



4th Young Graduate Meet, 2024

Interdisciplinary Approaches to South-Asian Ecology

Dates: 23rd – 25th October, 2024



Organized by:

School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)

IIT Mandi, Himachal Pradesh-175005

Concept Note:

In the present era marked by a pressing need for sustainable coexistence with the natural world, the centrality of human beings has taken a back seat to make way for integral ontological inquiries into nature, its components and inhabitants and the manifold relationship between them. The “self-organizing powers of non-human processes” have been emphasized in academia and the dissonant relations between those processes and cultural practices, rethinking sources of ethics have been explored. (Connolly, 2013) Amidst such circumstances, academia has inclined towards establishing connections between ecology and other aspects of being and is thereby addressing numerous interdisciplinary discourses that approach ecology from a multiplicity of angles and perspectives.

Environmental history traditionally separated humans from the natural world, viewing ecology as a study of the independent "non-human world". In fact, for a long time, the socio-cultural politics of human beings pertaining to factors like class, gender, race etc was not approached from the point of view of humans being part and borne and sustained of their natural environment. But a shift has been made from such anthropocentrism through an emphasis on the symbiosis between nature, science and ethics. The ethical dimension strongly opposes humanism, conservationist, animal liberation and animal rights theories and bases its core on the concept of “companion species” and contests the idea that humans are separable from and superior to other living beings. (Haraway, 2003) The environmental patterns independent of human interventions were formerly encountered through a focus on ecology. Contemporary ecological theories challenge the anthropocentric approach and highlight the need for a more nuanced understanding that includes the historical development of ecological knowledge and recognizes nature's dual role: as a human habitat shaping societies, and as a stage with its own "cast of non-human characters" impacting human history (Arnold & Guha, 1995). Moreover, theorists have gone beyond this relationship through the concept of “ecological collective”, recognized as a political organization that includes both human and nonhuman species, a form that does not collapse others into the self or the self into the world but rather recognizes the difference. The dominant aesthetic in contemporary environmentalism is characterised by an effusive "poetics of ambience." This aesthetic, encompassing movements like deep ecology, experimental noise music, and nature writing, impedes an ethical and genuinely ecological engagement with the vast array of entities that exist independently of our human concepts (Morton, 2009).

Ecological interfaces, encompassing a spectrum of aspects including history, culture, society, narratives, politics, and economy exist across diverse habitats and scales. While a wealth of research investigates these aspects, unified theoretical frameworks and consistent terminologies are still ongoing developments and will persist for a while. The heterogeneity of approaches is exemplified by the use of disparate phrases like overuse check and justice, aesthetic and recreational ecology, “ideologies of environment” and “environmentalism of the poor” (Gadgil & Guha, 1995) etc. The development of a unifying framework for interdisciplinary perspectives towards ecology would integrate this rich body of research, transcending the limitations of disciplinary boundaries. The 4th Young Graduate Meet (YGM) 2024 to be hosted by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Mandi aims to provide a platform in the lap of the Himalayas, to engage in discourses on ecology and seeks to unlock novel insights into the

scholarly interpretations of the ecological debate through a critical engagement with the South-Asian region.

Themes and Sub-themes

Interested participants can send their extended abstracts in not more than **500-750 words**, with 5 keywords in 12 font Times New Roman in PDF file. Kindly include a bio-note separately in not more than **100-150 words**. The broad areas of this seminar may include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Literature and Ecology:** Eco-narratives, Eco-criticism, Eco-translations, Postcolonial Ecologies, Climate Fiction, and Folklore, Graphic Narratives.
- **Environmental History:** Traditional Knowledge on Ecology and Cultural Practices, Art History, Heritage Conservation, Architecture and Ecology, Colonial and Post-Colonial Ecological Transitions.
- **Ecological Anthropology and Sociology:** Spatial Ecology and Infrastructure, Human-nature Interactions, Indigenous Populations and Religious Practices.
- **Politics and Policies on Ecology:** Sustainable Governance, Environmental Movements, Environmental Laws and Justice, Social Impact Assessment, Animal Rights, Biodiversity.
- **Towards a Sustainable Future:** The Impact on Ecology of Pollution and Climate Change, Sustainable Development, Energy Efficiency, Eco-tourism, Technological Advancements and Environmental Sustainability and Economics.
- **Population Dynamics and Ecological Interactions:** Demographic Studies, Migration and Displacement, Human Development, Health and Well-being, The Ecology of Ageing.
- **Philosophy and Ethics of Nature and Conservation:** Environmental Ethics, Deep Ecology, Anthropocentrism and the Nonhuman, Ecocentrism, Concepts of Wilderness and Entanglement.
- **Environmentalism and Eco-psychology:** Attitudes towards Conservation, Media Representation and Awareness, Public Perceptions, Environmental Education and Behaviour.
- **Ecology in the Himalayan region:** Indigenous Literatures, Cultures, Identity and Economy of the Eastern and Western Himalayas, Trans-Himalayan Ecology.

Invited resource persons

Keynote Speaker:



Prof. Supriya Chaudhuri
Professor Emerita,
Jadavpur University

Plenary Session Speakers:



Prof. Pankaj Sekhsaria
Associate Professor
C-TARA, IIT Bombay



Dr. Diptimayee Nayak,
Associate Professor of Economics
HSS, IIT Roorkee

Important Dates

Abstracts Submission Deadline: 15th August 2024

Acceptance and Intimation of Abstracts: 25th – 31st August 2024

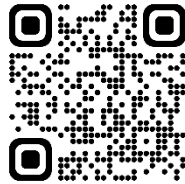
Date of Registration: 26th August 2024 to 30th September 2024

Registration Fee: Rs. 3000/-

*Registration fee includes Conference kit, participation in all sessions, food and accommodation. Accommodation (on twin sharing basis) will be arranged in the institute guest house(s).

Abstract Submission Link

Kindly submit your abstract using the following link or QR code



<https://forms.gle/dFUtwae3ka9Nx7V6>

For further information, Contact us on:



shssmeet.iitmandi@gmail.com



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