

“Multi-level Governance of Natural Resources: Tools and Processes for Water and Biodiversity Governance in Europe” (GoverNat)

Characteristics:

- EU Marie Curie Research Training Network with 9 Doctoral students and 3 Post-docs
- Duration: 4 years (10/06 – 9/10)
 - Doctoral fellows: 4/07-3/10
 - Post-docs: 7/07-1/10
- 10 partners and several praxis affiliates in 9 European countries
- Coordination: UFZ – Centre for Environmental Research (Dr. Felix Rauschmayer)
- Total contribution of European Commission: 2.4 Mio €
- Links water and biodiversity, participation and decision tools in a governance perspective

Objectives: The **overall objective** of GoverNat is to develop new solutions for multi-level environmental governance and to facilitate their use by decision makers in an enlarged EU. The **central research objective** is to test the hypothesis that certain participatory processes and analytical decision tools are particularly useful for improving multi-level environmental governance. **Specific research objectives** therefore address the enhanced understanding of multi-level governance of natural resources, the development of methods of public and stakeholder participation to be used in such contexts, the effective utilisation of specific analytical decision tools in multi-level governance, and the reflective evaluation of such use. These four tasks are necessarily interdisciplinary. The **central training objective** is to give 9 doctoral fellows and 3 post-doctoral fellows an interdisciplinary training 1) in research on environmental governance, particularly of biodiversity and water, in Europe, and 2) in designing legitimate and effective solutions for communication between policy makers, scientists and the public in science/policy interfaces. GoverNat brings together a critical mass of excellent partners to attain these objectives and to overcome disciplinary and policy fragmentation.

Overall Approach and Methodology: GoverNat overcomes disciplinary and policy fragmentation. Research and training objectives are dealt with in the context of water and biodiversity governance. Both of these fields of governance are characterised by the interdependence of local use regulations and externalities of resource uses across spatial scales and policy fields. They also include challenges, which are typical of multi-level governance of many other natural resources as well:

- (1) Complex natural and social processes which create high levels of uncertainty;
- (2) Legitimacy of adopted institutional processes and of their consequences;
- (3) Social dynamics generated by new modes of governance;
- (4) Costs of governance processes, policy implementation, and failed decisions.

GoverNat's programme will train nine doctoral fellows to deal with the four challenges from both an insider and an outsider viewpoint. The interdisciplinary consortium will provide the “outsider perspective” for comparative analysis and the evaluation of case studies. The fellows will make internships to *praxis affiliates* to experience from the “insider perspective” the challenges of making decisions on environmental governance at different spatial scales. Interplay between the partners and praxis affiliates will ensure the feasibility and effectiveness of designed governance solutions. The consortium supports three post-doctoral fellows in economics, politics and law to distil disciplinary lessons from the project.

Doctoral fellows will be trained through network-wide events (3 schools, 4 workshops), complemented by individualised training. They will apply and refine their knowledge in case studies in water and biodiversity governance and will have the responsibility for national dissemination of the project results.

Consortium of this project:

1. UFZ – Environmental Research Centre Leipzig - Halle, Germany (F. Rauschmayer);
2. ECOMAN - Ecological Economics and Management, Lisbon, Portugal (P. Antunes);
3. NERI - Danish Environmental Research Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark (M. S. Andersen);
4. SRI - Sustainable Research Institute, Leeds, United Kingdom (J. Paavola);
5. ICTA – Institute for Environmental Science and Technology, Barcelona, Spain (S. v.d. Hove);
6. CSWM – Centre for the Sustainable Water Management, Lancaster, United Kingdom (W. Medd);
7. UStutt - Institute for Sociology, Stuttgart, Germany (O. Renn);
8. IF - Institute of Forecasting, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic T. Kluvenkova-Oravska);
9. IELM-SIU - St. Istvan University, Budapest, Hungary (G. Pataki);
10. IREAS - Institute for Structural Policy, Slovak Republic (V. Chobotova).

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