



The requirements for sustainable management of environmental resources in general, and of water in particular, have been a topic of continued concern. Critical voices have recognized that prevailing environmental resources management approaches have been mechanistic and technocratic largely neglecting complexity and the human dimension and have argued for a radical paradigm shift. In terms of policy approaches, there has been a tendency to focus on standard policy solutions (e.g. liberalisation of water services) for vastly different policy contexts and situations, many of which have had counter-productive results. This ongoing debate has been fuelled by prospects of climate and global change which render the conditions under which management has to perform increasingly unpredictable.

Globalization exhibits breathtaking dynamics and leads to large scale changes with unprecedented speed. In particular climate change and the concomitant increase of extreme weather events has exposed the vulnerability and lack of resilience of water resource management regimes. Many problems are not primarily associated with the resource base but can be attributed to governance failures and poor understanding of how ecosystem – human institution interactions further affect ecosystem services and human use. The human dimension has a central role and strong emphasis needs to be given to governance issues.

Governance embraces the full complexity of a wide range of regulatory processes and their interaction. This is reflected in the definition of water governance by UNDP: "Water governance refers to the range of political, social, economic and administrative systems that are in place to regulate development and management of water resources and provisions of water services at different levels of society (UNDP, 2000)".

A major challenge is to understand how all these different processes in concert determine certain policy outcomes and how change in governance regimes occurs. What is required to increase the adaptive capacity of governance regimes and meet at the same time the normative principles of 'good water governance'? Governance regimes are characterized by self-organization, emergence and diverse leadership. What is yet lacking in general is a profound understanding of what "managing change" might imply in such diffuse, complex and multi-level networks, how all these complex processes act in concert and under which conditions they lead to a sustainable governance of environmental resources. The conference will make a major contribution to establishing the state of the art, to identify major future challenges and support the establishment of a scholarly community in the emerging field of water governance.

RESEARCH CONFERENCES

ESF Conference in Partnership with LFUI

Water Governance: Meeting the Challenges of Global Change

Universitätszentrum Obergurgl (Ötz Valley, near Innsbruck), Austria

5-10 June 2011

Chairs: **Claudia Pahl-Wostl** - University of Osnabrück, DE;
Joyeeta Gupta - IVM FU Amsterdam, NL & **Theo Toonen** -
TU Delft, NL



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Invited Speakers will provisionally include:

Paula Antunes, UNL Lisbon, PT; **Frank Biermann**, VU Amsterdam, NL; **Janos Bogardi**, GWSP, Bonn, DE; **Declan Conway**, UEA, UK; **William Cosgrove**, Ecoconsult Inc. Montreal, CA; **Matthias Finger**, IDHEAP Lausanne, CH; **Helen Ingram**, UCI Irvine, US; **Louis Lebel**, USER/ CMU, TH; **Josefina Maestu**, UN-Water DPAC, ES; **Lyla Mehta**, U. Sussex, UK; **Peter Mollinga**, SOAS London, UK; **Elinor Ostrom**, Indiana U., Bloomington, US; **Claudia Pahl-Wostl**, U. Osnabrück, DE; **Roger A. Pielke**, U. Colorado, Bolder, US/ CIRES, US; **Benoit Rihoux**, UCL Louvain, BE; **Maria Saleth**, MIDS Chennai, IN; **Roland Schulze**, KwaZulu Natal U., Scottsville, ZA; **Koos Wieriks**, Dutch Advisory Committee of Water, NL

Application form & programme available from
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Closing date for applications: **21 February 2011**

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- **William Cosgrove**, Ecoconsult Inc. Montreal, CA
A complementary keynote speech from a policy/practitioner's perspective
- **Matthias Finger**, Management of Public Enterprises, IDHEAP, EPFL, Lausanne, CH
- **Helen Ingram**, University of California, Irvine, US
Beyond universal remedies for good water governance
- **Louis Lebel**, USER - Unit for Social and Environmental Research and Chiang Mai University, TH
Transitions in water governance: a perspective from developing countries
- **Josefina Maestu**, UN-Water Decade Programme of Advocacy and Communication, ES
- **Lyla Mehta**, University of Sussex, UK
Politics of scarcity and security aspects
- **Peter Mollinga**, SOAS, London, UK
New perspectives on global environmental governance
- **Elinor Ostrom**, Indiana University, Bloomington, US
Video Conference - Beyond panaceas, need for shared ontologies on data from socio-ecological systems
- **Claudia Pahl-Wostl**, University of Osnabrück, DE
- The importance of the overall field and the session themes from a scientific perspective
- Dynamics of governance and role of multi-level and multi-scale learning processes
- **Roger A. Pielke**, University of Colorado, and Fellow of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), US
- **Benoit Rihoux**, Université catholique de Louvain (UCL), BE
Qualitative comparative analysis and related methods
- **Maria Saleth**, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), Chennai, IN
Institutional economics of water – cross-country analyses of water governance regimes and their performance
- **Roland Schulze**, University of KwaZulu Natal, Scottsville, ZA
Climate change impacts on water, hydrological regimes
- **Koos Wieriks**, Secretary to the Dutch Advisory committee of Water, NL

The conference is open to scientists world-wide, whether from academia or industry. Attendance is possible only after successful application. A certain number of **grants** will be available for early-stage researchers to cover the conference fee and possibly part of the travel costs. Grant requests should be made by ticking appropriate field(s) in the paragraph "Grant application" of the [application form](#).

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This conference is organised by the European Science Foundation (ESF), in partnership with the Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck (LFUI).



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