

**Jan-Henrik Meyer**

**When Europe Went Green. Transnational Networks and the Origins of European Environmental Policy since the 1970s**

The present-day European Union (EU) is a major actor in international environmental politics and an important setter of shared norms and rules. However, very little is known about how and why the original European Communities (EC) established an environmental policy, although there was no base in the founding treaties of what was essentially an economic community. Accordingly, the main goal of my research project is to describe and explain the emergence and early development of the environmental policy of the EC beginning in the early 1970s. Going beyond the traditional state-centric perspectives on the history of the EU, the guiding hypothesis for this project is that an emerging transnational network of national and supranational state and non-state actors, including environmental activists, nongovernmental organizations, and scientific experts, played a decisive role in the successful establishment of environmental policy at the European level.

Applying a network approach, a method informed by insights from the social sciences, this research project will contribute to three specific areas of environmental history: first, to the history of the diffusion and negotiation of the new political concept of the environment in the 1970s; secondly, to the recently growing interest in international and global aspects of environmental history, notably the role of organizations and actors beyond the nation state; and thirdly, while providing a new method, the network approach elucidates the involvement of societal actors such as experts, interest groups, and activists from the environmental movements in European politics beyond the nation-state, about which we know very little so far.

Jan-Henrik Meyer is a postdoctoral researcher at Aarhus University, Denmark. His research interests relate to the international emergence of environmentalism and environmental policy since the 1960s. At the Rachel Carson Center, he will be working on a project that seeks to explain the rise of environmental policy making within the European Communities, the predecessor of the present-day European Union. In October 2012, he organized (with Wolfram Kaiser) an international conference on "Environmental Protection in the Global Twentieth Century: International Organizations, Networks, and Diffusion of Ideas and Policies" funded by the research college The Transformative Power of Europe at Free University Berlin. Together with Astrid M. Kirchhof, Meyer founded and organizes the Berlin Brandenburg Colloquium for Environmental History. They also jointly organize a series of panels on "Anti-Nuclear-Protest in the 1970s and 1980s in a Transnational Perspective: Europe and Beyond." at the ESEH conference in Munich 2013.