

## CO-EVOLVING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS AND LANDSCAPES



**Plan ahead for 2014!!!!**  
**Join the debate on humans and landscape in long-term perspective in two of the best cities in Europe! Satisfy both your academic and touristic needs in one go.**

### Call for papers

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In order to build understanding on and provide empirical evidence for co-evolving social/economic arrangements and landscapes as environmental systems, two sessions are organized at two different venues:

- **A session on Co-evolution of water systems and societies, to be held at the European Geosciences Union – April 27-May 2 2014 in Vienna**
- **A session on Human Niche Construction in Landscape Archaeology, to be held at the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Landscape Archaeological Conference 2014 – September 17-20 2014 in Rome**

At those sessions, both held in great cities with huge and fascinating histories, both studies that take a historical or archaeological approach, use social science methods to assess how communities/societies create and respond to environmental change, as natural scientific studies on those changes and its impacts are welcomed. Questions like whether landscape are gradients the starting points where organisms (humans) are altering its own selective environment (inceptive change), or whether it would be the lack of such gradients that initiate humans to respond to a (deteriorated) selective environment (counteractive change), are discussed.

#### Co-evolution of water systems and societies – EGU – 27 April to 2 May 2014, Vienna, Austria

- Conveners: Gemma Carr / Maurits Ertsen / Sjoerd Kluiving / Saket Pande
- Submit an abstract:  
[http://www.egu2014.eu/abstract\\_management/how\\_to\\_submit\\_an\\_abstract.html](http://www.egu2014.eu/abstract_management/how_to_submit_an_abstract.html)
- Deadline for the receipt of abstracts is 16 January 2014, 13:00 CET.
- Find all sessions at <http://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU2014/sessionprogramme>
- Further information about EGU 2014 can be found at: <http://www.egu2014.eu>



#### Human Niche Construction in Landscape Archaeology – LAC2014 – 17-20 September 2014, Rome, Italy

- Conveners: Maurits Ertsen / Sjoerd Kluiving / Tony Wilkinson
- Submit an abstract at <http://www.let.vu.nl/en/research/conferences/lac-2014>, click on submission form LAC2014
- Abstracts can be send until the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2014.



#### Theoretical background

Organisms are constantly changing their environment: the famous beavers build dams, termites build huge mounds, and the changes wrought by humans have transformed the surface of the earth. In turn, the environment changes organisms; selective pressures from any given environment have an influence on survival strategies of those living within that environment. The concept of Niche Construction stresses that organisms – in changing their selective environment – change themselves in the long term. Human Niche Construction Theory simply argues that humans do so too and produce interlinked changes in four domains:

1. The material environment – modified by human agency
2. The social arrangements – when modifying the environment and responding to the changes
3. The genetic structure of the human group – as a result of modifications
4. The material environment for other species – which would transform those species

As originally conceived, Human Niche Construction Theory claims to include the genetic level in its field of study. The well-known examples of lactose-intolerance and sickle-cell-tolerance of malaria show that such an inclusion is entirely possible. However, direct relations between genetic change and landscape are hard to claim and the data to study any relation are not available yet. Therefore, both these sessions will focus on the two directional nature of the interactions between material environment and social arrangements, in order to capture work that examines how humans change their environment, and how subsequent environmental changes alter societal functioning.