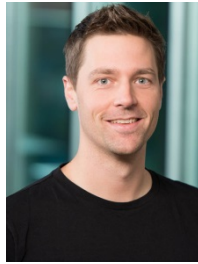




## Lecture Series *Transformations to Sustainability*



# Which Democracy for Climate Change?

25 March 2019, 11:00 – 13:00

Building 1.0, Lecture hall

Prof. Dr. Patrizia Nanz, Dr. Frederic Hanusch, Institute For Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)

**Abstract.** Democracy and sustainability are shared aims of world society (as is prominently shown by SDGs), yet, the relation of both is still disputed. As time frames close to stay within internationally agreed upon targets, such as the 1.5 – 2° target of the Paris Agreement, it is argued that authoritarian regimes show more effective problem-solving capacities in environmental matters. Even within democratic states, suggestions for environmental governance persist that are in tension to democratic ideals, namely technocracy, eco-centrism or securitization. In contrast to those critics most sustainability measurements show that more democratic states perform better. This is due to the structure of global sustainability dynamics as wicked problems for which democracies are conceptually the political systems best situated to address. But present democracies still do not make sufficient progress with a huge gap between performance and targets. Incremental adaptation of democracies does not suffice, particularly when taking into account time frames available for action. What is needed is democratic leap frogging and continuous reflection

on how democracies can be strengthened to identify options for sufficient sustainability performance. Democracy and sustainability not only need to be shared aims of world society, they can be complementary enablers towards better futures.

**Prof. Dr. Patrizia Nanz** is a political scientist and Scientific Director at the IASS Potsdam, Professor of Transformative Sustainability Studies at the University of Potsdam, and Co-Chair of the Science Platform Sustainability 2030. Her research focuses on political philosophy and democracy theory, which she has deepened with Jürgen Habermas and Charles Taylor, among others, as well as on sustainability transformations involving citizens.

**Dr. Frederic Hanusch** co-leads the research group “Democratic (Re)Configurations” at the IASS. In 2017, his book “Democracy and Climate Change” was published in the Routledge Global Cooperation Series. His research is focused on a combination of democracy research and dynamics of global change, recently studying the role of time in this context.

**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 head of RU 6 Environment and Society: [bernd.hansjuergens@ufz.de](mailto:bernd.hansjuergens@ufz.de). Photos by: S. Meyer-Bergfeld (1), L. Ostermann (2)