TOPICS

agriculture:

History of the planned use of the soil by growing, harvesting and utilization (including animal production) of crops on arable and grass lands. Investigations about the production of specific food stuffs or feed and about the use and breeding of animals. Works mainly from the field of agricultural history.

air:

History of an environmental medium (cp. "water" and "soils") and "public good". Histories of air pollution and its perception.

animals:

- Animals as part of production systems, in particular in agriculture (breeding and stocking of animals, animal trade);
- Animals and their bodies as resource (working power, food stuff and raw material);
- Relations between animals and humans, veterinary medicine and perception of animals;
- protection of species and species' history. Works mainly from agricultural history, statistics of agriculture, archaeozoology, and history of hunting.

aquatic ecosystems - rivers, brooks, lakes, marine systems:

- History of water level and hydrological changes;
- Morphological development without and under anthropogenic impact;
- Bodies of water as factors of production, resource and energy suppliers and means of transportation;
- Changes of the flora and fauna in and at water courses; use of aquatic species (fisheries and pond culture).

cities and towns:

- Cities and towns as landscapes and living spaces of humans, animals and plants; development of their built shape and its perception; population, urban hygiene development and natural history of the city;
- Urban infrastructure (cp. "infrastructure" and "transportation"), provision and disposal of materials, relations between urban centers and their hinterlands,
- Cities and towns as location of production, urban land use. Works from urban history, demography, urban archaeology, including works not centered on urban questions but resulting from research taking place there.

climate and weather:

Historical changes of temperature and precipitation and the perception of these; impact on agriculture; extreme weather conditions and catastrophes. Works on the methods of climatic reconstruction (radiocarbon dating, dendrochronology, sediment and ice cores) and interpretation of climate indicators (historical reports, pollen analysis, sediments).

conservation and environmental protection:

History of nature-, species-, water- and soil-protection, history of air and climate protection, history of the national parks (e.g. conflicts concerning the planned Austrian hydropower plant

Hainburg and the subsequent designation of the Danube alluvial floodplain forest national park); historical reconstruction (e.g. with maps and descriptions) and their use for maintenance or reconstruction of a "potential natural state" based on current situations (management plans).

consumption:

History of nutrition (food spectrum and food stuff), the use of and provision with resources (eg. wood); the provision situation and life standards; socio-ecological works with the concept of "social metabolism" (material and energy flows); works from the history of hunting (in combination with "animals").

cultural heritage:

Description of Cultural Heritage sites in the DRB; their origin and history, existing threats, potential for sustainable tourism or other human activities; Cultural heritage may be defined as the entire corpus of material signs - either artistic or symbolic - handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of humankind (UNESCO, 25 C/4, 1989, p.57).
Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural Heritage is often expressed as either Intangible or Tangible Cultural Heritage (ICOMOS, 2002).

demography, population:

History of demographic development of cities, regions or countries and the consequences of population growth or decline e.g. on nature and/or resources exploitation.

disasters:

Natural and environmental disasters in history (depending on the evaluation of human influence), their perception, their consequences and the handling of catastrophes by society; including events with potential catastrophic impact such as avalanches, fires or floods.

diseases and epidemics:

Diseases of humans, animals and plants as seen from human ecology, medical history and epidemiology; direct impact on populations and therefore indirectly on landscapes, production systems and development of settlements; social handling of diseases of humans (treatment, history of hygiene and its development, public welfare, history of pharmacy), of animals (veterinary medicine) and plants (pest control).

ecosystems (terrestrial):

Environmental Histories using the concept of ecosystems as systems of interrelated and interacting organisms and their physical environment (works from ecology, in particular landscape-, plant- and animal ecology); historical biodiversity research; environmental history using the concept of "agro-ecosystems"; ecological framework conditions and agricultural production.

education:

Contributions dealing with traditional vs. new forms of education (social learning) which foster inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation as a prerequisite for sustainable development; tertiary education of adults.

energy:

History of different energy sources (eg. wood, fossil energy, electrical energy) and their social production, use and perception; conflicts in this realm (e.g. construction of power plants); history

of electrification; socio-ecological works with the concept of social metabolism (energy flows).

environmental laws and regulation:

History of relations between nature and society and their regulation, in particular through institutions (formal institutions such as seigneuries, communes, codified systems or informal institutions such as management plans); history of normative regulation of rights to access, use and disposition of resources such as wood or water as can be found in different groups of sources (e.g. village laws, custumals, forest-, woodland-, pasture-, and mountain-regulations, modern environmental law).

environmental legacy:

Toxic or otherwise problematic substances left in the environment as a result of previous land-use (often created by chemical industry or mining operations) and other material leftovers from interventions into landscapes. Legacies can be benign, problematic or wicked, depending on their longevity, maintenance requirements and reach of effect.

environmental politics:

History of environmental policies aiming at the maintenance of the natural basis of human existence (e.g. health provision, protection of environmental goods, remediation of damages and downsights of anthropogenic intervention); chronologically limited to 19th and 20th centuries; environmental history work in particular from policy science.

environmental pressures, impacts and stress:

History of intervention and impacts on nature, in particular environmentally harmfull and damaging ones.

environmentalism:

History of the individual (biographies of main actors) and collective awareness of problems with regard to environment or nature; history of environmental movements, in particular of networked social groups concentrated on environmental protection; social controversies and conflicts involving such groups (e.g. Hainburg).

forests and woodlands:

Environmental Histories from forest and woodland history; history of the use of wood, history of non-timber forest uses and their social regulation; work from historical woodland ecology.

gender:

Environmental Histories with reference to sex and gender and their interdependencies; works in historical reproduction ecology, on sex distribution, on organisation of labour and gender specific labour profiles (in particular in the agricultural sector); gender specific life standards (e.g. diseases, nutrition); works concerned with gender specific concepts and perception of nature.

hotspot:

- biodiversity: A biodiversity hotspot is a biogeographic region with a significant reservoir of biodiversity that is under threat from humans.
- Toxic hotspots are locations where emissions from specific sources such as water or air pollution may expose local populations to elevated health risks, such as cancer. These emissions contribute to cumulative health risks of emissions from other sources nearby. Urban, highly populated areas around pollutant emitters such as old factories and waste storage sites are often toxic hotspots. (Wikipedia)

human population:

Works on the long term development of population as the interactions between particular societies, their means of production and land use, their population structure and their spatial structure. Demographic investigations (number, entity, age and sex distribution, growth dynamics, numbers of persons able to work) in combination with questions of land use, demands of goods and services, consumption and social division of resources, as well as the accumulation of waste; works on the relation between population and the environment in historical perspective and on the relation between industrialisation and demographic transition; works from historical and anthropological demography, historical human ecology and historical population geography.

industry:

History of the economic sector characterized by a high degree of mechanisation and automation, in particular works with a focus on processes of industrialisation.

infrastructure:

Histories of the material, organisational and institutional features of society which provide the functioning of provision and disposal, communication, traffic and transportation.

interdisciplinarity:

Products of interdisciplinary research and works which, on the basis of specific projects or in general, discuss the conditions for interdisciplinary collaboration, possibilities and problems of interdisciplinary work, in particular within Environmental History.

land-use/land-cover:

History of social interventions into terrestrial ecosystems, to increase their utility for society; systematic and comparative description of spatial and temporal processes in agro-ecosystems (patterns of land use).

landscape:

History of landscape understood as

- a natural landscape, whose ecological states in the past are reconstructed;
- as cultural landscape, that is a space in which humans intervene and which is perceived by humans depending on their culture;
- works on changes and development of landscapes and their assessment by means of landscape indicators.

long-term-socio-ecological studies:

The emerging interdisciplinary field of Long-Term Socio-Ecological Research, abbreviated LTSER, aims at observing, analyzing, understanding and modelling of changes in coupled socio-ecological (or human-environment) systems over longer, i.e. at least decadal, sometimes even centennial, periods of time. LTSER is focused on interactions between societies and ecosystems at various spatial and temporal scales. By including long-term monitoring, historical research, forecasting and scenario building, empirical and conceptual research as well as participatory approaches, LTSER aims at providing a knowledge base that helps to reorient socio-economic trajectories towards more sustainable pathways. (From LTER Europe)

marine environments:

History of Black Sea especially with respect to influences from the Danube river; relevant topics

comprise e.g. pollution or the Black Sea as habitat for diadromous species migrating upstream the Danube (especially sturgeons, shads).

methods:

Works discussing the tools and the know-how of scientific research, often with an interest in developing them further; works from the (archeo-)natural sciences and historical biology such as archaebotany and -zoology; methodical discussions within the historical sciences (e.g. settlement history).

mining and quarrying:

History of the use and extraction of mineral resources and stones as well in mines as in quarries; works on the impact of such activities on landscapes, environmental pollution and health; localisation of historical mining sites.

natural heritage:

Description of Natural Heritage sites in the DRB; their origin and history, existing threats, potential for sustainable tourism or other human activities; long-term environmental background of biodiversity or endemic species; see also conservation and environmental protection.

perception:

Works from cultural studies asking how humans symbolically appropriate by means of their senses "nature" and "landscape" and how these are assessed and in which cultural context the perception stands.

plants:

- plants as parts of the production system, in particular of agriculture, and plants as resource (food stuffs, feed and raw material);
- human-plant-relations and perception of plants;
- protection of plant species and historical change of flora. Works in particular from agricultural history and -statistics, archaebotany, vegetation ecology and garden archaeology.

pollution:

History of the pollution of environmental media such as air, water (both surface water and ground water), and soils by means of materials which are an output of social activities; noise and light pollution are included.

power:

History of power structures understood as social structures or as social institutions (e.g. seigneuries, monasteries) or groups of people (aristocracy); their impact on the configuration of social relations to nature (management of resources, organisation of colonising interventions); work about places where power can be seen materialized: castles, palaces, parks, zoos, and gardens.

production:

History of the process of transformation by which humans produce stockable goods either from natural or already processed raw materials using energy, labour and means of production; including works on production in industry, in handicraft, agriculture and forestry; works on the historical shifts in production and organisation, that is the way material goods are produced depending on the respective social development.

religion:
Contributions dealing with the influence of religion on perception of nature and environmental behavior in history. (see e.g. Lynn White (1967): The historical roots of our ecological crisis).

restoration:
Contributions with a special link between restoration and the history of a region; restoration linked to Natural Heritage or problems of restoration following historically based targets, e.g. due to irreversible changes of an aquatic or terrestrial ecosystem.

scholarship and sciences:
Works on the history of knowledge about nature, in particular the history of the natural sciences; history of scientific ideas and concepts of relevance to the social relation to nature; scientific collections; history of environmental history and history of neighbouring fields and disciplines.

settlement:
History of settlements as places where humans live and work together (not only classical settlements such as villages, towns and hamlets, but also castles and other bases erected for the colonization of landscape); investigations of impacts of landscape and resources on the development of settlements; works from Settlement History, in particular also the history of deserted villages ("Wüstungen").

soils:
History of the pedosphere, which was formed through weathering at the interface between atmosphere and lithosphere as an ecosystem. Historical works on soil ecology; works concerning the history of knowledge about soils or discussing more generally the cultural appropriation and the importance of soils for society.

sources:
Works introducing and discussing the merits of particular sources for Environmental History. "Sources" denote classical historical sources (such as texts, but also maps, in particular cadastral maps), but also the objects of other disciplines (e.g. plants, pollen, bones, rocks); material solely editing sources has not been included.

teaching material:
Any material aimed at use in an educational context regardless of the medium used.

technology, engineering:
History of technology as the production of industrial and manufactured items, processing of raw material from nature (e.g. melting and metal work) and its impact on nature and society; history of tools and machinery (in particular technology of land use, e.g. tractors in modern agriculture).

theory:
Works which can not be classified geographically or periodically, in particular such works concerned with the central cognitive interest of an interdisciplinary Environmental History or with theories of interactions between society and nature. Programmatic and conceptual works, in particular with regard to models in Environmental History.

tourism:

History of tourism and its effects on nature, e.g. increase of local resources extraction, landscape and land-use changes, new traffic routes. Potential of sustainable tourism especially in combination with Natural and Cultural Heritage.

trade:

History of the purchase, transportation and selling of goods, capital or knowledge without major changes or processing; works mainly from Economic History.

transportation:

History of the movement of persons, goods or data in a defined space, history of transportation routes and means of transportation; quantitative and qualitative changes of traffic, its impact on the natural system (cp. "pollution" and "environmental pressures, impacts and stress") and its feedback on social organisation.

war:

War is an organized and often prolonged conflict that is carried out by states or non-state actors. It is generally characterised by extreme violence, social disruption and economic destruction. War should be understood as an actual, intentional and widespread armed conflict between political communities, and therefore is defined as a form of (collective) political violence or intervention. The set of techniques used by a group to carry out war is known as warfare. An absence of war is usually called peace. (wikipedia)

waste:

History of waste, garbage and raw materials which can be recycled (depending on their value for society); history of waste management; often works from archaeology (garbage as a source).

water:

History of an environmental medium, history of social uses of water; water as a central resource for societies, often in combination with "pollution" or as such, physically as surface waters (cp. "aquatic ecosystems") or ground water.

wetland and estuaries:

History of these two ecosystem types, their origin, especially when wetlands were manmade due to weirs. History of their specific uses e.g. in agriculture also because of special vegetation (meadows, pastures); methods to alter wetlands and estuaries for increasing exploitation (e.g. drainage, dikes). Includes also moors and peat bogs and e.g. use of peat.