



## **Contested Society-Nature-Relations Forest related Emotions, Practices and Conflicts in Times of Societal Change**

### **CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

**!! NEW DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACTS: 15.06.2020 !!**

**24th – 25th November 2020**

**International Multidisciplinary Workshop  
Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena, Germany**

Forests are crucial ecosystems that humans have always been dependent on. Global land use changes, degradation of (forest) land or the valorization of forests (e.g. REDD+) and their possible implications constitute impacts on values and attitudes towards forests and various forms of their usage and exploitation. As a bio-based resource and part of nature that is linked with society in multiple ways, forests are an interesting case for studying societal and political debates as well as economic and political power relations. Individual relationships with forests can be defined as human-forest-relationships (HFR), shaped by one's individual and family history, cultural background, the society in which an individual lives, and the forest surrounding her/him. These relationships combining both traditional and modern values and practices, reflects the constantly evolving global, national, communal, and individual attitudes towards forests. In scientific research, the concept of HFR is usually, if at all, mentioned alongside, or as a synonym for, human-nature-relationships.

The German-speaking debates about societal nature relations (SNR; *gesellschaftliche Naturverhältnisse*) contribute an important perspective that focuses on the ways in which societies view, construct, investigate, use, exploit, and dominate the 'nature' they ultimately depend on. As concepts, SNR as well as HFR have strong implications for thinking about work in forestry and about the economic usage of nature and forests. Consequently, these relations consciously or unconsciously affect every forest-related action or decision.

In this workshop, we want to foster exchange and debates between Finnish and German-speaking researchers working on the cultural and social implications of different types of human-forest relationships. We thus invite empirical and/or conceptual contributions focusing on a broad range of research issues and debates, including, but not limited to, the following questions:

### Definitions and Conceptualizations of SNR as well as HFR

- What are the forest paradigms and values of our times? Do they differ in the Global North and Global South?
- How do HFR manifest themselves? How can attitudes, values, collective imaginaries, and everyday practices be expected to change or to have an impact on our relationships with forests? How can they be studied?
- With what kinds of understandings and perceptions of nature do certain HFR correlate?
- In what ways do the concepts of HFR and SNR correspond and differ from another?

### Bioeconomy and HFR/SNR

- How would a transition to post-fossil economies transform HFR and SNR? What can we learn from history, political economy, and the social sciences about this?
- To what extent will transitions within the management of forests and the use of timber (e.g. due to carbon neutrality, bioeconomy or circular economy) influence HFR and SNR?

### Sustainable Futures

- In what way are the current and possible future SNR or HFR intertwined with, and affected by, the political and economic debates and developments?
- In what ways are HFR, social status and societal relations linked to different sustainable management forms and usage practices of forests?
- What could the analysis of SNR and HFR reveal about possible pathways and strategies for sustainability?

We welcome contributions from different academic fields of social sciences and humanities, including (but not limited to) Sociology, Political Science, Human and Critical Geography, Social and Political Ecology, History, Political Economy, Philosophy and Cultural Studies. Contributions may be based on theoretical analyses, case studies, empirical investigations, and comparative or in-depth studies.

The workshop will be held in English in Jena (Germany), hopefully with participants being present. We will enable online participation if necessary. In the meantime, the coordination team continues to closely follow the development of the Covid-19-situation and will make further decisions accordingly as needed. If you are interested in contributing to the workshop, we invite you to submit an abstract of **max. 500 words to [jana.holz@uni-jena.de](mailto:jana.holz@uni-jena.de) until June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. Draft papers or presentations will be due until November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Workshop discussions will be based on these draft papers or presentations, aiming to refine them for possible publication.

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The workshop is organized by the Junior Research Group 'Mentalities in Flux' (flumen) and the 'Human-forest relationship in Societal Change' -Research Project.

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