



EDITORIAL by Sabine Weiland (*Freie Universität Berlin*). The Freie Universität Berlin and the LIAISE Network of Excellence invite papers for the 2012 'Berlin Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change', which will be the 11th event in the series of annual European Conferences. This year's conference theme "Evidence for Sustainable Development" addresses the knowledge basis of political decisions required for sustainable development, the construction of evidence, and the ways evidence is used in decision-making. Two questions will be in focus: 1. How can the research process be organised to develop evidence that is considered relevant and timely in the political process to meet the challenges of sustainable development? 2. How can the science-policy interface be organised in a way that such scientific evidence is taken into consideration?

The conference aims at bringing together scientists from different disciplines and strands of research that produce evidence to support decision-making for sustainable development, and those that study the use of such evidence. Most notably, we invite researchers whose knowledge, tools and models potentially are relevant for sustainable development but who have not yet been involved in policy assessment and the support of decision making. Furthermore, we invite policy-makers and practitioners working at the science-policy interface or dealing with issues of evidence use in policy making to share their experiences. With this conference, LIAISE aims to contribute to one of its core objectives, namely to actively bridge the gap between science and policy-making.

The conference will be held in Berlin on 5-6 October, 2012. For details see the [Call for Papers](#): paper proposals may be submitted via the [Conference website](#) until April 1st 2012.

LIAISE News

• **2012 Berlin Conference on "Evidence for Sustainable Development"**

The 2012 Berlin Conference on "Evidence for Sustainable Development", which is jointly organised by the Environmental Policy Research Centre at FU Berlin and the LIAISE Network of Excellence, will be held on 5-6 October, 2012. This year's conference theme addresses the knowledge basis of political decisions required for sustainable development, the construction of evidence, and the ways evidence is used in decision-making. Paper proposals may be submitted via the conference website until 1 April.

• **LIAISE Toolbox Update - Development of Beta Platform Started**

LIAISE is developing a Shared Toolbox as a virtual platform for interaction between researchers and practitioners of Impact Assessment (IA). This toolbox will help practitioners to identify knowledge relevant for the assessment of 'their' policies. It includes a number of information databases, such as IA experts, best practice examples of IA, background information on impact areas, methods for IA, computer models for IA. After a successful launch of an Alpha prototype, the implementation of the Toolbox Beta has now started. If you want to take part in the testing of the LIAISE Toolbox, please contact the LIAISE project office at info@liaise-noe.eu.

• **First LIAISE Winter School Successfully Finished**

From 10-13 January, 2012 the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ in Leipzig hosted the first LIAISE Winter School on "Tools and Modelling for Impact Assessment". 18 participants from eleven different countries discussed on tool use, modelling approaches, policy assessment and sustainability. Lecturers and tutors from within and beyond the LIAISE Network of Excellence gave interdisciplinary insights into different approaches to policy assessment.

• **The World Sustainability Ranking According to the FEEM Sustainability Index**

The new edition of the FEEM Sustainability Index (FEEM SI 2011) was presented and discussed at FEEM headquarters in Milan. The FEEM SI provides a unique and precious instrument to assess the sustainability of development policies. Building upon the existing literature in this field of research and addressing the need to go 'beyond GDP' in the assessment of sustainability, the FEEM SI is an aggregate index which, thanks to its foundations in a recursive-dynamic computable general equilibrium model, provides future projections of sustainability across world countries and over time.

• **LIAISE Participating Organisation at 8th Sustainability Forum "Earth: A Project for the Future"**

LIAISE has become one of the participating organisations of the 8th Sustainability Forum "Partners for the Year of Science 2012" organised by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF). This year's theme will be "Earth: A project for the future". The Year of Science 2012 shall identify interrelations and give concrete proposals and advice for sustainable action. Institutions and organisations from science, economy and society are encouraged to help design the Year of Science. Partners of the Year of Science can present their activities to the public and make their research on sustainable development more visible.

• **LIAISE at the Leuphana Sustainability Summit**

At the Leuphana Sustainability Summit, which will be held in Lueneburg, Germany, from 29 February - 2 March, 2012, LIAISE organises a special session on "Policy Assessment - How to Include Scientific Knowledge in Political Decision Making" (speakers: Wolf-Michael Catenhusen, former State Secretary, Vice-chair of the German National Regulatory Control Council; Klaus Jacob, Sabine Weiland, both Freie Universität Berlin). Moreover, LIAISE organises a workshop on "Tools to Support Sustainability Transition in a Rural-urban Context" (speakers: Annette Plorr, Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research; Dirk Wascher, Freie Universität Berlin; chair: Katharina Helming, Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research).

• **LIAISE Session at TEEB Conference "Mainstreaming the Economics of Nature: Challenges for Science and Implementation"**

At the TEEB Conference 2012 "Mainstreaming the Economics of Nature: Challenges for Science and Implementation", to be held in Leipzig, Germany, from 19-22 March 2012, LIAISE organises a session entitled "Integrating ecosystems and biodiversity in policy impact assessment". This session aims to present a set of research papers that study the integration of ecosystem and biodiversity considerations in policy IA, thereby addressing the following research questions: How can ecosystem and biodiversity considerations be integrated in policy IA? What evidence-based tools for the assessment of ecosystem impacts in policy IA are needed? In particular, how can ecosystem impacts be quantified? How could policy IA also be used as a platform for transferring knowledge across scales and linking different levels of governance? How could IA systems benefit from (local) stakeholders' knowledge?

• **LIAISE Special Session at EAERE Annual Conference 2012**

LIAISE partners Klaus Rennings (ZEW) and Francesco Bosello (Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, FEEM) are organising a special session on "Linking Economic Approaches with Other Disciplines - How Environmental Economics Contributes to Sustainability Impact Assessment" at the annual conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (EAERE) 2012 in Prague, which will be held from 27-30 June, 2012. Sustainability impact assessment has become an important issue at the European policy level. Every important regulation spanning from the field of climate change mitigation, to agricultural policy reform, to biodiversity protection has to undergo an ex ante impact assessment, including an estimation of likely economic, ecological and social impacts. This exercise clearly requires a lot of interdisciplinary research where environmental economics interacts with other disciplines and investigation approaches.

• **LIAISE Session on Impact Assessment of Energy Policies at the Annual IAIA Conference**

A LIAISE session on "Research for policy impact assessment for energy policies" will be held at the annual IAIA Conference on "Energy Future. The Role of Impact Assessment" (27 May-1 June, 2012, in Porto, Portugal). The session presents research related to policy impact assessment by example of renewable and non-renewable energy policies in the European Commission and the EU member states.

Publications from the LIAISE network

- **[LIAISE Working Paper No.1: Green Economy Discourses in the Run-Up to Rio 2012](#)**

The study analyses central contributions to the debate on the concept of a Green Economy in the run-up to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. It does so by identifying the pillars on which the various understandings of a green economy are based as well as analysing policy concepts published and statements made. It concludes that currently there are three distinguishable discourses on the green economy and that the political challenge for the Rio+20 conference will lie in building bridges between these different understandings to build a consensus. A central role for the EESC is seen in supporting the EU's role as a role model and helping to build the bridges and adapt the concept in other countries.

- **[Simulating Land Use Policies Targeted to Protect Biodiversity with the CLUE-Scanner Model](#)**

This chapter from the collected edition by Yongyut Trisurat, Rajendra P. Shrestha and Rob Alkemade (editors): "Land Use, Climate Change and Biodiversity Modeling: Perspectives and Applications" presents an integrated modeling approach for assessing land use changes and its effects on biodiversity. A modeling framework consisting of a macro-economic model, a land use change model, and biodiversity indicator models is described and illustrated with a scenario study for the European Union.

- **[A Rural Typology for Strategic European Policies](#)**

The role that the agricultural sector plays in rural areas has considerably changed in the last five decades, and is reflected in a major shift towards multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral land use. The rural typology presented in this paper has been produced as a response to a new policy need for typologies addressing the diversity in regional rurality. This new rural typology incorporates two dimensions identified by statistical screening of a range of geographical and socioeconomic data related to the territorial variation of European rural land.

- **[Environmental Policy](#)**

Underpinning environmental politics is the tense relationship between an identifiable 'environmental state' and its opposite numbers representing the social and economic realms. As the section shows, this inherent tension can be better understood first through tracing the historical evolution of environmental policy, then outlining its distinctive characteristics and finally, by identifying its underlying rationales. While this overview would suggest that environmental policy development has resulted in a great deal of state-building, the overall impacts on the state of the environment are not so clear.

- **[Evaluation of Agricultural Policy Reforms in the European Union](#)**

This report provides an overview of the main characteristics and structure of the current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its developments in the last 25 years in a changing environment within and outside the EU. This report further suggests improvements in the market orientation, competitiveness and risk management at all levels of the food chain, and pleads for clarifying the link between policy measures and objectives through better targeting, and strengthening evidence on which to base policies.

- **[EXIOPOL Briefs: Bottom-up and Top-down Approach for Policy Analysis](#)**

On 12 October, 2011, the four-year EU-funded EXIOPOL project coordinated by FEEM, held its final conference in Luxembourg. The project's main findings are summarised in two briefs, representing the Bottom up and Top down approaches developed in EXIOPOL.



Events

- **[Stadtkolloquium: Interdisciplinary Urban PhD Research Seminar, Annual Workshop 2012](#)**

The UCL Urban Laboratory is organizing its annual 2-day workshop for PhD research students in urban-related disciplines, to be held on 26-27 March, 2012 at University College London. Stadtkolloquium aims to create a supportive environment for urban researchers who to develop their work and meet PhD students from other departments and universities. The workshop is unique in that all participants agree to both present their work and support others in doing so in small group sessions.

- **[PhD Conference "Knowledge Gaps in Climate Change Research – How Are You Tackling It?"](#)**

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change is hosting the second annual PhD Conference at the University of East Anglia (Norwich, UK) from the 11-13th April 2012. The theme is "Knowledge Gaps in Climate Change Research – How are you tackling it?", reflecting the innovative and interdisciplinary research being carried out by PhD researchers across the UK and wider world. There will be four paper sessions reflecting the four themes of the Tyndall Centre: Land and Water, Cities and Coasts, Governance and Behaviour, and Energy and Emissions.

- **[11th Annual IAS-STS Conference "Critical Issues in Science and Technology Studies"](#)**

A call for abstracts has been issued for a conference on science and technology, organized by the Institute for Advanced Studies on Science, Technology and Society in Graz, Austria, to be held from 7-8 May, 2012. Sessions will be organized on the following issues, among others: Mobile learning and working; Ethical, Legal and Social Aspects of Human Genetics and Agricultural Biotechnology; Knowledge Brokerage as participatory interaction processes linking research, policy and civil society.

- **[ESRC Research Seminar "Eco-city Politics: National Policy, Local Leadership, Public Accountability"](#)**

The ESRC Research Seminar Series – The Governance of Eco-City Innovation announces its third event on "Eco-city politics: national policy, local leadership, public accountability", which will be held 10 February, 2012, at the University of Westminster, London. It assesses the challenges involved in achieving effective leadership for sustainable urban development in different national and sub-national governance and policy contexts.

- **[26th European Conference on Modelling and Simulation](#)**

The European Conference on Modelling and Simulation (ECMS), to be held from 29 May - 1 June, 2012, in Koblenz, Germany, is an international conference dedicated to help define the state of the art in the field of creating, defining and building innovative simulation systems, simulation and modelling tools and techniques, and novel applications for modelling and simulation.

- **[Conference on "Health. Development. Inequality. Economic Modelling Of How Health And Inequalities Shape Development."](#)**

The goal of the conference on "Health. Development. Inequality. Economic Modelling Of How Health And Inequalities Shape Development", to be held in Darmstadt, Germany, on 1-3 June, 2012, is to bring together international scholars working on aspects of the health and development nexus for exchange of ideas and discussion of recent results within theoretical and applied economic research.

- **[Local Politics, Global Impacts: Steps to a Multi-Disciplinary Analysis of Scales](#)**

The University of Chicago and the French Development Agency announce a conference to be held in Paris, France, on 14-15 June, 2012, devoted to exploring concerns about global impacts of local politics and power relations and helping scholars to exchange concepts, research designs, methods and professional networks. Possible research subjects may include, but are not limited to, the epistemology of scale analysis, climate change, environmental protection, global health, food security, financial crisis, international security and social violence.

- **[GRONEN Research Conference 2012 on "Corporate Sustainability - Off to Pastures New or Back to the Roots?"](#)**

The GRONEN Research Conference 2012 on "Corporate Sustainability - Off to Pastures New or Back to the Roots?" will be held on 26-29 June, 2012 in Southern France's Provence region and is organised by Euromed Management School Marseille. The conference will offer different formats and workshops to foster academic exchange and novel perspectives on research into corporate sustainability. The Call for Papers is open until 15 February, 2012.

- **[15th Annual Conference on Global Economic Analysis "New Challenges for Global Trade and Sustainable Development"](#)**

From 27-29 June, 2012, the 15th Annual Conference on Global Economic Analysis will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on the topic: "New Challenges for Global Trade and Sustainable Development". The goal of the conference is to promote the exchange of ideas among economists conducting quantitative analysis of global economic issues. Particular emphasis will be placed on applied general equilibrium methods, data, and application.

- **[Conference "Governing Pooled Knowledge Resources- Building Institutions for Sustainable Scientific, Cultural and Genetic Resource Commons"](#)**

The 1st Global Thematic IASC Conference on the Knowledge Commons, to be held from 12-14 September, 2012, in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, aims to bring together leading people from a number of international scientific research communities, social science researchers, practitioners and policy analysts, to discuss the rationale and practical feasibility of institutional arrangements designed to emulate key public domain conditions for collaborative research. A variety of initiatives and policies have been proposed that are going beyond "open access", and aim to facilitate more effective and extensive (global) sharing on local and global pools of not only scientific information and data but also genetic resources and cultural expressions.

- **[Annual Conference of the Society for Tropical Ecology](#)**

From 22 - 25 February, 2012, the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg will host the Annual Conference of the Society for Tropical Ecology, focusing on the Islands in land- and seascape. It aims at maximizing interactions among scientists of all disciplines and backgrounds who are interested in tropical biogeography and biodiversity.



Policies

- **[EEA Data: Most Carmakers Must Further Improve Carbon Efficiency By 2015](#)**

According to updated data published by the European Environment Agency (EEA) several carmakers need to make their fleets even more carbon-efficient in order to meet 2012 CO2 emissions target. Almost all manufacturers must reduce emissions to meet 2015 targets under European legislation for new passenger cars, based on average CO2 emissions for each manufacturer.

- **[EU Publishes Energy Road Map To 2050](#)**

The EU has published an energy road map to 2050 which explore five decarbonising scenarios. Scenarios involving more energy efficiency and renewables will cost about the same as if Europe continues to rely heavily on fossil fuels and nuclear. Meeting the EU's climate goal for 2050 means CO2 emissions from the power sector will have to drop by more than 90%.

- **[European Commission Launches Eco-Innovation Action Plan](#)**

An eco-innovation action plan to stimulate green growth in the EU has been published by the European Commission. The Eco-Innovation Action Plan (Eco-AP) replaces the Environmental Technologies Action Plan, launched in 2004. The plan includes a variety of measures to overcome the barriers preventing the development and spread of eco-technologies, particularly among SMEs.

- **[European Commission Reveals Plan For LIFE+ Funding 2014-20](#)**

The European Commission proposes to support environmental law implementation under its LIFE+ environmental funding programme during the 2014-20 budget period. The new Integrated Projects will focus on implementation at a regional or national level, including regional Natura 2000 networks, river basin management plans, cross-border flood prevention strategies and climate adaptation plans.

- **[New EEA Report: How 'Green Infrastructure' Can Improve Sustainable Land Use](#)**

The European Energy Agency has released a new report on "How 'green infrastructure' can improve sustainable land use". The overall question "What can a strategy for green infrastructure look like?" is answered by explaining the concept of green infrastructure and asking for mechanisms that could help integrating greener infrastructure into policies using monitoring systems.

- **[UN Secretary-General Launches International Year of Sustainable Energy for All](#)**

During his address to the opening ceremony of the fifth World Future Energy Summit (WFES), UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the "International Year of Sustainable Energy for All", stressing the need to end energy poverty to ensure equal opportunities. Ban described the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, also known as Rio+20) as the beginning of a multi-year mission to achieve sustainable energy for all.



Training

- **[The Global Sustainability Summer School 2012](#)**

35 young professionals from universities, governmental and non-governmental agencies and industry from all over the world will meet at IASS and PIK to explore and discuss globally pressing sustainability issues such as risks from dangerous climate change, extreme events and urgent societal and economic responses. The programme will comprise lectures, field trips and interactive project activities. Lecturers will come from all three institutions but also include other leading international scientists as well as politicians and key representatives of civil society.

- **[Advanced Course: Decision Support Systems for the Development and Environmental Management of Rural Areas](#)**

In this course participants will be introduced to ways in which decisions can be made in a more informed and structured manner as a prelude to more detailed understanding of the components of DSS and their integration and application. Emphasis is placed on readily accessible tools enabling qualitative and quantitative analysis and evaluation as well as examples of more integrated systems applied to critical problems. Lectures will be interspersed with practical sessions led by expert developers.

- **[Training Course on Applied Regulatory Impact Assessment](#)**

Jacobs and Associates is organizing a training course on applied regulatory impact assessment to take place on 7-11 May, 2012 in Rome. The course will benefit anyone using RIA in environmental, social and economic fields as well as stakeholders such as business associations, NGOs and consultants who want to understand better how to use RIA constructively. More information is available online.

- **[Summer School on "Individual and Agent-based Modelling"](#)**

The Summer School on "Individual and Agent-based Modelling" provides an overview over the state-of-the art in individual and agent-based modelling, model development, implementation, parameterization, and sensitivity analysis. Further topics are the handling of uncertainties in data, the design of simulation experiments and the statistical analyses of their results. The Summer School will be held from 7-15 June, 2012 in Bad Schandau, Germany and is organized by TU Dresden.

- **[European Summer School of Resources and Environmental Economics on Management of International Water](#)**

The 2012 Summer School will take place from 1-7 July, 2012 at the VIU campus on the Island of San Servolo, in Venice. The theme of this Summer School is Management of International Water. The focus will be on several aspects of international water management that have been emerging from recent work in several disciplines. Issues to be addressed include negotiation, management models, regional development, global climate change, and transboundary pollution. The deadline for applications is 1 February, 2012.

- **[Winter School: Limits to Growth Revisited](#)**

The Volkswagen Foundation invites applications for its Winter School on "Limits to Growth Revisited", which will be held in Visselhoevede, Germany, from 21 November to 1 December, 2012. The buzzword of our time, "sustainability", is closely related to a book published 40 years ago, in 1972: "The Limits to Growth". Using computer models in an attempt to quantify various aspects of the future, "Limits to Growth" has shaped new modes of thinking. What questions have not been resolved since 1972? What are new questions that are not dealt with in the report? How should one rewrite the "Limits to Growth" study at the beginning of the 21st century?



Links

- **[New SEI Report – Climate Economics: The State of the Art](#)**

According to a new report by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), economic analysis has become increasingly central to the climate policy debate. However, the models and assumptions of climate economics often lag far behind the latest developments in this fast-moving field. SEI published a new report, titled "Climate Economics: The State of the Art", which offers an in-depth review of new developments in climate economics and science since the Stern Review (2006) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment Report (2007).

- **[New Tool to Map Noise Levels by European Environment Agency](#)**

The European Environment Agency has developed a new tool to map noise levels across Europe. It is part of "eyes on earth", a software tool aiming at bringing the most important global environmental problems to a local level and making them more visible for the average citizen.

- **[Science for Environment Policy: New Ozone Hole Discovered Over The Arctic](#)**

As Science for Environment Policy reported, for the first time, scientists have identified an 'ozone hole' over the Arctic, in addition to the well-known ozone hole over the Antarctic. Unusually persistent low temperatures over the arctic in early 2011 caused an unprecedented amount of chemical destruction of stratospheric ozone there. The authors warn that this is likely to happen again, although it is presently difficult to predict when this might be.

- **Launch of "Planet Under Pressure" Policy Brief Series "U.N. Overhaul Required to Govern Planet's Life Support System"**

A series of policy briefs have been prepared for the 2012 London Conference "Planet Under Pressure". The policy briefs target policy-makers in the Rio+20 preparation processes to give them access to the latest scientific thinking on sustainable development issues. The first 5 policy briefs have been released now.

- **PBL Report: The Energetic Society. In Search of a Governance Philosophy for a Clean Economy**

In its Trends Report, 'The energetic society. In search of a governance philosophy for a clean economy', the PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency describes ways in which such a new philosophy of governance could be formed and how government could fill this new role. Government has much to gain from a better utilisation of its citizens' creativity and innovation potential. With a different philosophy of governance as well as a new mindset, government may effectively improve development towards a cleaner economy. By combining the mindset of 'green growth' with 'the energetic society', a new perspective is created on the role of government: one that considers the long term and that creates opportunities for society.

- **Researchers Provide Extensive Analysis of the World's Water Cycle**

The final report of the Water and Global Change programme (WATCH), an extensive analysis of the world's water resources, is significantly expanding our understanding of climate change and land use impacts on the global hydrological cycle. WATCH results provide the first assessment of the global hydrological cycle on a daily time-frame at 50km grid scale resolution for the past (20th century) and future (21st century), as well as a new global analysis of water scarcity.

- **Green Growth Knowledge Platform Launched in Mexico**

The Platform is a global network of researchers and development experts that identifies and addresses major knowledge gaps in green growth theory and practice. It is being created in cooperation between the Global Green Growth Institute, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Bank.



Jobs & Funding

Please visit our website for opportunities in the field of Impact Assessment and Sustainable Development. You are invited to send your vacancies, research programs, events or other relevant content to liaise@feem.it



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