

Educating leadership for sustainable environments

**Conceptual Basis of the International
M.Sc.-Programme 'Environmental Governance'
at the University of Freiburg**

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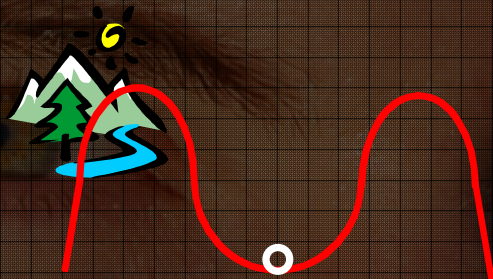
Introduction

- Literal ‘governance-hype’ in recent years (Jann 2005)
- ‘Environmental Governance’-hype at the University of Freiburg: high interest of students, media, international organisations
- Blurring functional, structural and / or territorial boundaries as main reasons for the career of the term ‘governance’ in environmental policy?

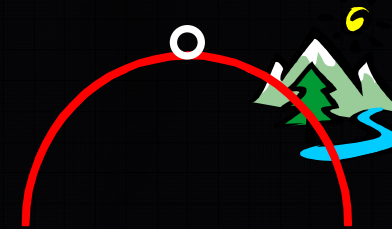
Challenges of Environmental Governance

- Uncertain facts: complexity; pervasiveness; multiple causations; mutual interdependencies;
- Provisional facts: dynamic change; non-linear threshold effects; catastrophic, irreversible and discontinuous features
- ‘Wicked’ environmental problems
 - No accepted definition of the problem
 - One problem is interrelated with others
 - Precarious solutions: no right or wrong, only more or less adequate

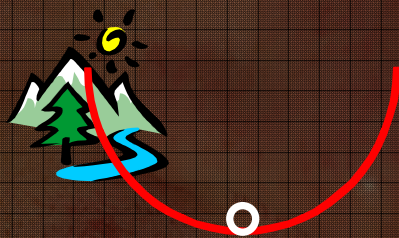
Sound of clashing certainties



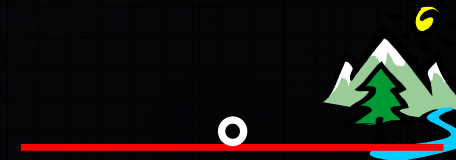
Nature Perverse / Tolerant



Nature Ephemeral



Nature Benign



Nature Capricious

(Following Thompson und Schwarz 1990)

Implications

- Growing awareness of
 - social constructivist perspectives in general
 - ‘skills of governance’ are seen as necessary for the management of problems due to the limitations of natural sciences to provide ‘proof’
- Alternative perspective on environm. knowledge:
 - environmental knowledge is created anew in argumentation processes;
 - sharp distinction between scientific and ordinary knowledge is disappearing
 - communicative action itself informatizes

Requirements for education programme

- Sound knowledge about global environmental and societal changes
- Ability to reflect on societal decision-making processes from different theoretical perspectives
- Skills to design decision-making processes effectively (reconciliation the manifold chorus of stakeholders' interpretations of sustainability)

Strategic design of the MEG

Realising

Understanding

Shaping

Master-Thesis 30 ECTS-P

Conceptual / Methodological
Thesis Topics

or

Specific Thesis Topics
relevant to Home Country

or

Strategic Environmental
Assessments

Internship

Student-
Organized
Events

Research
Skills

Elective 3

Elective 4

Integrated
System
Design
(case study II)

Elective 2

Economics,
Institutions &
the Environment

Environmental
Policy
Analysis

Sociology and
Psychology of
Environmental
Knowledge

Ecosystem
Management

Internship

Joint module
with MSc-FEM

Sustainability
and Governance

Global
Environmental
Changes

Global
Societal
Changes

Managing
human-
environ.
Interactions

Elective 1

Regional
Studies
(case study I)

Joint module
with MSc-FEM

Joint module
with MSc-FEM

Ability for reflection

- Realisation of pluralism of science
(as exemplified by controversy about Lomborg's book)
- Understanding of comparative shortcomings:
Intensive discussions and comparative reflections on
several disciplinary approaches
- Promote self-reflection and ability for reasoned
argumentation
- Teaching 'not know-how, but know-why' (students
themselves draw conclusions)

Procedural and persuasive rationality

- Necessity to 'cope with clashing certainties'
- Procedural rationality in complex negotiations: agreement on the 'rules of the game'
- Persuasive rationality in complex negotiations: communicative attachment to mutual shared beliefs of 'right behaviour'
- Preparation of students for deliberative role:
 - Ability to develop capacities / institutions for self-governing
 - Argumentative skills in public discourse
 - Skills of moderation, mediation, deliberation

Context-sensitivity

- Three integrated case-studies (each three weeks)
- Selection based upon strategic considerations:
 - thematically: globally most environmental problems
 - scales: from local to international level, from cells to ecosystems
 - geographically: different regions and continents
- Integrated modules, international experienced tutors
- Assorted background of students (geographical origins, several disciplines, significant work experiences)



Shape. Complex. Futures.

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