterveer, P. (2020) Sustainability of Palm Oil and its Acceptance in the EU. *Journal of Oil Palm Research* Vol. p. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21894/jopr.2020.0039>
- Oosterveer, P. and Brons, A. (2020) Sustainable Food Systems. In: Behrens, Paul, Thijs Bosker, and David Ehrhardt (eds.) *Food and Sustainability*. Oxford; Oxford University Press, pp. 285-307.
- Purnhagen, K.P., van Zeben, J., Ahlborn, C. and Oosterveer, P. (2020) Beyond Food Safety – EU Food Information Standards as a Facilitator of Political Consumerism and International Law Enforcement Mechanism. *European Law Review*, (4), 553-568.
- Sahakian, M., Rau, H., Grealis, E. et al. (2021) Challenging social norms to recraft practices: a living lab approach to reducing household energy use in eight European countries. *Energy Research and Social Science*, 72, 101881 [https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S2214-6296\(20\)30456-4](https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S2214-6296(20)30456-4)
- Samerwong, P., Toonen, H.M., Oosterveer, P. & Bush, S.R. (2020) A capability approach to assess aquaculture sustainability standard compliance. *PLoS one*. 15(1), e0227812

Scheiner, J. & Rau, H. (eds.)(2020) *Mobility and Travel Behaviour Across the Lifecourse: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

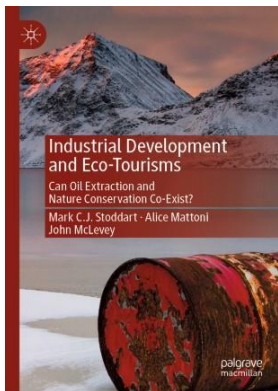
Open Access version of Chapter 1 available at:

<https://www.elgaronline.com/view/edcoll/9781789907803/9781789907803.00009.xml>

This thought-provoking book analyses recent innovations for researching mobility practices and travel behaviour over the life course, including their impacts on society and the environment. Original in its approach, it synthesises quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods to contribute to conceptual, methodological and empirical advancements in the field.



- Stoddart, M.C.J., and Quinn Burt, B. (2020) Energy Justice and Offshore Oil: Weighing Environmental Risk and Privilege in the North Atlantic. *Environmental Sociology* 6(4): 390-402.
- Stoddart, M.C.J., McCurdy, P., Slawinski, N. and Collins, C.G. (2020) Envisioning Social Futures in the North Atlantic Oil Industry: Avoidance, Persistence, and Transformation as responses to Climate Change. *Energy Research & Social Science* 69: 101662.
- Stoddart, M.C.J., McLevey, J., Schweizer, V. and Wong, C. (2020) Climate Change and Energy Futures - Theoretical Frameworks, Epistemological Issues, and Methodological Perspectives. *Society & Natural Resources* 33(11): 1331-1338.
- Stoddart, Mark C.J., Mattoni, A. and Nezhadhossein, E. (2020) Environmental Movement Interventions in Tourism and Energy Development in the North Atlantic: Connecting the Social Movement Societies and Players and Arenas Perspectives. *Contention* 8(2): 74-98.



Stoddart, M.C.J., Mattoni, A. and McLevey, J. (2020) *Industrial Development and Eco-Tourisms: Can Oil Extraction and Nature Conservation Co-Exist?* Palgrave Macmillan.

This thought-provoking book examines the “oil-tourism interface”, the broad range of direct and indirect contact points between offshore oil extraction and nature-based tourism.

doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-55944-1

- Tindall, D.B., Stoddart, M.C.J. and Howe, A. (2020) Social Networks and Climate Change Policy Preferences: Structural Location and Policy Actor Support for Fossil Fuel Production. *Society & Natural Resources* 33(11): 1359-1379.
- Veldhuizen, L.J.L, Giller, K.E., de Boer, I., Oosterveer, P., Brouwer, I.D., Janssen, S. van Zanten, H. and Slingerland, M. (2020) The Missing Middle: Connecting global goals to local contexts and agricultural production to food consumption to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2. *Global Food Security*, Vol. 24, Article number 100336

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