

# Ecological Challenges 2017:

## Call for papers!



Environmental movements use the slogan “System Change, not Climate Change.” It points out that international negotiations and technological innovations repeatedly fail to reduce carbon emissions levels, and that our societies need to be profoundly transformed to prevent disastrous climate change.

At the Ecological Challenges conference in Oslo, Norway 15-18 February 2017, we take this as a point of departure and focus on questions that relate to systemic change:

- What kind of systemic alternatives are desirable and feasible in the economic, political, social, and cultural spheres?
- What systems have to change, and why is it so hard to change them?
- What strategies could environmental movements adopt in order to achieve system change?

### Subthemes

We call for papers that both deal with these questions at a general level and for papers that deal with one of the subthemes of the conference. These are:

#### 1) An ecological worldview

What is the relationship between ecology, how we think about nature and system change? How can ecological thought inspire a new ethics and new visions of human community? If ecology is a systematic body of ideas, what is the relationship between

social sciences and ecological insights, between philosophy and practice, and between culture and ethics? In short, we want to discuss how ecological thinking can inform system change to an ecological society.

## **2) Ecological economics**

What are possible ecological alternatives to our present economic system? How attractive and viable are these alternatives? What can we learn from contemporary experiments in ecological economics, and how is it possible to scale up alternative practices that are already going on in various communities and regions? What is the role of trade unions, cooperatives, municipalities, and commons, in mobilizing for an ecological transition? In short, we want to discuss what the economic framework of an ecological society would look like and how we can get there.

## **3) Ecological politics**

What would an ecological politics look like? What are the dynamics of systems change? How can the political system be transformed to facilitate an ecological transition to sustainability? What is the role of parties, movements, elections, and legislation? Can we use existing political channels or do we have to create new ones? What is the relationship between ecology and democracy? In short, we would like to discuss what constitutes a genuinely ecological politics today.

## **4) Movements and strategies**

How can we build the movements we need for systems change? How can ecological movements advance a progressive and emancipatory social agenda? What can we learn from various ecological campaigns and popular movements around the world? How can we stimulate interaction and cooperation between trade unions, environmental groups, and community organizations? How can the social sciences help develop social ecological alternatives? What is the interplay between political organization and extra-parliamentary activism? In short, we want to discuss how we can develop a new social ecological agenda and build new popular movements that are relevant, committed, and capable of initiating systems changes that benefit people as well as nature.

## **Abstract deadline and details**

If you wish to present a paper at the conference, please send an abstract of your paper (maximum 250 words) together with a short bio to [conference@ecologicalchallenges.org](mailto:conference@ecologicalchallenges.org) by *August 15th, 2016*. Your proposal and bio cannot extend one A4 or letter-size page. If you wish to point to other work, please add these as links in the document. The abstract should have a clear title, as well as an indication of what subtheme it falls under.

Proposals that are accepted will have to be developed into papers of approximately 3,000 words by December 1, 2016. After the conference we will make a selection of the papers to be published in a book as the conference proceedings.

## **Reimbursement**

Participants from outside of Norway who don't have funding from other institutions or organizations can apply to have their travel and accommodation expenses reimbursed. We cannot guarantee reimbursement for everyone as this depends on pending proposal for conference funding. If you wish to apply for economic support, please notify us when you send us your abstract.

## **Organization**

Ecological Challenges 2017 is organized by the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo and the New Compass collective. Other partners so far include Norsk Tjenestemannslag, Spire, Framtiden i våre hender, Future Earth Norway, Institutt for journalistikk og mediefag (HiOA), Institutt for filosofi-, idé- og kunsthistorie og klassiske språk (UiO), Attac Norge, Research and Degrowth, Tvergastein, TRISE, Färnebo Folkhögskola, Bytopia, Staden vi vill ha, Demokratisk Omställning, OulUtopia, Écologie Sociale, ROAR Magazine, Straßen aus Zucker.

Deadline for paper proposals is August 15th, 2016. Send to [conference@ecologicalchallenges.org](mailto:conference@ecologicalchallenges.org), any questions can be directed to the same address.