"As has been repeated throughout history, it is precisely forest conservation by the state that has made local citizens enemies of the forests." (Radkau 2012: 426). This is the conclusion of Joachim Radkau, an expert in environmental history who has researched the relationship between state power and the natural environment—soil, forest, water, climate etc.

Many of us who are interested in environmental protection, whether it be ratifying the International Convention on Climate Change, introducing a carbon tax, or subsidizing renewable energy, would be surprised by this claim. We would have thought that the problem is not an excess of state involvement, but rather a lack of it. I think many people consider that the state should be more involved in environmental conservation and resource use and devote human and financial resources to its cause. But if we stop for a moment and reflect on Radkau's insights, we realize that we haven't been able to identify the exact effects of state policies about the natural environment on local communities. While it is important to deal with imminent environmental issues, the more serious issues for a changing society are the way forward for a society that creates certain kinds of “problems” and the changes in human society that "solutions" stimulate. That is because it is human society itself that determines exactly “what are the problems that should be solved,” and is, in turn, subject to the outcomes of this interpretation.