Ecologisms of Wars and Conflicts in the Middle East and the Mediterranean



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
9 TO 11 DECEMBER 2026

Académie du Climat
(Climate Academy)
2 place Baudoyer
75004 Paris

Free admission, registration required
Hybrid event (in person & online)
Languages: French & English
Contact : anr.imagin-e@ehess.fr
or contact@carep-paris.org

IMAGIN-E Alter-Citoyens au Moyen-Orient
anr agence nationale de la recherche AU SERVICE DE LA SCIENCE
L'ÉCOLE DES HAUTES ÉTUDES EN SCIENCES SOCIALES
CÉSOR Centre d'études en sciences sociales du religieux
université de TOURS citeres UMR 7324
VILLE DE PARIS
L'ACADÉMIE DU CLIMAT

ANR IMAGIN-E & CAREP Paris Conference

Ecologisms of War and Conflict in the Middle East and the Mediterranean

December 9–12, 2026

In person participation: Académie du Climat, 2 place Baudoyer, 75004 Paris. Mandatory registration : https://forms.gle/DxofmuWPGh94hv8p9

Online participation (please register via): https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZzYVSDIdSFKKSIfaI641Yg

Languages: French / English

Wednesday, December 9, 2026 I Opening Evening | Salle des mariages

6:30 pm | Welcome

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm | The Singing of the Plants
A Sound Herbalist and Bio-Communication with Plants by Renaud Ruhlmann and Guillaume Dejoux (NaturaSounds)

8:00 pm - 9:30 pm | Opening of the conference, lecture: *Ecologization of Warfare and Time of the Living* by Stéphanie Latte Abdallah (CNRS/Césor-EHESS)

Keynote Lecture: *Ecocide and Ecosumud. What Ecoresistance in Palestine teaches us ?* by Mazin Qumsiyeh (Palestine Museum of Natural History, Bethlehem University)

Thursday, December 10, 2026 | Salle des mariages

9:30 am | Registration

9:45 am - 10:00 am | Welcome address

10:00 am - 12:15 pm | The Ecologization of Contemporary Conflicts

Moderator : Malcom Ferdinand (CNRS/IRISSO)

- Muna Dajani (London School of Economics): *Surviving the Ongoing Nakba: What Our River Ways Teach Us*
- Umut Yildirim (Geneva Graduate Institute): *Extractive States, Environmental Stakes in Turkey's Kurdish Heartland*
- Ala Uddin (University of Chittagong) : *Conflict's Long Shadow: Displacement Ecology and Toxic Governance in Cox's Bazar*

12:15 pm - 2:00 pm | Lunch break

2:00 pm - 3:45 pm | Legacies and Waste of War I: Identifying and Locating

Moderator : Isabel Ruck, CAREP Paris (Paris, France)

- Taif Alkhudary (University of Cambridge): *Crude Attachments: Toxicity, Affect and the Politics of Labour in Southern Iraq*
- Yaser Abunnasr (Nature Conservation Center/ American University of Beirut): *Documenting the Ecocide in Real-Time: Insights from Lebanon*
- Wim Zwijnenburg (PAX NGO): *How to Make Use of Remote Sensing and Open-Source Data Collection to Start Mapping Conflict-linked Environmental Damages: Insights and Lessons Learned from Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq*

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm | Coffee break

4:00 pm - 6:15 pm | Legacies and Waste of War II: Detoxifying, Remediating
Panel in French

Moderator : Bénédicte Florin (Université de Tours, CITERES/EMAM)

- David Billeau (Inalco): *Un héritage militaire encore actif. Contamination par les mines terrestres et environnementalisation de l'action contre les mines aux frontières turques*
- Joëlle Abou Issa (UMR Géographie-Cités): *Quand les déblais de guerre deviennent remblais sur mer : le cas de Costa-Brava (Liban)*
- Kamel Elias (Agronomist UJFP/UMMA): *Gaza, une enclave polluée*
- Ghassan Salman (SOILS Permaculture Association) : *Bioremediation potential in Lebanon*

6:30 pm - 9:00 pm | Film screening and discussion |Pépinière

Discussion led by Pauline Tucoulet (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle/Ircav) and Michael Issa El Helou (Université de Caen Normandie/LASLAR ; Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth)

- Dala Nasser: Red in Tooth (Lebanon – 21 min)
- Jumana Manna: Foragers (Palestine 1948 – 65 min)

Friday, December 11, 2026 | Salle des fêtes

9:15 am | Reception of participants

9:30 am - 11:15 am | Environmental Violence and Displacement

Moderator : Juliette Duclos-Valois (CETOBaC)

- Jasmin Lilian Diab (Lebanese American University): *Ecologies of Return: Ecocide and the Environmental Politics of Return in South Lebanon*
- Kenza Yousfi (Williams College): *The Wall as Ecology (Western Sahara)*
- Théo Lefort (Geneva Graduate Institute): *The Room and the Forest: Narrating Weaponized Border Ecologies and More-than-Human Relations on Afghan Migration Journeys*

11:15 am - 11:30 am | Coffee break

11:30 am - 1:15 pm | Ecological Alternatives and Activisms

Moderator : Simone Spera (IREMAM)

- Allan Hassanyan (University of Exeter): *The Environmentalism of the Subalterns: A Case Study of Environmental Activism in Eastern Kurdistan/Rojhelat*
- Idriss Benkacem (Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University): *Ecologies of Resistance: Amazigh Activism, Documentary Filmmaking, and Extractive Violence in Imider, Morocco*
- Maria Gabriella Trovato (Norwegian University of Life Sciences): *Working within the Polycrisis: Ruination, Resistance, and Prefigurative Landscape Practices in the Middle East*

1:15 pm - 2:30 pm | Lunch break

3:00 am - 4:45 pm | What Relations Among the Living?
Panel in French

Moderator : Vanessa Manceron (CNRS/LESC)

- Wael Tahhan (Université Paris 1/Institut ACTE): *L'après-vie des semences : esthétique du vivant dans le conflit syrien*
- Charlotte Schwarzinger (Independent researcher): *Herbiers spéculatifs. Détourner les taxonomies du vivant par l'art en Palestine et au Liban*
- Samuel Verley (York University): *Sanctification and Sanctuarisation of the Living in Kurdish Alevi Activism*

4:45 pm - 5:00 pm |Closing remarks

5:00 pm - 5:30 pm | Coffee break

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm I Radioshow

With Emily Sarsam (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna) and Yassine Rachidi (University of Basel)

6:30 pm - 7:30 pm | Cocktail reception

7:30 pm - 9:30 pm | Closing event

Poetry reading of Gazan authors by Nour Elassy and Nada Yafi, with oud music and a cappella singing by Karam Allazkani

Organised by:

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah, Research Director at CNRS/CéSor-EHESS, Coordinator of the ANR IMAGIN-E project
Isabel Ruck, Head of Research and Scientific Coordination at CAREP Paris
Juliette Duclos-Valois, Early-career associate researcher at CETOBaC, Member of the ANR IMAGIN-E project
Bénédicte Florin, Associate Professor at Université de Tours, CITERES / Arab World and Mediterranean Team; Institut Universitaire de France; Co-coordinator of the ANR IMAGIN-E project
Simone Spera, associate researcher at IREMAM ; Member of the ANR IMAGIN-E project
Samuel Vock-Verley, Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Anthropology, York University; Member of the ANR IMAGIN-E project

Speakers Biographies (in Programme Order)

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah is a historian and political anthropologist, and a research director at the CNRS (CéSor-EHESS). Her current research addresses issues of borders, carcerality, and prisons in Palestine/Israel. Her work also focuses on environmentalism amidst crises and conflicts in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, eco-political activism, and concrete utopias in Palestine and Lebanon. She coordinates the ANR project IMAGIN-E (*Alter-citizens in the Middle East: Inventing Resistance in Times of Violence*). Her recent publications include *The Prison Web. A History of Confinement in Palestine* (Palgrave Macmillan 2022), *Des morts en guerre. Rétention des corps et figures du martyr en Palestine* (Karthala 2022) ; she co-edited *Gaza. Une guerre coloniale* (Actes Sud, 2025), and *Gaza inédite. Société, arts et politique* (Presses de l'Ifpo 2026).

Mazin Qumsiyeh is founder and volunteer director of the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability, Bethlehem University. He served at US universities including Tennessee, Duke and Yale. Pr. Qumsiyeh published on topics ranging from environmental impact of colonization to environmental and climate justice, cultural heritage, biodiversity conservation and cancer. His books include *Sharing the Land of Canaan* (Pluto Press, 2004) and *Popular Resistance in Palestine* (Pluto Press, 2010). He served on the board of 11 human rights advocacy organization. He is laureate of the

Paul K. Feyerabend Foundation award, the Takreem award, the World Beyond War award 2026, and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2025.

Malcom Ferdinand holds a PhD in Political Science from Université Paris Diderot and is a researcher at the CNRS (IRISSO). At the intersection of political philosophy, postcolonial theory, and political ecology, his research focuses on the Black Atlantic and explores the connections between political issues, colonial history, and the challenges of ecological preservation. His doctoral dissertation is titled "Thinking Ecology from the Caribbean World: Political and Philosophical Stakes of Ecological Conflicts".

Muna Dajani is a political ecologist and scholar-activist committed to struggles for environmental justice and decolonization in Palestine and the wider SWANA region. She is a Fellow in Environment at the Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics and Political Science. Her fifteen years of work in Palestine, Jordan, and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights bridges academia and activism. Through the lived experiences of those resisting dispossession and ecological violence, her scholarship amplifies grassroots knowledge to challenge dominant paradigms of sustainability and development.

Umut Yıldırım is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the Graduate Institute of Geneva. Her areas of expertise include war and decolonial mobilisation, forced migration and resettlement, transnational development programmes and extractivism, ecologies of war and political mass violence, maritime extraction and commons. She recently published a book monograph, *Extractive States: War and Resistance in Turkey's Kurdish Heartland* (Stanford University Press, 2026), and the edited volume *War-Torn Ecologies, An-Archic Fragments: Reflections from the Middle East* (ICI Berlin Press, 2023).

Ala Uddin is a professor of Anthropology at the University of Chittagong, Bangladesh. In addition to a focus on the indigenous peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), Uddin researches the Rohingya refugee crisis, migration and diaspora issues, urban landscapes, health and culture, religious pluralism, education, and environment & climate change. He has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals such as *Ethnopolitics*, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *Development in Practice*, and *Asian Ethnicity*.

Isabel Ruck is a political scientist and Middle East specialist. She is the Head of Research and Scientific Coordination at CAREP Paris, where she directs the "Political Ecology" research program. Her current research focuses on public policy, water management, and environmental issues in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. She also teaches at Sciences Po Paris.

Taif Alkhudary is a PhD candidate in the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge, where her work focuses on the political ecology of oil in Southern Iraq. She also holds teaching posts at SOAS and UCL. Before this, Taif was a Research Officer at the LSE Middle East Centre and worked at several NGOs conducting strategic litigation on human rights issues in the Middle East.

Yaser Abunnasr is the Director of the Nature Conservation Center and Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture and Planning at the American University of Beirut. He holds a PhD in Regional Planning and a Master's in Landscape Architecture from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA. His research and practice focus on regenerative urban planning and design, landscape planning, green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation at urban and landscape scales.

Wim Zwijnenburg is the Environment, Peace and Security Project Lead at PAX, a Dutch peace organisation. Since 2009, he has worked in, and published extensively on, Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, Yemen and other conflicts areas. He has received the UNEP/UNOCH Green Star Award in 2017 and the Environmental Law Institute and UNEP Al Moumin Award in 2023.

Bénédicte Florin is a geographer at the University of Tours and a member of the Institut Universitaire de France. She leads the Arab World and Mediterranean Team, at the UMR CITERES. Her research focuses on the informal recycling economy from a comparative perspective (France, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey). She co-directs with Stéphanie Latte-Abdallah the ANR project IMAGINE: *Alter-citizens in the Middle* East and participates in the ANR project SORRYL: *Towards a reuse and recycling society*.

David Billeau is a PhD candidate in International Relations at INALCO and an associate researcher at the French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA) in Istanbul. His research focuses on minefields along Turkey's borders and on humanitarian demining and mine action.

Joëlle Abou Issa holds a PhD in Geography and Architecture and Landscape Sciences from Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and the Lebanese University. She is an associate researcher at the UMR 8504 Géographie-cités research unit. Her research explores the construction of coastal land reclamations – whether contested or unfulfilled – within the context of ongoing crisis in Lebanon. She focuses particularly on how urban expansion occurs through the circulation of waste and construction materials, as well as the political-economic dynamics that structure these material flows.

Kamel Elias holds a PhD in Agricultural Sciences and is a consulting agronomist. He studied at the University of Damascus, at the Institut national agronomique Paris-Grignon and at the École nationale supérieure d'horticulture in Versailles (ENSH). He has worked as a consultant for various international organizations and in a consulting firm specializing in plant production and plant genetic resources. He is a member of the Gaza Group of the Union juive française pour la paix and he co-authored the book *Gaza. Mort, Vie, Espoir* and works with the UMMA association (Union méditerranéenne des mondes agricoles).

Ghassan Al Salman is an agroecologist by profession with over 15 years of experience throughout Lebanon. Since 2014, he has been working towards just and sustainable farming systems through production, marketing, training, design and research.

Pauline Tucoulet Pauline Tucoulet holds a PhD in Film Studies and is currently a postdoctoral research fellow on the PHAMM project (Pour une histoire de l'audiovisuel et du multimédia muséal), led notably by the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) and the École nationale des chartes-PSL. Her research focuses on the transnational history of Kurdish cinema since the late 1960s. She is affiliated with the Institute for Research on Film and Audiovisual Media (IRCAV). She is also an associate researcher at the French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo) and Secretary-General of the Ethnographic Film Committee – Jean Rouch International Festival. She taught in the Department of Film and Audiovisual Studies at Sorbonne Nouvelle University from 2018 to 2026, and in the Eurasia Department at the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO) from 2016 to 2023.

Michael Issa El Helou is a PhD candidate in Film Studies at the University of Caen Normandy and Saint Joseph University of Beirut, where he is jointly supervised by Valérie Vignaux and Ghada Sayegh. His doctoral research examines representations of Lebanese history in contemporary Lebanese cinema.

He is also an affiliated researcher at the French Institute of the Near East (Institut français du Proche-Orient).

Juliette Duclos-Valois is an anthropologist with a PhD from EHESS (Paris) and an early-career associate researcher at CETOBaC. She was a postdoctoral researcher with the ANR IMAGIN-E project for nearly three years. Her research focuses on (im)mobility, everyday life, habitability and uncertainty in contexts of conflict, toxicity and climate stress. She has been conducting research in Iraq for the past twelve years.

Jasmin Lilian Diab is the Director of the Institute for Migration Studies at the Lebanese American University, where she also serves as an Assistant Professor. In 2026, her research received the 'Best Paper Award' from the Gender and Sexuality in Migration Research Standing Committee at IMISCOE. Dr. Diab is also a Global Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Carr-Ryan Center for Human Rights at Harvard University. a Research Affiliate at the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University, and an Affiliated Scholar at the Center for International Gender Studies at the University of Münster.

Kenza Yousfi is a political and environmental anthropologist at Williams College. Her scholarship examines how contemporary ecologies of infrastructure, extraction, militarism, and green energy imaginaries shape the everyday lives of people who have come into close contact with the spaces and visions of transition in Northwest Africa. Her ethnography traces the Saharawi anticolonial struggle through the broader ecological conditions Saharawis inhabit under military occupation and the infrastructures of both the wall and phosphate extraction.

Théo Lefort is a doctoral student at the Graduate Institute, Geneva since 2022. For his dissertation, he examines more-than-human relationality in the context of the illegalized border crossings and migration journeys of people from Afghanistan towards Turkey and Western Europe. He holds a master's degree in political relations and international relations from Sciences Po Lyon, and studied at the University of Tehran, the Galatasaray University of Istanbul and the EHESS in Paris.

Simone Spera is an associate researcher at IREMAM (UMR 7310). He holds a PhD in Anthropology from Paris Nanterre University, focusing on educational utopias and emancipatory pedagogies in Lebanon. His current research examines an experiment in social mixing in primary schools in Marseille.

Allan Hassaniyan is a Senior Lecturer in Middle East Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter. He is the author of *Kurdish Politics in Iran Crossborder Interactions and Mobilisation since 1947* (Cambridge University Press, 2021) and *Iran's Environmental Challenges and Movements on the Margins, Beyond the Centre* (Edinburgh University Press, 2026). His research focuses on state-society relations in Iran and Kurdistan, and on environmental movements and ecological security in the Middle East.

Idriss Benkacem is a researcher at the Laboratory of Applied Human Sciences, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, Morocco, where he also serves as an adjunct professor of Media and Cultural Studies. His research interests include African anthropology, decolonial studies, environmental humanities, and indigenous studies. His recent publications have appeared in reviews such as *The Journal of North African Studies* and *Global South Literary Studies*.

Maria Gabriella Trovato is Associate Professor and Programme Leader of the International Master's in Landscape Architecture for Global Sustainability at NMBU, Norway; Adjunct Associate Professor at AUB Lebanon; and Visiting Professor at POLIMI, Italy. Her research explores landscape-based approaches to socio-ecological repair in conflict-affected and climate-vulnerable territories, drawing

on decolonial, post-humanist, and political ecology frameworks. She is Chair of the IFLA Working Group Landscape Architects Without Borders.

Wael Tahhan is a PhD candidate in Aesthetics in his final year of doctoral studies at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, where he teaches philosophy of art. His research focuses on the critique of artistic and spatial practices in the Levant, as well as the epistemological and aesthetic conditions of sensory knowledge in the Arab and Islamic contexts.

Charlotte Schwarzinger is a researcher and acultural programmer. She holds a PhD in Political Studies from EHESS, focusing on cinema in Lebanon between 2019 and 2023. Her work draws on an interdisciplinary approach combining ethnography, film analysis, and collective artistic practice. She has published several articles on Lebanese and Palestinian cinema and co-edited an issue of *Mondes arabes* on "art-making" in the region. Alongside her research, she develops cultural programmes in Lebanon, France, and Palestine, including film screening series, multidisciplinary events, and artistic residencies.

Vanessa Manceron is an anthropologist and Research Director at the CNRS, affiliated with the Laboratoire d'ethnologie et de sociologie comparative (LESC). Her research focuses on social perceptions of nature in Europe (France, England, and Italy) and explores environmental debates, ecological risks, and human-animal relations. She is the author of *Une terre en partage. Liens et rivalités dans une société rurale* (2005, Éditions de la MSH) and *Wild and Wonderful* (2025, Hau/University of Chicago Press), a book that examines the ecological knowledge of naturalists in England.

Samuel Vock-Verley holds a PhD in Anthropology and History of Religions. He is currently a research associate at the University of York and teaches in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Aix-Marseille University. His research focuses on religion, migration, and political violence within the Kurdish and Alevi spaces, based on fieldwork conducted between Turkey and France.

Emily Sarsam is an artist and researcher who works with sound composition, creative writing, performance, and sculpture. Her research mainly looks at the impacts of colonialism and extractivism on commoning, farming and local cosmologies. She is particularly interested in how the creative process of fiction writing is influenced by sonic composition, and vice versa. She is a co-founder of Broudou, a research collective and publication dedicated to the future of food in Tunisia, and a team member of Tunis-based artist residency & project space, Mouhit. She is a candidate of the PhD-in-Practice program and currently lecturing at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Yassine Rachidi is a doctoral researcher in Urban Studies at the University of Basel. Splitting his practice between the academic and the artistic, he questions – through writing, photography, and filmmaking – the emerging materialities, temporalities, and spatial identities that unfold through processes of construction, speculation and adaptation on the African continent. His current research project examines post-disaster reconstruction in Morocco's High Atlas following the 2023 Haouz earthquake.

Nour Elassy is a Palestinian writer and journalist from Gaza. She holds a BA in French and English Literature and has published with Mediapart, The New Humanitarian, and Al Jazeera English. During the genocide on Gaza, she produced over 100 television reports documenting civilian life, loss, and survival for the Associated press since September 2024. Evacuated to Paris in July 2025, she is now

pursuing a master's in political science at EHESS, writing across journalism, poetry, and testimony. Her first poetry collection in its French translation came out with the title *Ceci est ma maison* (2026).

Nada Yafi served as an official Arabic interpreter for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Presidency (1989–2003), before joining the diplomatic corps after passing the Foreign Affairs Advisor entrance examination in 2003. She served as France's Ambassador to Kuwait (2010–2014) and as Director of the Center for Arabic Language and Civilization at the Institut du Monde Arabe (2014–2018 and 2019–2020). She published *Plaidoyer pour la langue arabe* (Libertalia, 2023) and a collection of poems dedicated to Gaza with Karim Kattan, *Que ma mort apporte l'espoir* (2023).

Karam Allazkani is of Syrian origin and is currently pursuing a dual degree in Arabic Studies and Indonesian-Malay Studies at Inalco (Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales), with a particular focus on history. As a musician, he began with singing before taking up the *ʿoūd*. He performed with Mediterranean choirs in Paris as a chorister, solo vocalist, and occasional percussionist. His musical practice revolves primarily around traditional Arab and Ottoman repertoires, ranging from *muwashshaḥāt* to classical Ottoman instrumental pieces.