



Graduate School Environment, Society and Global Change (ESGC)

Inter- and transdisciplinarity in research on environment, society and global change

2-day workshop for ESGC graduate students

July 2-3, 2019, 9-16h

Facilitated by Michael Pregernig



GRADUATE SCHOOL ESGC

'The world has problems, but universities have departments.' With this – somewhat cynical – statement Garry Brewer (1999) wanted to point out that especially environmental and natural resource management problems require research that goes beyond the sometime overly narrow perspectives of single disciplines. Before that background, the principles of interdisciplinarity (ID) and transdisciplinarity (TD) have been increasingly seen as an effective means of addressing complex socio-ecological problems.

Aims of the workshop:

- gain a better understanding of the differences between disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research
- learn about principles and methods of ID/TD research
- learn from ID/TD case studies
- reflect on the benefits and challenges of ID/TD research
- position own PhD project in the field of ID/TD research
- explore and discuss how principles of ID/TD research could be applied to own PhD project, including expected benefits and trade-offs

Core contents

The workshop is set up as a varied mix of four didactic elements:

Lecture-type input: Presentations and related discussions on the following questions

- What is meant with ID/TD research and in how far does it differ from disciplinary forms of knowledge production? What is the difference between multi-, inter-, transdisciplinarity?
- What methods does ID/TD research draw on?
- What is the role of stakeholders and civil society actors in ID/TD research?
- How can different forms of knowledge be integrated?
- What are the benefits of ID/TD research – and what are its challenges ... seen through the lens of scientists as well as practitioners?

Guided reading: Critical (in-advance!) reading and discussion of core ID/TD texts

- Lélé, Sharachchandra & Norgaard, Richard B. (2005): Practicing Interdisciplinarity. *BioScience*, 55/11, 967–975.
- Lang, Daniel J., Wiek, Arnim, Bergmann, Matthias, Stauffacher, Michael, Martens, Pim, Moll, Peter, Swilling, Mark & Thomas, Christopher J. (2012): Transdisciplinary research in sustainability science: practice, principles, and challenges. *Sustainability Science*, 7/1, 25-43.

Case studies: Report on hands-on experiences of work in ID/TD projects and formats at our Faculty

- Transdisciplinary format: “Realworld-laboratories as a tool for connecting science and society: The project ‘Knowledge Dialogue Northern Black Forest’ and beyond” (www.wissensdialog-nordschwarzwald.de/real-world-laboratory) (presented by: Dr. Regina Rhodius)
- Interdisciplinary project: “Drought impacts, processes and resilience: making the invisible visible” (DRiER, www.drier.uni-freiburg.de) (presented by: Dr. Sylvia Kruse)

Group work: How to go towards ID/TD research in your own PhD projects?

Based on their own PhD projects, small groups will reflect on the question of how principles of ID/TD research could be applied, what benefits could be expected, what barriers would have to be overcome, what methods could be applied etc.

Tentative schedule

Tuesday, July 2	
9:00-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction ▪ Input: What is inter- and transdisciplinary research? (Pregernig) ▪ Case study “Realworld-laboratories as a tool for connecting science and society” (Rhodius)
13:30-16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case study “DRiER – Drought impacts, processes and resilience” (Kruse) ▪ Wrap-up
Wednesday, July 3	
9:00-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Input: What is inter- and transdisciplinary research good for? (Pregernig) ▪ Discussion of papers by Lélé & Norgaard (2005) and Lang et al. (2012)
13:30-16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poster exercise: Positioning students’ research in the ID/TD debate ▪ Discussion and final synthesis

Room: tba (Herderbau, Tennenbacher Straße 4)

Note: In order to allow for contentful discussions, workshop participants are asked (1) to read the two given texts and (2) to browse the webpages of the two projects, in advance.

If you are interested, please, register via the following Doodle query: **URL.....**

If you have any question, please, write an e-mail to michael.pregernig@envgov.uni-freiburg.de.

Since the number of places is limited, participants are allocated on a first come first serve basis.