During its second phase the interdisciplinary collaborative research centre SFB 1070 RESSOURCENKULTUREN (RESOURCECULTURES) will expand the economic understanding of resources and scrutinise the social and cultural dynamics of the use of resources. About sixty researchers from various academic disciplines such as archaeological, anthropological and historical sciences, Geography, Classical Philology and Theology, collaborate in more than twenty interdisciplinary projects. The studies of different cultural regions and eras are focusing on processes and events that cause change of resources and their use.

SFB 1070 applies a comprehensive concept of resources. Tangible resources, such as raw materials or trade goods, as well as intangible resources, for example knowledge or networks, are understood within their cultural dimensions. This concept serves as a fundament for a better understanding of the creation, maintenance and transformation of social relations, units and identities. Resources are not considered as isolated economic factors, but as an integral part of a network of objects, human individuals, groups, knowledge and practice.

The geographical frame spans from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and from the Iberian Peninsula to South and Central Asia. From the age of the Neanderthals, the Mesopotamian civilisations, the periods of colonisations of Phoenicians and Romans to the time of the Vikings and present times development and use of resources are analysed. This includes the development of new land, the use of different categories of food, as well as medical or religious aspects.

In addition, the junior research groups ‘A Cultural History of Water in Central Asia’, and ‘Forging the Political Landscape in Iron Age Turkey’, the latter including an excavation in Zincirli/Turkey are associated to the SFB, as well as the international cooperation ‘Soil and Human Culture Dynamics during the Holocene Epoch’.

External cooperation is at the heart of the SFB 1070 cooperation with leading German and international institutions. The institutional cooperation of SFB 1070 ensures that the results of interdisciplinary research are directly relevant for society.
In Project Division A. DEVELOPMENTS diachronic long-term analyses of the role of resources in processes of cultural and social change are conducted with a focus on the relation between human behaviour and natural environment concerning the use of resources. Questioning the role of resources and ResourceComplexes in socio-political processes, such as the emergence of hierarchies, will be of special interest.

In Project Division B. MOVEMENTS the impact of resources on processes connected to the development and settlement of (new) spaces is studied. Central topics are resource-connected conditions for the appropriation of space, the perception and conceptualisation of space, migrational behaviour and the understanding of culturally dependent assignment of value to resources.

The projects of division C. VALUATIONS are dealing with resource related creation of value. The symbolic dimensions of resources are highlighted, showing the related Resource-Complexes to be networks of objects, people, knowledge and practices. The division’s projects try to answer the question what kinds of processes lead to a creation or elimination of resources, a stabilisation or de-stabilisation of systems, their termination or endurance, and, most crucially: how it is possible to control these processes.