



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO

DIPARTIMENTO DI BENI CULTURALI  
E AMBIENTALI

**IV EDIZIONE DELLE GIORNATE DI STUDI INTERDISCIPLINARI "GEOGRAFIA E..."  
SOCIETÀ DI STUDI GEOGRAFICI**

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Università degli Studi di Milano, via Festa del Perdono 7

## **GEOGRAFIA E ECOLOGIA POLITICA**

*Teorie, pratiche, discorsi*

### **PRESENTAZIONE DI PROPOSTE DI SESSIONE**

<b>Proponente</b>	Dr Chris Büscher, Dr Alessandro Sciullo, Dr Paola Minoia, Dr Dario Padovan, Dr Elisa Bignante
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<b>Titolo della sessione</b>	<b>Political ecology of energy transitions across the global North and South</b>

<p><b>Descrizio ne(max 2500 caratteri )</b></p>	<p>Transitions towards more sustainable and just energy systems are increasingly subject to social science energy research (Blondeel et al. 2021). Political ecology and critical geography have contributed much to such research, both empirically and conceptually (Bridge 2018; Bridge &amp; Gailing 2020; Valkulchuk 2020). This research into energy transitions, while diverse, shares some common characteristics and premises. In general terms, it seeks to explain the reproduction and change of energy systems. In so doing, it considers the interplay between their social (political, cultural) and natural (environmental, material) properties as well as the specific configurations of actors, discourses and forces that enable and frustrate transitions (Szabo 2022). It shows that transitions do not occur naturally. Some actors drive while others resist transitions, based on visions of what is (un)desirable about (current) energy systems. Political ecologists pay particular attention to capitalist development trajectories, both major and minor, and playing out at different scales (Robbins 2012; Newell 2019). They investigate the volumes and types of energy these consume and require, the power relations and extractivist logics that sustain them and who wins and loses in such trajectories. Research does not so much assess the promises and pitfalls of different types of renewable energies or novel technologies in and of themselves, nor how these could be used <i>in</i> such trajectories. Rather, such trajectories are themselves subject to critical enquiry, because of their reliance on perpetual accumulation and an ever-expanding energy base to the benefit of a minority (Dunlap &amp; Laratte 2022). Political ecological research is thus critical in acknowledging that some energy sources and systems are more sustainable and just than others, and emancipative in that research should help bring about systems that open up rather than narrow down pathways for human and nonhuman flourishing (Sayer 2009). This requires reflection on our normative departure points (Castree 2003: 289–294), on the way we produce knowledge and from which/whose lens we theorize such transitions (Tornel 2022; Mbembe 2021). This is all the more important if we factor in the spatial variegation and differentiation in energy systems and transitions across the global North and South (Bridge 2018). While energy systems are often connected in time and space, their socio-material make-up in specific spatial configurations matter deeply for how actually existing transitions unfold.</p> <p>In this panel, we seek to expose this plurality of energy transitions and our political ecological research about such transitions. We therefore welcome abstracts that deal empirically and/or conceptually with energy transitions in the global North and South</p>
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	<p>in view of the premises outlined above. Such abstracts can deal with energy transitions at various scales and can for instance cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The destabilization or disassembly of existing energy systems and its underlying politics and contradictions (Bridge 2018)</li> <li>• The emergence, adoption or materialization of alternative imaginaries/ policies/ projects to current energy systems and its impacts and contestations</li> <li>• Promises, pitfalls, and contradictions of different renewable energies in light of capitalist development trajectories (Dunlap &amp; Laratte 2022)</li> <li>• Reflections on the 'just' in just energy transitions</li> <li>• Reflections on (Western) knowledge production on energy transitions</li> </ul> <p><i>Sono benvenute presentazioni in inglese o in Italiano</i></p>
<p><b>Eventuali Chair e discussant</b></p>	<p>Chris Büscher, Alessandro Sciullo, Paola Minoia</p>
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