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Key Submission Deadlines

February 15th 2023: Abstracts and Full Panels
March 1st 2023: Innovative Sessions

Conference

24th -26th October 2023

Call for Papers

2023 Radboud Conference on Earth System Governance

Bridging Sciences and Societies for Sustainability Transformations

October 24-26, 2023, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

We are delighted to invite you to the 2023 Radboud Conference on Earth System Governance, Nijmegen, the Netherlands (on-site, with optional virtual access and presentations)¹. The conference is organized by the Radboud Centre for Sustainability Challenges (RCSC) and will be part of the University's celebration of its 100th anniversary.

The 2023 Conference is hosted by Radboud University and Earth System Governance Project and stands in a long tradition of global conferences on earth system governance, from Amsterdam (2007 and 2009) to Colorado (2011), Lund (2012), Tokyo (2013), Norwich (2014), Canberra (2015), Nairobi (2016), Lund (2017), Utrecht (2018),

¹ As organizers, we understand that on-site participation is desired by many within the Earth System Governance community, but possibilities for attendance may be limited by the ongoing uncertainty related to travel or public health concerns. Therefore, the conference will be planned for on-site attendance, with opportunities for virtual access and paper presentations.

Oaxaca (2019), Virtual Forum (2020), Bratislava (2021), and Toronto (2022).

In addition to five analytical lenses of the Earth System Governance Research Agenda, the 2023 Radboud Conference will feature a programmatic focus on bridging sciences and societies for sustainability transformations – in other words inter- and transdisciplinarity. The conference organizers therefore particularly invite inter- and transdisciplinary research teams and researchers, based in the global North and South, from different scientific disciplines, including the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences, as well as practitioners (e.g., policy makers, civil society, business actors, citizens groups) working on specific sustainability challenges related to e.g., water, energy, food, biodiversity, forests, climate change, oceans and pollution (see stream 6 below). We also invite proposals for innovative sessions joining scholars from different disciplines and/or scholars and practitioners. Together with panels featuring inter- and transdisciplinary research these innovative sessions can inform the further operationalization of inter- and transdisciplinarity in the context of the Earth System Governance 2018 Science Plan and Community. With this the conference is designed to have impact also beyond the event itself.

Key Dates:

- Deadline for abstracts and full panel proposals: 15th February, 2023 (There will be no extension)
- Deadline for Innovative Session proposals: 1st March, 2023
- Notification of acceptance and open registrations: 10th April, 2023
- Deadline for registration of presenters: to June 30th
- Full papers due: 15th September, 2023

Conference Streams

The 2023 Radboud Conference will be organized around the five analytical lenses structuring the ESG research agenda, as captured in the 2018 Earth System Governance Science and Implementation Plan: Architecture and Agency; Democracy and Power; Justice and Allocation; Anticipation and Imagination; Adaptiveness and Reflexivity; and a sixth stream focusing on the theme of the conference – bridging sciences and societies for sustainability transformations.

1. **Architecture and Agency.** We invite papers and panels that address institutional frameworks and actors implicated in earth system governance and how they resist or respond to change and evolve over time. Core questions include: *How are environmental issues influenced by complex global networks across sectors, scales and decision-making arenas? What are the implications for earth system governance of growing diversities and power disparities among agents? What forms of architecture and agency are most effective in earth system governance across scales? Which changes and new developments of global governance architecture are needed to address the challenges posed by contemporary global environmental change? How can architectures for sustainability transformations become less anthropocentric and more eco- and biocentric, or overcome human-nature dichotomies?*

2. **Democracy and Power.** We invite papers and panels that address how old and new conceptions of democracy and power can make sense of, and craft responses to, trends in collective problem-solving in earth system governance as well to challenges to democracy and rise of authoritarianism and populism. Core questions include: *What is the nature of the relationship between democracy and sustainability in earth system governance? Does the Anthropocene exacerbate existing power inequalities or create new opportunities for the legitimate exercise of power? How do power asymmetries in earth system governance affect management of natural resources? What challenges and opportunities are posed by social media and populism in earth system governance? Can community regimes and collective actions foster transformations towards sustainable economies across scales? How can multi-species democracies contribute to sustainability transformations?*

3. **Justice and Allocation.** We invite papers and panels that normatively or empirically address justice, and allocation of resources, rights, and access in earth system governance. Core questions include: *Which new demands for justice and allocation are emerging in the context of profound transformations of*

the earth system? What types of steering have been effective towards implementing various conceptions of justice and allocation? Who bears the costs and benefits of transformations towards sustainability and how are rights and livelihoods affected? How can rights of nature, animal rights, and provisions against ecocide contribute to just transformations?

4. **Anticipation and Imagination.** We invite papers and panels that address how to govern proliferating anticipation processes that seek to imagine and govern future sustainability challenges, as well as how anticipation and imagination themselves become sites of politics. Core questions include: *How do processes of anticipation and imagination interact with each other in shaping efforts to steer societies towards more sustainable futures? What kinds of institutions and practices underpin processes of anticipation and imagination? To what extent are ongoing processes of anticipation legitimate and inclusive, and what are their geopolitical implications? Which are the most relevant differences in the processes/capacities of anticipation and imagination among different actors and groups?*

5. **Adaptiveness and Reflexivity.** We invite papers and panels that address how societies can navigate change towards global sustainability in adaptive and reflexive ways. Core questions include: *How can adaptiveness and reflexivity as qualities of earth system governance be assessed and compared? What kind of governance attributes (e.g., polycentricity or centralization, market or hybrid, flexibility, or stability) are best suited to cultivating adaptiveness and reflexivity? Which factors enhance or hinder adaptiveness and reflexivity in diverse cultural and economic contexts? Do socio-environmental conflicts and social movements favor or halt adaptiveness and reflexivity?*

6. **Inter- and transdisciplinarity for sustainability transformations.** We invite papers and panels that present inter- and/or transdisciplinary problem-driven research on sustainability transformations. We especially welcome

panels bringing together researchers from different natural and social science disciplines, humanities, and/or practitioners (e.g. policy makers, civil society groups, business actors, citizens groups) focused on a specific sustainability challenge, such as water, energy, food, forests, oceans, biodiversity, climate change, pollution. Core questions include: *How do different disciplines contribute to solving sustainability challenges? What are the limits of disciplinary approaches? How can inter- and/or transdisciplinary research contribute to solving major sustainability challenges? What do the different sustainability challenges (on energy, food etc.) have in common? How can education, co-production and learning effectively bridge sciences and societies for sustainability transformations?*

Types of Proposals

Individual papers

We invite submissions of abstracts of up to 400 words that address either the main conference theme; one or more of the six conference streams; or any other topic that is relevant to the Earth System Governance Project. All abstracts will be anonymized and evaluated in double-blind peer-review by at least three members of our conference review panel. Please submit your abstracts through the [Conference Portal](#).

Full panels

We also invite panel proposals that address the main conference theme; one or more of the six conference streams; or any other topic relevant to the Earth System Governance Project. Panel proposals will initially be reviewed in their entirety. Successful panels will be featured in the conference programme, and may receive comments for improving individual paper inputs. Abstracts that are part of unsuccessful panel proposals will be reviewed individually, when successful they will be featured in other panels.

Full panel proposals, including all individual papers of the panel, can be submitted jointly through the [Conference Portal](#). Panel proposals must include a description of the panel (300 words or less), 4 abstracts (each up to 400 words), as well as the name of a chair and a discussant (discussants may be scholars, practitioners, or other experts). Please note that all paper abstracts should be submitted together with the panel and not separately.

Innovative sessions

We also welcome proposals for non-traditional sessions, such as roundtables (which may include policy-makers, academics, and/or representatives of social movements and non-governmental organizations), policy games, book launches, art exhibition, outdoor workshop, and book seminars (that may discuss recently published academic works). The innovative sessions will be allocated 90 minutes.

The Radboud 2023 ESG Conference especially encourages transdisciplinary innovative sessions, bringing together practitioners (e.g., policy makers, civil society groups, business actors, citizens groups) and scholars to discuss transdisciplinary approaches to accelerate sustainability transformations. Such innovative sessions are meant to:

- a) Discuss cross-cutting issues relevant for sustainability transformations more generally

Core questions include: *What are the implications of current geopolitical contexts for sustainability transformations? What are key characteristics of sustainable economic systems? Which values underpin sustainability transformations? How and to what extent can value changes in society be 'governed'?*

- b) Reflect on transdisciplinarity

Core questions include: *What are lessons learned from experience with transdisciplinary projects and programs? What changes are needed in science funding and at research institutions to further facilitate transdisciplinary research? What are the potential pitfalls of transdisciplinary approaches? How can disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research be better connected? What are the main transdisciplinary research questions for accelerating sustainability transformations for the next 10 years?*

All Innovative Sessions are submitted through the [Conference Portal](#). Proposals should include a description of the session (maximum 300 words) and a list of participants. Innovative Session Proposals will be reviewed by the conference organizing team.

Early Career & South-South dialogues

We will organize Early Career and South-South dialogues on bridging sciences and societies for sustainability transformations directly prior to the conference, on October 22-23, 2023. These events will also facilitate inter- and transdisciplinary exchange. More information will be announced in due time on the conference website.

Meeting Day

On 27 October 2023, extensive meeting space will be provided for back-to-back events of our Project's Taskforces, Working Groups and Affiliated Projects. Suggestions for such meetings can be submitted to rc2023@earthsystemgovernance.org by 1 May 2023. We will ensure wide dissemination of the events through our network and assist with formal registration. All interested conference participants can select the event they plan to participate in through the conference registration form.

Field Trips

The conference will offer field trips in the greater Nijmegen area. More information will be announced soon on the conference website.

Additional information

The organizers are undertaking all efforts to secure travel support for participants who are based at institutions in developing countries and for early-career researchers. Acceptance of a paper for presentation does not guarantee travel support.

As part of the theme of the conference "Bridging sciences and societies for sustainability transformations", the organizers aim to facilitate participation by scholars and practitioners from outside the ESG community, e.g. by clustering inter- and transdisciplinary contributions in the programme. More information will follow closer to the conference.

Details on abstract submission and answers to frequently asked questions are available at our conference website www.earthsystemgovernance.org/2023radboud

More information on the Earth System Governance Project can be found at www.earthsystemgovernance.org

We look forward to welcoming you to The Netherlands in 2023!

For all questions, the organizing team can be contacted at
rc2023@earthsystemgovernance.org