

**Roundtable**  
**Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Interdisciplinary**  
**Approaches to Nature and Environmental History in Arabic and Islamic**  
**Discourses**

**5 and 6 September 2018**

**Cairo Office of the Orient-Institut Beirut and German Academic Exchange Service**  
**(DAAD) Cairo**

In 2003, UNESCO defined knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe as essential domains of intangible cultural heritage. Nature and environment are essential factors for cultures and often shape culture itself. The interrelation between humankind and the environment as an anthropological issue has influenced all human cultures and societies remarkably, leading to a variety of culturally specific approaches as a response. Environmental history is an increasing academic discipline combining natural sciences with numerous approaches from history, anthropology, geography, social sciences, philosophy as well as law, economics and intellectual history. Literary and cultural studies as well as theology furthermore provide important perspectives on the inescapable entanglement between humankind and their environment.

The COSIMENA Cultural Heritage Cluster represents the newest of seven issue-driven clusters hosted under the DAAD project Clusters of Scientific Innovation in the Middle East and North Africa (COSIMENA).

In the scope of COSIMENA, the DAAD Regional Office Cairo in cooperation with the Orient-Institut Beirut organizes the Roundtable “Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage - Interdisciplinary Approaches to Nature and Environmental History in Arabic and Islamic Discourses” on September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2018. The Roundtable will bring together existing and potential partnerships in the field of Cultural Heritage from different academic disciplines.

The Roundtable “Knowledge of Nature” aims to bring together experts and researchers working in and on the MENA region into a fruitful dialogue concerning past and present issues and future perspectives on nature and environment protection. The Roundtable intends to contribute to the awareness of nature and environment as essential parts of an intangible cultural heritage in Near and Middle Eastern societies that deserves to become re-discovered. The roundtable will also set the stage to create future cooperation in the Cultural Heritage sector between research institutions and researchers in Germany and the countries of the Middle East and North Africa.