

Capitalism and the Environment from Stockholm to COP28: New historical research on the role of business and labor

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

November 9, 2023 to November 10, 2023

Location:

Switzerland

Subject Fields:

Business History / Studies, Contemporary History, Economic History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies

University of Lausanne, Switzerland, November 9 and 10, 2023

Keynote speakers:

- Naomi Oreskes, Professor of the History of Science, Harvard University
- Glenda Sluga, Professor of International History and Capitalism, European University Institute, Florence

The aim of this conference is to bring together recent, evidence-based historical research on the role business and labor actors played in climate and environmental policies during the period that runs from the United Nation's Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, in 1972, until the Conference of the Parties to be held in the United Arab Emirates in November this year. We invite submissions that focus attention on the political actions or social practices of individual corporations, CEOs, business organizations or federations, consultants, scientific experts, labor unions, workers' coalitions, whistleblowers, etc. How did these corporate and labor actors react to the growing public attention given to human-made environmental degradation since the 1960s? How did they position themselves towards scientific evidence on climate change? What kind of transnational networks were established between actors in Europe or North America and groups in the Global South? In what circumstances did organized labor oppose the regulation of various types of pollution to the preservation of economic growth and jobs? What impact did neoliberal paradigms have on the integration of business actors into global climate governance? What strategies were put into place to influence regulations of air and water pollution on a national level? Were there conflicts between different business and labor actors on these strategies? How did lobbying influence the work of international organizations or domestic political processes? It is therefore not the history of technological innovation or management practices that is at the center of this conference, but that of power relations involving business and labor.

We welcome proposals of max. one page that state the issues which will be addressed and the sources that will be used (archives, document corpus, etc.), accompanied by a short biographical

note. They should be sent to: CapitalismEnvironment@unil.ch by 15 March 2023. Notification of acceptance will be given by 15 April. Participants will be asked to submit the complete conference papers (approx. 6000-8000 words) by October 15, 2023. The conference organizers are planning an edited volume based on a selection of revised conference papers. Travel and accommodation costs will be supported (especially for early career scholars); scholars with access to institutional or grant funds to support research travel will be asked to consider these sources first. To reduce the conference's carbon footprint, participants who need to travel by airplane may be asked to take part in the conference online; for all others, in-person participation is expected.

Organizing committee:

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