Call for Proposals

"Society and Natural Resources in an Illiberal World"

The editors of *Society & Natural Resources* invite paper proposals for participation in an interdisciplinary social science, theory-building workshop and related special issue on *society–environment interactions in the context of illiberal regimes and conditions*. The scope of the project includes both the developed and developing world; illiberal democracies, centralized states, theocracies, monarchies, military-ruled states; indigenous states and territories; unrecognized states and stateless societies; times and places of war and other forms of protracted conflict; illiberal places within liberal states; illiberal movements, organizations, and other actors; and more. Theoretical, empirical, comparative, case study, and practice-based approaches will be considered. Perspectives from the Global South are especially welcome. *Abstract proposals are due by March 1, 2016; complete draft papers by August 1, 2016.* Authors whose proposals are accepted will be invited to participate in a pair of collaborative, online theory-building workshops; completed papers will be considered for inclusion in a special issue of *Society & Natural Resources*.

Background

Since their inception, contemporary mainstream environmentalism, environmental policy, and environmental social science have been developed in close association, extension, and critique of liberalism, a liberal worldview, and liberal values based largely on classical Western ideals of the rights of individuals (actual and fictive, corporate); citizenship; political pluralism; representative democracy; responsive states and institutions, etc.

Many of today's states are predicated at least nominally on the rule of law and the establishment of responsive/representative institutions, including with respect to natural resources and the environment. Today's global institutions, including environmental institutions, are founded to a large degree on liberalism as well: the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rio Declaration, the recently-endorsed global Sustainable Development Goals, etc.

Yet Western-style, liberal democracies hardly are universal. *Illiberalism* is widespread, in institutional forms ranging from centralized states to illiberal democracies, theocracies, monarchies; and non-state forms including various 'rights' and millenarian movements, including within liberal states. In much of the world, liberal states and institutions co-exist with, and at times are overshadowed by, illiberal counterparts, rivals, and critics. At the same time, strained by seemingly endless series of actual and perceived social and
environmental crises, all states face increased calls for environmental intervention, at times even over the rights of individuals, communities, and dependent territories.

What are the implications of this wide variety of socio-political forms and ideologies for a social science of the environment that seeks to study the full range of nature–society interactions and to support the attainment of a more sustainable future across the globe?

Aims

This ad hoc, collaborative, theory-building project aims to advance social scientific understanding of society–environment relations in illiberal political and institutional contexts through evidence-informed analysis of questions such as:

• What socio-political theories and analytical frameworks help explain the nature, characteristics, and dynamics of environmental policy and practice under such conditions? What new concepts and theoretical approaches are needed for this purpose?

• In what ways and conditions do illiberal states, institutions, and other actors take up problems and issues related to society, natural resources, and the environment? With what outcomes and effects?

• In what ways, and with what effect, do environmental and natural resource institutions, organizations, managers, and other actors function in illiberal contexts, at every level?

• Are there aspects of society–environment relations which are universal, extending across and beyond socio-political forms and contexts? Alternatively, in what ways are such relations deeply embedded in particularistic political, institutional, and cultural conditions?

• What are the possibilities, challenges, and limitations for individual and collective engagement in natural resource and environmental issues and problem resolution in illiberal contexts?

• What are the most pressing elements of an agenda for future research on society–environment interactions in an illiberal world?

Proposals

To propose a paper for consideration for these workshops and SNR special issue, send a 200-word abstract and brief CV to <snr@colostate.edu> by March 1, 2016. The editors may follow up with questions or requests for clarification of proposals.
Manuscript development

Authors of proposed papers accepted for participation in the theory-building workshop will be notified by March 15, 2016, with an initial, online workshop taking place soon thereafter. Complete drafts are due by August 1, 2016, with a second virtual workshop to follow, including short presentations and discussion of those drafts. Incorporating feedback from workshop participants and the editors, authors will submit a final version through SNR's standard, double-blind, peer review process. Selected accepted papers will appear in the special issue; others may be published as individual articles in SNR.

Timeline

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<td>Paper proposals</td>
<td>March 1, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification</td>
<td>March 15, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop #1</td>
<td>late March/ early April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete draft papers</td>
<td>August 1, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop #2</td>
<td>late August/ early Sept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final draft papers submitted to SNR for peer review</td>
<td>December 31, 2016</td>
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Information

For inquiries and further information, please contact Professor David A. Sonnenfeld, Editor-in-Chief, Society & Natural Resources, at <snr@colostate.edu>.

Related reading


