



## Call for Papers

**Date:** 30-31 May 2017

**Location:** Department of History, Cultures and Civilization, University of Bologna, Italy

The Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society at LMU Munich, the Department of History, Cultures and Civilization of the University of Bologna (Italy), and the Center for History at Sciences Po (France) invite paper proposals for a conference on Household Consumption and Environmental Change in the Twentieth Century.

Consumption is a crucial dimension of present-day environmental debates. From meat to automobiles, from tourism to electronic gadgets, multiple dimensions of individual and group consumption are questioned from the perspective of their impact on the environment and their share of responsibility in the global ecological crisis. How this relationship has been built, both discursively and in its material underpinnings, throughout history? While consumption studies have shed light on the subjective and often political dimension of consumer culture, environmental history has emphasized the material outcomes. We think that only by combining these two historical perspectives it is possible to fully understand the contradictory place of consumption in present-day environmental debates and politics.

This workshop aims at fostering such a dialogue, by focusing on the interconnection between **domestic consumption and its environmental premises and impacts**. We think this interconnection can be more effectively understood from a scalar perspective. Individual and household consumption patterns mobilize scales of ecological impact which can easily reach into the global. On the other hand, global environmental policies and politics aiming at reducing the impact of consumption often have a normative dimension reaching into the sphere of subjectivity. From such a methodological angle, we encourage contributions under one or more of the following headings:

- a) **Ecologies:** Individual and household consumption patterns involve everyday practices and identities as much as large scale transformations of ecosystems. How has the interconnection between the household and the environment been materially constructed and transformed over the twentieth century? Which ecological scales were mobilized? Possible topics include:
  - Home appliances and energy
  - Food consumption culture and industrial farming
  - Textiles, metal, and plastic consumption
- b) **Discourses:** When and how did the environment become an issue—if not *the* issue—in discourses about household and individual consumption? Which scales were this impact articulated through? What were the consequences for consumption itself? Possible topics include:
  - National and international think-tanks
  - Grassroots movements for alternative consumption
  - Pop culture and advertising
- c) **Politics:** We are interested in exploring the history of the scalar politics which have emerged to deal with domestic consumption. How were the multiple and overlapping environmental scales of domestic consumption regulated (or ignored)? By whom? Which conflicts and negotiations were involved? Possible topics include:
  - Waste transfers
  - Regulation of commodity chains and cycles
  - Local and national regulation/prohibition of consumer practices because of environmental concerns

The conference will be held at the University of Bologna in the historic convent of San Giovanni in Monte. Accommodation costs for participants will be fully covered by the conveners. Travel costs will be partly covered within the limit of the available budget.

Your proposal should consist of an abstract (approx. 300 words) and a brief biographical note (approx. 150 words). Please submit complete proposals to **conferences@rcc.lmu.de** by **31 December 2016**.

All participants are expected to provide a draft of their paper (at least 5000 words in length) by **30 April 2017**. The conveners will circulate draft papers to conference participants and expect that participants will read them before the event to facilitate an informed and nuanced discussion.