

EnviroAnt-Network 2019 Workshop Report



The inaugural workshop of the EASA Environment and Anthropology (EnviroAnt) Network took place in Cologne, Germany, on December 12th and 13th, 2019. A motivated group of 60 registered participants (including 29 presenters) came together to discuss the theme “**Perspectives and stories in a world of facts and figures? Exploring the potential of anthropology in tackling environmental issues.**”



Raj Puri



Mattias Borg Rasmussen

Comprising 3 keynotes and 25 Pecha Kucha presentations, the workshop provided opportunity for the members of the recently founded network to get to know each other's work, develop the purposes and strategies of the network, and plan possible collaborations. Based on the conviction that environmental anthropology can contribute to alternative and more just futures, the organizers placed the exploration of possible ways to do so at the heart of this inaugural meeting. The workshop thus explored the potential for anthropologists, and anthropological insights, in contributing to public debates and solution attempts for current environmental issues. Participants shared their diverse experiences of linking up



Michael Bollig





Sarah Mund



Andre Thiemann



Desirée Hetzel

with policy and practice, exchanged some of the methods that they have found useful to this end, and critically discussed the potential benefits and harms that providing anthropological knowledge in these circles may cause.

Following a brief introduction by the organisers Aet Annist, Michaela Haug and Franz Krause, the first day of the workshop (Dec 12, 2019) began with a keynote by Michael Bollig (University of Cologne). In his talk “**Environmental Anthropological Knowledge and Agency in Institutions of Policy Advice and Science Politics**”, Michael Bollig reflected on his experiences as member of the German Committee Future Earth, which acts as independent, research advisory board to national research funders and as a national platform for global sustainability researchers from the social and natural sciences. His keynote was followed by the first of four thematic blocks, each of which consisting of a series of Pecha Kucha presentations and a period of discussion based on them. The first block, “**What can we contribute?**” highlighted specific strengths of anthropological environmental research and featured presentations by Raj Puri (University of Kent), Mattias Borg Rasmussen (University of Copenhagen), Sarah Mund (University of Cologne), Andre



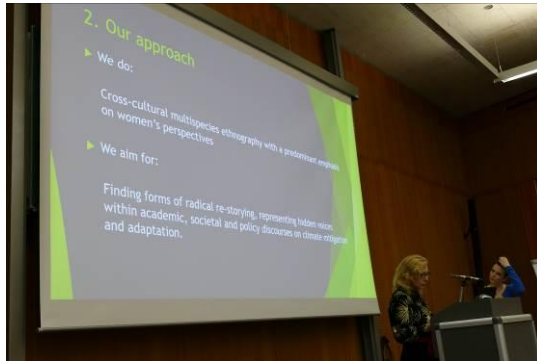
Liana Chua



Felix Lussem



Tom Boyd



Catrien Notermans and Anke Tonnaer



Arno Pascht



Gerda Kuiper and Hauke Vehrs

Thiemann (Riga Stradins University), Desirée Hetzel (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München), Catrien Notermans and Anke Tonnaer (Radboud University Nijmegen) and Franz Krause (University of Cologne).

Liana Chua (Brunel University London), who is leading innovative research at the interface of social and natural sciences in the context of wildlife conservation opened the afternoon session with a keynote titled “**(Re)calibrating engagement: on being anthropologically present in orangutan conservation**”. Drawing on her recent work in Borneo, she explored various ways of “being present” and challenged us to rethink what we aim for with the call to “being heard”. Her talk prepared the ground for the following thematic block “**How can we make ourselves heard/present?**”, with presentations by Felix Girke (Universität Konstanz), Arno Pascht (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München), Marketa Zandlova (Charles University in Prague), Hauke-Peter Vehrs and Gerda Kuiper (University of Cologne), Michaela Haug (University of Cologne) and Sandro Simon (University of Cologne). After the ensuing discussion, delegates visited a Cologne Christmas market before reconvening for dinner.



Aet Annist and Dan Podjed



Hannu Heikkinen



Benoit Ivars



Sandro Simon

The morning of December 13th began with a keynote on “**Renewal of Anthropology in the Anthropocene**” by Dan Podjed (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts). Drawing on his experience as founder of the EASA Applied Anthropology Network and co-founder of the “Why the World Needs Anthropologists” international symposium, he highlighted the rewards and challenges of applied anthropology. The following thematic block “**What has (not) worked?**” encouraged reflections on successful and (at least perceived as) failed forms of engagement. It included presentations by Petra Tjitske Kalshoven (University of Manchester), Greg Acciaioli (The University of Western Australia), Lye Tuck-Po (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Joonas Plaan (Tallinn University and Estonian Fund for Nature), Milena Baghdasaryan (Armenian National Academy of Sciences), Noah Walker-Crawford (University of Manchester), Aet Annist (University of Tartu) and Hannu I. Heikkinen (University of Oulu).



Petra Tjitske Kalshoven



Greg Acciaioli

A final thematic block focused on **future activities, inspirations and strategies** for the network. It comprised presentations by Felix Lussem (University of Cologne), Elvira



Elvira Wepfer



Arvid van Dam





Tuck-Po Lye



Joonas Plaan



Milena Baghdasaryan

Wepfer (University of Manchester), Arvid van Dam (University of Leeds), Kathrin Eitel (Goethe University Frankfurt) and Tom Boyd (University of Manchester). In order to develop the network further, four **working groups** were established, 1) to elaborate the objectives of the network, 2) to link up with related groups and networks, 3) to provide a platform for exchange teaching experiences and materials and 4) to promote the public and social media presence of the network. The next meetings of the network are scheduled to take place at the EASA conference in Lisbon in 2020 and at another workshop in 2021.

After the end of the main workshop program, some of the attendants went to Cologne's ethnographic museum, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum, for a guided tour of the "Delta Welten" exhibition with Benoit Ivars (University of Cologne), one of the curators.

The workshop was supported by EASA, Global South Studies Center (GSSC) Cologne, the DELTA project, the University of Cologne and the University of Tartu.

Images provided by Greg Acciaioli and GSSC. Not all presenters are pictured.



Michaela Haug



Franz Krause



Noah Walker-Crawford