

Prologue

The presented conference proceedings, which were prepared as a result of the 2021 digital world congress "Draft Animals in the Past, Present and Future" fits excellently into the further efforts of the State Castles and Gardens of Hesse to implement the sustainability strategy (Hessische Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie) defined by the State administration. Thus, not only educational approaches such as the newly implemented "Knowledge growing in the Garden" in Bad Homburg Castle Gardens as well as acquired third-party projects such as the competition "Landscape in Motion" awarded by the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region are part of this, but also just such as the here presented publication projects. Once again, it becomes clear that our historical cultural monuments can also provide important impulses and contributions to discussions on current issues of sustainability, and that these are in fact desirable. In the special context of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey, the UNESCO Convention and the UN Sustainable Development Goals constantly are serving as important anchor points for reflecting on and following up on our own projects. The results of the conference dedicated to draft animals therefore also have to be seen as an outcome of that reflexion-process.

The conference proceedings impressively show that only the inclusion of historical dimensions allows for a complete coverage of the topic of "animal traction" and that the networking efforts undertaken by the Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory, which made the collaboration of this international body of authors possible in the first place, can certainly serve as a role model in any cultural context.

Hermann Schefers
Director of Lorsch Abbey

