

# EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

the present issue of *Pacific Geographies* discusses various topics. The first two articles are dealing with the mountainous remote regions of Southeast Asia. The APSA-member Sebastian Koch highlights recent positive developments in terms of forest governance in Lao PDR, especially since the implementation of processes and mechanisms such as REDD+ and FLEGT after the new government took over in early 2016. Mathias Faust from the NGO "Electricians Without Borders" introduces about a rural electrification project for the Red Dao minority in Ca Lo, Vietnam.

This issue also contains a travel report about a country which some label as the most evil place on earth. The author prefers to stay anonymous. As you might have followed the news, only a few weeks ago, Otto Warmbier, the 22-year-old University of Virginia student was released from a North Korean prison after spending 17 months in captivity and more than a year in a coma. He died only a week after returning home. He had travelled from Beijing to Pyongyang with a tour group and was arrested at Pyongyang International Airport upon his departure. Otto Warmbier had to go on trial where he confessed to stealing a propaganda poster and was sentenced to 15 years of hard labour.

The APSA member Britta Schmitz, a regular contributor to our journal, did accomplish another excellent book review. This time, she had a closer look at "Totenkranz", the third crime novel dealing with Hanoi-based special agent Ly and written by the Hamburg-based author Nora Luttmer.

Last but not least, we would like you to know that our journal has received a new web design based on a state-of-the-art content management system. Please have a look at: [www.pacific-geographies.org](http://www.pacific-geographies.org). We sincerely hope you like it and that you also enjoy this new issue of *Pacific Geographies*.

The managing editors, Michael Waibel & Matthias Kowasch

## Pacific Geographies

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In order to uphold scientific standards, the PG is implementing a peer-review process. Articles marked as „scientific papers“ have been peer-reviewed by two external reviewers. Articles marked as „research notes“ have been peer-reviewed by one external reviewer and a member of the editorial board. All other articles have been reviewed by the editorial board.

APSA-Members receive the *PACIFIC GEOGRAPHIES* at no cost as a membership benefit.



The Association for Pacific Studies (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Pazifische Studien e.V., APSA) was founded in 1987 at the Department of Geography of the University of Technology in Aachen. Activities include workshops, conferences, public lectures and poster exhibitions. The book series *PAZIFIK FORUM* was initiated in 1990. In 1992, it was complemented by the journal *PACIFIC GEOGRAPHIES*.

The APSA sees itself as one of the largest scientific networks in Germany for academics and practitioners with an interest in the Asia-Pacific region as well as academic exchange.

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### COVER PICTURE

Village consultation meeting in Ban  
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