

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# ‘RESOURCE POLICIES: EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND EQUITY’

**2006 BERLIN CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF GLOBAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE**

**BERLIN, 17-18 NOVEMBER 2006**

The Berlin Conference Steering Committee and the Environmental Policy and Global Change section of the German Political Science Association and its partners invite papers for the 2006 Berlin Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, to be held in Berlin on 17-18 November 2006. This conference will be the sixth event in the series of annual Berlin Conferences. This year's discussions will address the theme 'Resource Policies: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Equity'.

Plenary speakers will include Professor Paul Ekins, Policy Studies Institute London, UK, Prof. Marina Fischer-Kowalski, IFF Vienna – Department of Social Ecology, Austria, and Prof. Martin Jänicke, Freie Universität Berlin – Environmental Policy Research Centre, Germany.

### **Resource Policies: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Equity**

The sustainable use of natural resources has been a challenge for environmental policies from their very beginning. Without an appropriate institutional setting, scarce resources such as water, materials, energy sources, land, etc. are overused, following the infamous logic of the tragedy of the commons. Related to this are issues of effective resource policies, efficient resource consumption, and equity on a global scale.

*Effective* resource policies have to cope with a high degree of complexity: Policies that effectively limit the use of natural resources are often perceived as jeopardizing the economic basis of industrial sectors. They are not only opposed by the affected sector, but cause fierce debates within governments and at different levels of policy-making. Economic imperatives are likely to be a particular challenge for traditional and indigenous institutions to protect access to and safeguard sustainable use of local resources. It is subject to investigation whether specific institutions are more robust to these challenges than others and whether these institutions are actually diffusing and replacing more vulnerable approaches. Safeguarding the access to natural resources such as oil or water has been and still is a matter of security in a large number of countries.

An increase in the productivity of resource use – *efficiency* – is a declared objective in many strategies for sustainable development throughout the world. A shift from material-intensive production to a stronger knowledge and service-based economy is not only seen as an ecological must, but also promises positive effects on employment. Recently, efforts have been made in Europe and Japan to adopt specific strategies and to achieve these objectives. A number of these initiatives deals with minimising and cleaning waste streams, other strategies and instruments focus on products. Furthermore, the exploding demand for steel, coal, oil etc. in the rapidly growing East and South Asian economies has an impact on the prices of raw materials. This demand may question the efforts for the cleaning or even reduction of resource flows. However, rising prices may also open up new opportunities for innovations that are less material- or energy-intensive, thereby contributing to ecological modernisation.

Economic growth and globalisation are contributing to the overexploitation of resources in developing countries, raising questions of *equity*. Such issues can be based on undefined property rights, political upheaval, conflicts or simply poverty. When a country's high export share of resources comes along with declining world market prices, economic problems of resource exports can lead to immiserising growth. Improvements in efficiency and the reduction of resource use in industrialised countries may lead to an outsourcing of material flows and the related environmental burden.

### **The Berlin Conference addresses the following topics:**

How and how effectively are governments, public and private actors around the world addressing these problems? Given the rising demand for industrial goods, what are the potentials and limitations of strategies to increase resource productivity and the cleaning of waste streams? What are the most promising entry points for governmental interventions? Are regulatory policies, such as take-back obligations for waste, a viable instrument towards cleaner production chains? To what extent are recent efforts to develop product policies likely to be effective and efficient? To what extent are institutions by private actors such as the Stewardship Councils to protect the Marine and the Forests a promising approach? What strategies are adopted in developing countries to safeguard access to and sustainable use of natural resources and how do they work?

The conference will be organised in several parallel streams. Papers are invited to contribute to the following topics:

- (1) **New resource policy trends in industrialised countries:** What policy innovations have been developed? To what extent are these policies effectively influencing the consumption of resources within these countries and on an international scale and what are the main obstacles for their success? To what extent are resource-saving strategies improving employment, economic efficiency, innovation and competitiveness? Is there evidence for outsourcing the environmental burden?
- (2) **Resource Policies in emerging and transition economies:** Is the rising demand for industrial goods overcompensating improvements in resource efficiency? Or do rising prices for scarce resources open up new opportunities for transitions towards sustainability? To what extent is scarcity of resources a driver for environmental innovation? How are transition economies coping with the double challenge of achieving an economic-ecologic transition? What is the impact of EU enlargement on resource policies in accession countries?
- (3) **Institutional design:** What kinds of arrangements facilitate sustainable resource use and environmental cooperation? How can institutions be designed which integrate external effects and account for the complex interdependencies between human and ecological systems? What can be learned from existing institutions to safeguard access to and sustainable use of resources? Are there opportunities for new coalitions for NGOs, industry and government?
- (4) **Monitoring and assessment of trends in resource use.** Many efforts have been undertaken to monitor and to assess patterns in resource consumption on a regional and a global scale. The Global Environmental Outlook by UNEP, the Millennium Assessment, the Environmental Outlook of the OECD, or the State of Environment Report by EEA are prominent examples of such efforts. To what extent do these efforts provide a basis for policy making? To what extent are patterns of resource use predictable, what lessons can be drawn from previous studies such as Meadows et al.? To what extent are concepts, such as the ecological footprint, material flow analysis, industrial metabolism, a useful guide for policy making?
- (5) **Resources and security:** What institutions have been established in order to prevent conflicts of access to natural resources? What concepts exist to ensure a fair

allocation of resources? Do these institutions help to avoid resource overuse and pollution in a fair and non-discriminative way?

As in previous conferences, we especially encourage paper submissions about teaching on global environmental change in higher education programs. This year we invite papers dealing with governance for ecological sustainable development and especially resource policies in PhD and master programmes. Papers and posters shall contribute to the following issues:

- (6) Academic training has to adapt new forms of **systematic interdisciplinary cooperation**: How are insights from a variety of social as well as natural sciences disciplines combined into problem analysis and the development of problem solutions?
- (7) How do **teaching programmes address the specifics of resource problems** and policies in industrialised countries, emerging economies and developing countries?

The 2006 Berlin Conference has been endorsed by the core projects 'Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change' and 'Industrial Transformation' of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP).

The 2006 Berlin Conference is organised by the Freie Universität Berlin (Environmental Policy Research Centre), the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Department of Resource Economics), the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) and the Institute for Ecological Economic Research (IÖW).

### **How to participate**

The conference will be held in English. Proposals for papers or for side events should be sent by e-mail to [bc2006@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:bc2006@zedat.fu-berlin.de). The body of the e-mail (no attachments please) should contain

- (1) the title of the proposed paper,
- (2) an abstract of less than 300 words (longer abstracts will be rejected. No graphs, references, tables etc. in the abstract, please),
- (3) the complete address and professional affiliation of all (co)-author(s).

### **Deadline**

The deadline for paper proposals is 15 June 2006. All paper submissions will be reviewed by an international review panel. Notification of the decision will be sent by e-mail no later than 15 July 2006. Full papers are expected by 1 November 2006. We are making all efforts to ensure funding to reimburse the travel costs of some conference participants, with a preference for junior colleagues and colleagues from developing countries. Paper presenters and other participants are asked to contribute a registration fee of 120 Euros (50 Euros for students with valid student ID) upon registration.

### **Further information**

Further information about the 2006 Berlin Conference will be available at

<http://web.fu-berlin.de/ffu/akumwelt/bc2006>

**Conference Chair:** Dr. Klaus Jacob, Freie Universität Berlin, Environmental Policy Research Centre

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