Forestry comes up in the early fiscal state’s cameralistics as part of the origin of “sustainability”. Carlowitz focused on avoiding the scarcity of wood in his *Sylvicultura Oeconomica* of 1713. Forests began to be cultivated according to economic principles to maximize yield and revenue to ensure a strong state. Accounting techniques were introduced, requiring close monitoring and registration, normalization, and statistical aggregation of individual objects in nature. From scientific forestry to present forest certification systems, such accounting practices created modern natural-scientific objects subject to control by national and transnational political and economic regimes.

This conference seeks to explore the ways that nature has been aggregated, normalized, and governed. We would like to address different formulations of environmental governmentality in economic and technoscientific administrations of nature, bringing regional-, national-, and global-scale perspectives into the analytic frame of biopolitics. Proposals for papers on one or several of the following topics are especially encouraged:

1. How have aggregations of nature been framed and processed in ways that aligned them with the mechanisms of economic and political regimes? This question addresses accounting methods: How has nature been accounted for? What have been the practices involved in framing natural entities in numerical or fiscal terms, to be quantified, compared, balanced, and controlled?

2. What are the larger economies accounting practices have been involved in? How has nature been taken into account as natural capital, as manageable, marketable, profitable, and exchangeable, and what have the effects of this been?

3. How have accounting practices arbitrated claims of protecting nature with operations of substituting or disposing of nature? This question inquires into the normative values of sustainability politics and how responsibility is understood within them. To what extent have environmental accounting techniques responded to the notion and the program of sustainable development, and how have they shaped it? What narratives of “development” have been licensed by such accounting practices? Have environmental accounting techniques recreated nature in terms that respond primarily to human economic needs and wants?

These questions are intended to spur a historically informed, thought-provoking discussion of “sustainability” as the tricentennial of the concept approaches.

Papers should tie accounting practices and aggregate figures together with the ways they have been utilized in making nature a governable economic and political object, whether in eighteenth-century cameralistics or modern environmental management. For this interdisciplinary endeavor, we actively seek contributions from fields as diverse as the history
of environmental sciences and ecology, history of science and natural philosophy, ecological economics, philosophy, law, and the social and political sciences to provide the broadest spectrum of critical perspectives.

Please send a proposal of no more than 500 words and a brief CV to Bärbel Thomas at B.Thomas@ghi-dc.org. The deadline for submission is April 15, 2008. Participants will be notified by the beginning of May.

The conference, held in English, will focus on discussing 5,000–6,000-word, precirculated papers (due September 10, 2008). Expenses for travel and accommodation will be covered.

Please send inquiries to one of the conveners: Sabine Höhler (hoehler@ghi-dc.org) or Rafael Ziegler (Rafael.Ziegler@cmb.hu-berlin.de)