



**Call for Panels, Papers, and Posters for
IASC Regional European Meeting,
Bern, Switzerland, 10-13 May 2016**

**Commons in a “Glocal” World:
Global Connections and Local
Responses**

Venue: University of Bern, Main Building

Organized by the Institute of Social Anthropology (ISA),
the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE),
and the Institute of Geography (IG)
in collaboration with
the Institute of History
the World Trade Institute (WTI),
University of Bern, Switzerland

Main theme: *Global Connections and Local Responses*

Research on the commons deals either with the development of institutions for the management of the commons, or with issues related to global change. While the latter mainly focusses on drivers and effects of global expansion of capitalist modes of production, consumption, and societal reproduction, research on institutions for the management of the commons deals with collective action and the effects and reactions within local action arenas. However, the entangled institutional processes through which global and local arenas – referred to as “glocal” – interlock are not yet addressed in a systematic way.

Europe has been a major driver of “glocal” processes. Therefore, the 4th Regional European Meeting of the IASC is devoted to global connections and local responses. It provides a space to advance our understanding of ongoing “glocal” processes and to analyse historically how commons in Europe have evolved and adapted to “glocal” changes. By integrating political ecology with approaches of New Institutionalism and Critical Theory in Anthropology, Human Geography, Political Science and History, we propose to investigate the impacts of external changes on the perception and evaluation of resources by actors related to the commons. This raises the question of local bargaining power, ideologies and discourses, and of the selection and crafting of institutional designs, which in turn affect the access to common-pool resources, as well as the distribution of benefits related to the management of these resources.

This conference therefore aims to look at the interfaces between local and global processes in order to bring together research arenas that have often been kept quite separate until now. We therefore call for contributions focussing on:

- how global players such as multinational companies and organizations affect local governance of the commons worldwide
- the role of international law and global trade in shaping the interface between global actors and institutional processes of local commons governance
- the impacts of external economic and political changes on the perception and evaluation of resources and areas by actors related to the commons
- local resistance and the development of political strategies countering the transformation of collective into private or state-based property rights as a consequence of economic and political changes
- the local crafting of institutional designs in global and local arenas, and how these affect access to and distribution of natural resources and related benefits among local to global actors using the commons
- how the encounter of global and local processes affect bargaining power, ideologies and discourses of global and local actors in governing sustainability trade-offs.

We especially welcome contributions that aim to address the above mentioned themes through novel forms of integrating theoretical approaches. In addition, the focus of the conference will be on a dialogue among representatives of different academic disciplines (e.g. geography, social anthropology, history, development studies, economics, political science, and law) and between academics and non-academic actors (e.g. practitioners, business representatives, policy makers, or NGOs).

Proposed panel topics and scopes

We are looking for panels, papers or poster proposals, which refer to the following topics. In addition, we also consider other thematic issues related to the overall topic but not mentioned below:

A) Features and effects of global (e.g. European) investments on commons in the world

- Relevant features and effects of triple crisis (financial, environmental and economic) on the contexts and functioning of commons
- Actors, drivers and processes related to investments in land, water, biodiversity conservation, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the impact of these investments on internal and/or external dynamics of the commons
- Extractive industries, commodity trade, and their effects on the commons: Policy coherence of co-existing corporate social responsibility and soft and hard laws at national and international levels
- Commons, food security and the sustainability of food systems
- Trade regimes and policies and their effects on the governance and socioecological outcomes of the commons
- Local responses (resistance, adaptation, transformation) at the interface of national and global European-based actors



B) Collective action, the commons, and sustainability: What is the role of bottom-up participatory resource governance ('constitutionality') in Switzerland and in other European political systems in common-resource governance

- "Nature Parks", protected areas, UNESCO world heritage and biosphere reserves in Switzerland, Europe, and beyond, including a historical perspective on the colonial past of protected areas
- Linking the management of the commons in forests, pastures, water, and wildlife with the state – in Switzerland, Europe, and beyond
- Institutional change and management of the commons of larger European cultural landscapes (Alpine and others) in the context of economic, public policy and climate change
- Environmentality vs. constitutionality – exploring the underpinnings of European commons
- Management of "new" resources (e.g. scenery, biodiversity, heritage, products with Designations of Origin) through common-pool resource institutions and its limitation
- Governing sustainability trade-offs in "glocal" processes

C) Prospects of the commons - Responses to triple crisis (financial, environmental, and socio-economic)

- Beyond (capitalist) markets and the state – the politics of commons in the search for new forms of societal organization
- The "tragedy of private property": are common property regimes a way out?
- Social movements, emancipation and the commons - tensions, conflicts or complementarities?
- Democracy, deliberation and the multi-layered governance of commons and its limitations
- Human Rights in relation to the commons
- Implications of the global post-2015 sustainable development institutions for governing the commons in local resource regimes
- the future of the commons in the context of international law, human rights, trade and investment policies

The venue and hosting organisation

There is a close connection between the theme of the conference and its location: Bern is the capital of Switzerland, a country whose policies have developed within a strongly decentralized system of semi-direct democracy. Its long tradition of decentralized governance also extends to mainly alpine commons (i.e. pastures, forests, wildlife, lakes, and rivers) and other common-pool resources. Switzerland's importance for the debate on the commons is illustrated, for instance, by Robert Netting's seminal work on the pasture, water, and forestry commons in Törbel in the Swiss Alps.

On the other hand, Switzerland is one of the world's leading financial marketplaces and hosts the headquarters of large multinational companies in mining and agro-business that represent global players at critical "glocal" interfaces concerning e.g. the global land rush, mining, oil and gas commodity extraction, and trading. Switzerland is also home to the United Nations and many international conservation organizations (e.g. IUCN and WWF), and a hub for international treaties and legal affairs.



The University of Bern, established in 1838, is therefore well-situated to host this conference. The university includes 8 faculties split up into 160 institutes. It ranks among the world's leading universities on topics such as climate change and sustainability. The organizing institutes have long addressed issues of sustainable development, CPR management, North-South relations, large-scale land acquisition, conservation, and participatory sustainable resource governance. The main hosting organisation at the University is the Institute of Social Anthropology (ISA) co-organised with the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) and in close collaboration with the Institute of Geography (Department of Integrative Geography - DIG) as well as with the Institute of History and the World Trade Institute. ISA and CDE as well as DIG have concentrated a large part of their research on the issue of the management of common pool resources and governance, aiming at a better understanding of global change.

Deadline for submitting panel abstracts is October 30, 2015

Please send your panel abstract (500 words) with at least two potential presenters

In case you have a single paper or a poster this can also be submitted at this deadline. A second call for papers related to the panels will follow on November 15, 2016

Please submit your abstract via the IASC Conference Registration Module:

<http://conferences.iasc-commons.org/>

Please contact us if you have questions:

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