

CALL FOR PAPERS

Digital Earths | Material Realities: Sustainability of/in Video Games

2026 Digital Games Research Association, Central and Eastern Europe // Central
and Eastern European Game Studies conference

20-22 November 2026
Warsaw, Poland

Organized by the University of Warsaw in collaboration with
Sustainable **TR**Ansi**T**ion for Europe's **G**ame Industri**ES** (STRATEGIES)

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

CEEGS, the Central and Eastern European Games Studies Conference, is the annual conference of the DiGRA Central and Eastern Europe chapter dedicated to exploring various aspects of games, including digital, analog, and hybrid formats, as well as the cultural and social contexts in which they exist. CEEGS aims to promote and advance game research, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. With a decade-long presence in game studies, CEEGS has established itself as an inclusive and internationally-minded platform, welcoming researchers, academics, and professionals from Europe, North America, and Asia.

THEME AND SCOPE

As we navigate the complexities of the Anthropocene, the relationship between play, technology, and the environment has become a critical focal point for scholars, designers, and players alike (Abraham and Jayemanne 2017, Backe 2017, Chang 2019, Navarro-Remesal 2019, op de Beke 2024). Video games are not merely escapes from reality: they are complex systems that model, simulate, and comment upon our ecological existence. Even more critically, the medium itself is deeply embedded in the material world, reliant on global supply chains, energy consumption, and hardware lifecycles (Fizek et al. 2022).

"Digital Earths | Material Realities" invites scholars and researchers to explore the manifold intersections between game studies and ecology. We seek to investigate how games represent natural environments and how game mechanics reinforce or challenge extractive ideologies, as well as to consider the material footprint of the gaming industry itself.

From the lush, digital wilderness of open-world RPGs to the resource management games and from the carbon footprint of cloud gaming to the rise of solarpunk

narratives, the conference seeks proposals that illuminate the ways in which games shape our understanding of the climate crisis and its attendant concepts of sustainability, ecocriticism, and ecology.

We welcome submissions from a wide variety of disciplines, including game studies, media ecology, environmental humanities, sociology, and design. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- ecocriticism and close readings of environmental narratives in video games
- aesthetics of the “digital sublime”: rendering nature, weather, and flora
- post-apocalyptic vs. solarpunk: (e)utopian and dystopian ecological futures
- animals, plants, and non-human actors in game worlds
- environmental impact of the games industry: e-waste, planned obsolescence, and hardware lifecycles
- carbon footprint of cloud gaming, streaming, and server farms
- sustainability in game production
- systems of extraction and game mechanics
- god games and geo-engineering
- green game mechanics
- serious games and gamification for climate action
- eco-activism within gaming communities
- virtual photography and digital nature tourism
- (anti)colonial ecologies
- extractivism in game worlds (terraforming, land&resource grabs: how games reproduce or challenge colonial ways)
- indie / slow games as eco-design practices, as well as low-poly/low-spec games.

WORKS CITED

Abraham, Benjamin and Darshana Jayemanne, 2017, Where are all the climate change games? Locating digital games' response to climate change, *Transformations* 30.

Backe, Hans-Joachim, 2017, "Within the Mainstream: An Ecocritical Framework for Digital Game History" *Ecozon@8*. Chang, Alenda Y., 2019, *Playing nature: Ecology in video games*. University of Minnesota Press.

Chang, Alenda Y., 2019, *Playing nature: Ecology in video games*. University of Minnesota Press.

Navarro-Remesal, Victor, 2019, "Pixelated nature: ecocriticism, animals, moral consideration, and degrowth in videogames", *LOGOS* 52 vol. 26 no. 2.

op de Beke, Laura, Joost Raessens, Stefan Werning, and Gerald Farca, 2024, *Ecogames: Playful Perspectives on the Climate Crisis*. Amsterdam University Press.

Fizek S., Clavero T., Frings L., Garda M. B., Haggis-Burridge M., Hubert A., Kolek L., Koskinen K. (2022). *Greening Games Education. A Report on Teaching and Researching Environmental Sustainability in the Context of Video Games*. <https://greeningames.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Greening-Games-Report-2023.pdf>

KEY DATES

- **Abstract Submission Deadline:** 14 February 2026
- **Notification of Acceptance:** 30 April 2026
- **Workshops proposals:** 30 May 2026
- **Registration Opens:** 15 June 2026
- **Conference Dates:** 20-22 November 2026

SUBMISSIONS

All CEEGS 2026 papers in the main program must contain original research work and should be submitted as abstracts of approximately 500 words (400 words minimum and 600 words maximum), preferably in .docx format. Each submission needs to be accompanied by a list of references cited within the abstract, which do not count towards the word limit.

All papers will undergo a double-blind peer review process by at least two expert reviewers to ensure a high standard of quality, considering originality, soundness of

method and/or argument, clarity of exposition, and relevance to the conference's thematic areas. For this reason, please remember to anonymize your submission.

A single author may submit multiple abstracts, but will only be allowed to present a maximum of one single-authored and one co-authored paper (or two co-authored papers). The Doctorals Consortium and workshops do not count towards this limit. Details for DC will follow.

If you have questions about the review process, please contact the Program Chair: Agata Waszkiewicz, agata.waszkiewicz@kul.pl

Please note that the submission link will become available in January.

WORKSHOPS

CEEGS has a long tradition of inspiring workshops, primarily for presenting and discussing work-in-progress research. Workshops will take place on the first day of the conference. If you want to propose a workshop, please contact Przemysław Kordos pkordos@al.uw.edu.pl.

Workshops can be proposed by May 30.

CONFERENCE FEE

To be announced soon.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Agata Waszkiewicz, agata.waszkiewicz@kul.pl

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HEAD OF LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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For information and updates, please refer to the conference website <https://ceegs.eu> or join [the CEEGS Discord server](#).