



Societies and cultures are culturally, politically and environmentally distinctive

According to Bankoff, scientific reasoning that has prevailed from the nineteenth century onwards contributed to the “growing conviction that geomedical boundaries restricted races to what were termed their 'ancestral environments'” (Bankoff, 2003, p. 7; see also Harrison, 1996). For instance, some regions like Equatorial were defined as “ones unsuited to Europeans”. Arnold argues that the scientific knowledge, increasingly substantiated by statistical enumeration and by “a medical geography that attributed local diseases to specific climates, vegetation and physical topographies, produced not only a literature on warm climates but also invented a particular discourse that he refers to as tropicality” (Bankoff, 2003, p. 7; see also Arnold, 1996). The important characteristic of this discourse is the creation of a “sense of otherness” that “Europeans attached to the tropical environment”, the climate and topography, but also to the societies and cultures. It was, according to Arnold (1996, p. 6): “a Western way of defining something culturally and politically alien, as well as environmentally distinctive”.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Local knowledge](#)

Disaster Phases: [Prevention](#), [Preparedness](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [National research bodies](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

Source

[Deliverable D4.2 "Report on 'risk cultures' in the context of disasters" \(page 26\)](#)

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