Session: Urbanization and land-system change
convener: Helmut Haberl

Urban areas, settlements and infrastructure areas cover an increasing percentage of the earth's terrestrial surface. They are mostly located in the biologically most productive areas. But their impact on ecosystems extends far beyond their boundaries, in particular in industrialized countries, where the majority of the population lives in cities or conurbations. City-hinterland relations changed quantitatively and qualitatively during agrarian-industrial transitions, and so did land-related sustainability problems associated with urban areas. The globalization of resource flows means that "teleconnections" - the "footprint" of consumption on far-distant places - play an increasing role in the global land system.

This session aims at improved understanding of these processes: What is the global or regional impact of cities on land systems? How to conceptualize teleconnections between centers of production and consumption, in particular with respect to land-related resources (food, fibre, bio-energy)? How do city-hinterland relations change during agrarian-industrial transitions? How to tackle these issues within an "integrated land-system science" framework? What could long-term socio-ecological research (LTSER) contribute to an improved understanding of the relation between urbanization and land-system change?

This session aims at bringing together scholars from a broad range of fields. In particular, it aims at an improved collaboration of currently rather distant fields such as human ecology, social ecology, land-system science and long-term socio-ecological research. It is supported by the Global Land Project and ALTER-Net.