Lecture Series Transformations to Sustainability

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Transdisciplinary Integration in large Research Programs: Empirical Insights from four Synthesis Processes

28 January 2019, 2 pm | Leipziger KUBUS Lecture hall 1C

Abstract. How are synthesis processes in large research programs towards sustainability structured? Which actors are involved and to what degree? What are the challenges of such synthesis processes in terms of integration of system-, target-, and transformation knowledge and actor involvement? Which recommendations can be derived? The lecture discusses these questions building on research about the transdisciplinary integration of knowledge in four synthesis processes of a Swiss National Research Program (NRP 61) on sustainable water management. Referring to the example of the research program Wings – Water and sanitation innovations for non-grid solutions – the presentation offers insights into the integration and synthesis concept of an inter- and transdisciplinary research program.

Dr. Sabine Hoffmann is a geoecologist by training and holds a doctoral degree in development studies. From 2010 until 2015 she was coordinator and researcher within the Swiss National Research Program on Sustainable Water Management *(NRP 61) where she managed one of four synthesis processes and investigated the transdisciplinary integration of the synthesis processes within the research program. Since 2015 she has been Group Leader for Transdisciplinary Research at the Department of Environmental Social Sciences at Eawag and leads the strategic inter- and transdisciplinary research program* Wings*. Her main research interests are methods and procedures of transdisciplinary integration and transdisciplinary research management of large research programs.*

The lecture series *Transformations to Sustainability*. Sustainability implies a formidable challenge for a variety of fields. Buzzwords such as bioeconomy, energy transformation, green chemistry, agricultural turnaround or digitalization illustrate the multiple facets at play. Each of these – often deeply interwoven – aspects describe complex processes on their own. Beyond technological progress, transformations to sustainability also require broad societal and institutional change. Against this background, the lecture series *Transformation to Sustainability* reflects on the topic from manifold perspectives: What are the specific targets of transformation processes? How can sustainability targets be translated into viable transformation research programs? To what degree can the transformation processes be consciously managed? What are the main drivers or barriers of transformation and how do they vary in different contexts? The lecture series was initiated by the Thematic Area ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY to offer a comprehensive discussion platform, welcoming colleagues from all disciplines at UFZ.

For further information contact the *Forum Transformation* at TB 6 Environment and Society:
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