

**WINS Seminar** [Winter Semester 2016/17]

The WINS Seminar is held during academic term on Thursday afternoons, 15:00–17:00 hrs (ct), in Room 4088 of the IRI THESys, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Quartier Stadtmitte, Friedrichstrasse 191, 10117 Berlin.

The format is 45 min. lecture, 45 min. discussion.

Sustainability of interlinked social, ecological and technical systems crucially depends on whether they are regularized by appropriate institutions and governance structures. It is, therefore, important to shed light on the complexity and diversity which characterize such interlinked systems. This is urgent in view of persistent global food problems, increasing scarcity of natural resources, growing degradation of the environment and the future challenges societies face due to climate change and energy insecurity.

Study of sustainable social-ecological systems requires intense exchange and mutual learning between scholars of different disciplines. It is the overarching scholarly aim of WINS to facilitate this exchange and mutual learning and the WINS Seminar is a key instrument for achieving this.

**Semester Theme, Winter Semester 2016/2017**

**Governability in the Anthropocene**

As the negative impacts of anthropogenic climate change, habitat destruction, pollution and resource depletion become ever more prominent, the failure of contemporary governance structures to provide for effective solutions is increasingly apparent. Scholars from a range of disciplines argue that the basic form of governance challenges has changed as humanity has achieved a more or less fully globalized and industrialised world. It has been argued that conventional institutions such as states, markets and international organisations are no longer up to the task of ensuring governability in what has come to be called the Anthropocene.

The question of whether or not the Anthropocene can be governed at all has been raised and it has even been suggested that democracy and free-trade might be incompatible with achieving governability in the Anthropocene. Some scholars see these challenges as an opportunity to address long recognized limitations in contemporary institutions, others see them as a matter of grave concern, a threat to democracy and to free-trade. This year, for the WS 2016/17 WINS Seminar, WINS takes up this debate about governability in the Anthropocene as a guiding thematic for the Seminar series. In this way we aim to foster critical and constructive dialogue on the topic and invite presenters to address, within the scope of their area of expertise and interests, and to address within their lecture, their position regarding what role(s) institutions might be playing in shaping these governability problems and whether, and if so, how they might contribute toward solving them.

**\* NEW this year \* Platz zum Querdenken (off the beaten track)**

This year WINS will dedicate three Seminars (the first Thursdays of Nov., Dec. and Feb.) to make space for lateral thinking and debate on the Seminar Theme - Governability in the Anthropocene. In place of a 45 min. lecture 45 min. discussion format, these three Platz zum Querdenken Seminars will be organised around questions and issues arising in the Seminar, with a more open discussion format, short stimulus interventions from practitioners, scholars and students and more dialogue.

**IRI THESys**

Integrative Research Institute  
on Transformations of  
Human- Environment Systems

**WINS**

Berlin Workshop in  
Institutional Analysis of  
Social-Ecological Systems

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