



## Call for Papers

### 'Earth System Governance: People, Places, and the Planet'

2009 Amsterdam Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change

Amsterdam, 2–4 December 2009

We invite you to the 2009 Amsterdam Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, to be held 2–4 December 2009. This conference will be the ninth event in the series of annual European Conferences on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, begun in Berlin in 2001.

This year's conference will also be the global launch event of the Earth System Governance Project, a new ten-year research programme under the auspices of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP).

The conference is hosted jointly by the Institute for Environmental Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Netherlands Research School for Socio-economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment (SENSE), in co-operation with their partner institutions: the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action on Transformation of Global Environmental Governance; GLOGOV.ORG—The Global Governance Project; the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan; the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency; the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Stockholm Resilience Centre; and the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

#### KEY DATES:

Deadline for paper abstracts: **15 May 2009**

Notification of acceptance: **15 July 2009**

Full papers due: **15 November 2009**

The Earth System Governance Project seeks to analyse the interrelated and increasingly integrated system of formal and informal rules, rule-making systems, and actor-networks at all levels of human society (from local to global) that are set up to steer societies towards preventing, mitigating, and adapting to global and local environmental change and earth system transformation. The notion of earth system governance describes an emerging social phenomenon – expressed in hundreds of international regimes, bureaucracies, national agencies, activists groups and expert networks – that engages numerous actors, institutions and networks at local and global levels. At the same time, earth system governance is a demanding and vital subject of research in the social sciences, which we hope will be reflected in lively discussions at the 2009 Amsterdam Conference.

The Earth System Governance Project also reflects recent developments within the Earth System Science Partnership, which unites the World Climate Research Programme, the International Biosphere-Geosphere Programme, the DIVERSITAS programme, and the IHDP. The mission statement of the Earth System Science Partnership calls upon social scientists to develop 'strategies for earth system management'. Yet what such strategies might be, and how such strategies are to be developed, remains poorly understood in the social sciences.

The challenge of earth system governance raises numerous theoretical, methodological and empirical questions, many of which are elaborated upon in detail in the new Science and Implementation Plan of the IHDP Earth System Governance Project ([earthsystemgovernance.org](http://earthsystemgovernance.org)).

The 2009 Amsterdam Conference is organised around the five core analytical problems identified in this science plan:

1. **Architectures of Earth System Governance.** We invite papers on the emergence, design and effectiveness of governance systems and the overall integration of global, regional, national and local governance. Core questions include: How is performance of environmental institutions affected by their embedding in larger architectures? What are the environmental consequences of non-environmental governance systems? What is the relative performance of different types of multilevel governance architectures? How can we explain instances of 'non-governance'? What are overarching and crosscutting norms of earth system governance?

2. **Agency in Earth System Governance.** We invite papers that advance understanding of the actors and agents that drive earth system governance and the ways in which authority is granted to them and how it is exercised. We welcome papers on the influence, roles and responsibilities of both state actors and non-state actors, such as business and non-profit organisations. Core questions are: What is agency in earth system governance, and who are the agents? How do different agents exercise agency in earth system governance, and how can we evaluate their relevance?

3. **Adaptiveness of Earth System Governance.** We invite papers on the adaptiveness of earth system governance, a theme that includes here related concepts such as adaptation, adaptive management, resilience, or vulnerability. What are the politics of adaptiveness? Which governance processes foster it? What attributes of governance systems enhance capacities to adapt? How, when and why does adaptiveness influence earth system governance?

4. **Accountability and Legitimacy in Earth System Governance.** We invite papers on the accountability and legitimacy of earth system governance. What are the sources of accountability and legitimacy in earth system governance? What are the effects of different forms and degrees of accountability and legitimacy for the performance of governance systems? How can mechanisms of transparency ensure accountable and legitimate earth system governance? What institutional designs can produce the accountability and legitimacy of earth system governance in a way that guarantees balances of interests and perspectives?

5. **Allocation and Access in Earth System Governance.** Earth system governance is, as is any political activity, about the distribution of material and immaterial resources and values. It is, in essence, a conflict about the access to goods and about their allocation – it is about justice, fairness, and equity. But how can we reach interdisciplinary conceptualisations and definitions of allocation and access? What (overarching) principles underlie allocation and access? How can allocation be reconciled with governance effectiveness?

6. **Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Earth System Governance.** Finally, we invite papers that cut across these five analytical themes by focussing on the theoretical and methodological foundations of earth system governance. Central crosscutting themes identified in the science plan of the Earth System Governance Project are the roles of power, knowledge, norms, and scale. We also invite papers that analyse the theoretical foundations and implications of new ways of thinking about governance and earth system transformation, including concepts such as global environmental politics, sustainable development, earth system management, or earth system governance, and the extent to which they are related and to which they differ. Moreover, we invite papers that seek to identify and further develop the appropriate methods to study earth system governance, including papers that study options for integrating social science-based work with study programmes grounded in the natural sciences, including computer-based modelling and scenario work.

Abstracts must be submitted electronically by 15 May 2009 and not exceed 450 words. All abstracts will be evaluated in double-blind peer-review by at least four experts from the conference review panel. Details on abstract submission and more information are available at our conference website [www.ac2009.earthssystemgovernance.org](http://www.ac2009.earthssystemgovernance.org).

More information on the IHDP Earth System Governance Project, including its new Science and Implementation Plan for download, can be found at [www.earthssystemgovernance.org](http://www.earthssystemgovernance.org).

We look forward to welcoming you to the Netherlands in December 2009!

On behalf of all co-hosts and sponsors:

Frank Biermann

*Chair, Earth System Governance Project*

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## Hosts

- IHDP Earth System Governance Project
- Institute for Environmental Studies, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Netherlands Research School for Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment (SENSE)

## Co-Hosts and Sponsors

- European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action on Transformation of Global Environmental Governance (IS 0802)
- GLOGOV.ORG—The Global Governance Project
- Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan
- Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL), The Netherlands
- Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), The Netherlands
- Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden
- Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan

## Endorsements

- International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP)
- World Academy of Art and Science

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- Bernd Siebenhüner, University of Oldenburg, Germany

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- Will Steffen, The Australian National University, Australia
- Simon Tay, National University of Singapore, Singapore
- Kazuhiro Ueta, Kyoto University, Japan
- Arild Underdal, University of Oslo, Norway
- Oran R. Young, University of California at Santa Barbara, United States of America

#### **Co-ordinators of the Network of Senior Fellows and Research Fellows**

- Rafael Martins, University of Campinas, Brazil
- Kyla Tienhaara, The Australian National University, Australia

#### **Conference Managers**

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- Frans van der Woerd, SENSE Research School [*frans.van.der.woerd@ivm.vu.nl*]

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### **SENSE Pre-Conference 'Sustainable Cities'**

On 1 December, the Netherlands Research School for Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment (SENSE) organises a pre-conference on 'Sustainable Cities' that will present cutting-edge research from leading Dutch research groups, as well as from abroad. The programme of this event will soon be posted on [www.ac2009.earthsystemgovernance.org](http://www.ac2009.earthsystemgovernance.org). The SENSE Pre-Conference 'Sustainable Cities' requires special registration through this website.

### **Winter School on Earth System Governance: The Challenge of Adaptive Governance**

Back-to-back with the 2009 Amsterdam Conference, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam will offer an International Winter School on Earth System Governance for PhD students and other researchers in their early career stages. The leading topic of this year's programme is 'adaptive governance'. The Winter School will last from 23 November through 1 December 2009, with the possibility that participants will also attend the 2009 Amsterdam Conference afterwards. The International Winter School is supported by the EU FP6 Marie Curie Actions in co-operation with the Netherlands Research School for Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment (SENSE) and the Dutch national research programme BSIK-Climates for Space, Space for Climate. Participation in the International Winter School requires a separate application. Contact: Dr Philipp Pattberg [*philipp.pattberg@ivm.vu.nl*]

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**Conference website:** [www.ac2009.earthsystemgovernance.org](http://www.ac2009.earthsystemgovernance.org)