

## EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008

11–14 March 2008

# Governance by Evaluation: Institutional Capacities and Learning for Sustainable Development

## Call for papers

**Deadline for abstracts and application for EU grants: 10 October 2007**

This event is sponsored by



EASY-ECO has been awarded an Official Decade Project by the German Commission for UNESCO.

Status July 2007

### EASY-ECO - Evaluation of Sustainability European Conferences and Trainings

EASY-ECO is a conference and training programme on evaluations in the specific context of sustainable development ("SD evaluations"). Several European top-class research institutions are collaborating with the common aim of building SD evaluation capacity (for further details please see [www.easy-eco.eu](http://www.easy-eco.eu)). While the previous EASY-ECO conferences have dealt with the strategic and project level of SD evaluations, the upcoming EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008 will focus on the institutional aspects of SD evaluations as policy learning processes. In addition it aims to explore how different evaluation tools and approaches can contribute to knowledge-based governance for sustainable development.

#### Thematic outline: Good governance, sustainable development and evaluations

As the European Commission's White Paper on European Governance has pinpointed, good governance requires openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. These principles are also reflected to a large degree by the "Policy Guiding Principles" stated in the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy that was adopted in June 2006, highlighting the overlap between good governance and sustainable development.

SD evaluations facilitate these principles at different stages in the policy cycle. They make political agenda setting and decision-making more open and participatory, make decision-making and policy formulation more accountable, and increase the effectiveness of policy implementation and renewal. Overall, SD evaluations



contribute to governance challenges such as informed decision-making, policy integration, transparency and stakeholder participation. Therefore, the EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008 will focus on the institutional and governance context of SD evaluations, that is on "Governance by Evaluation".

#### Invitation for contributions

We encourage

- researchers from all disciplines (including young researchers),
- professionals from related fields of work,
- commissioning agents, and
- evaluation users and other stakeholders

to submit abstracts for presentations at the EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008 that touch on the institutional or governance context of SD evaluations as outlined above **until 10 October 2007**. **More specific topics are outlined below**. Please indicate in your abstract explicitly which topic you want to address with your contribution.





## Key topics

The thematic outline given above can be specified with the following key topics. Submissions can address one or more of the key topics in general terms or in the context of a case study.

### Institutional aspects of SD evaluations

SD evaluations can take on many different forms and functions. Their use and design is shaped not only by scientific reasoning, but also by institutional context factors and their place in the policy cycle. Interesting issues and questions to be explored in this respect are the following:

- **Types and tools of SD evaluation, assessment and feedback throughout the policy cycle:** How and at what point can they be used best in the policy cycle? How can they be orchestrated? How do they fit into a system of knowledge-based governance and the respective institutional framework of policy-making?
- **The institutionalisation of SD evaluations across Europe:** Did evaluations and other forms of feedback become more institutionalised in recent years or does feedback still occur on an ad-hoc basis? What is the linkage between SD evaluations, policy learning and political cultures in different EU countries or regions? What forms of institutionalizing feedback have emerged and what experiences have been made?
- **Building capacities for SD evaluations:** How can institutional capacities for policy learning be built in the context of SD policy making? What role can evaluation societies play in this respect? How to build capacities among all actors involved (e.g. commissioning agents, evaluators) so that they understand to frame their needs and contributions in the context of knowledge-based governance?

### Policy learning and SD evaluations

SD evaluations touch on the key principles of good governance and sustainable development. However, they make a difference only if they are able to trigger policy learning. Interesting questions that explore the conditions of policy learning are the following:

- **Learning through SD evaluations:** What are the success factors and limitations of policy, organizational

and individual learning in the context of sustainable development? How can the relationship between commissioning agents and evaluators be improved in order to foster learning? How to deal with different and ambiguous expectations of stakeholders in SD evaluations?

- **Administrative cultures and power:** How did the changes of modes of governance (bureaucracy, New Public Management, network-based New Governance) and the respective use of policy instruments (traditional regulations, soft law, partnerships etc.) shape the understanding, use and design of different types and tools of feedback? How do SD evaluations influence decisions and how do politics influence SD evaluations? How can the dichotomy of knowledge versus power be handled in SD evaluations?
- **Political relevance of SD evaluations:** What impact do SD evaluations and other feedback tools have on political decisions? How can the awareness for SD evaluation findings be raised among decision makers (in particular in politically contested and uncertain environments)? What is the relationship between political culture and evaluation?

### Methodological challenges and innovations

The recent evaluation theory literature provides a couple of evaluation approaches (such as network approaches, systems approaches, empowerment evaluations, participatory evaluations etc.) that are highly relevant for the institutional and governance focus of the EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008. Thus, we invite contributors also to explore the following methodological questions:

- What experiences have been made by using innovative SD evaluation approaches?
- What value do innovative SD evaluations add with respect to the challenges of knowledge-based governance and policy learning?
- How do innovative SD evaluations address the “guiding principles” of good governance and SD (in particular policy integration and participation)?
- How can the quality of SD evaluations be secured at different stages in the policy cycle (also through educational activities)?



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### Topics of interest for case studies

If a contribution addresses one or more of the key topics outlined above not in general terms, but through a concrete SD evaluation example, we regard the following subjects as particularly interesting:

- Climate change and energy
- Regional and rural development, structural funds
- Sustainable development strategies at various levels of government
- RTD for sustainable development
- Sustainable consumption and production
- Environmental resources and biodiversity
- Gender and diversity aspects of sustainable development
- Corporate social responsibility and sustainable businesses

Evaluation cases should deal with policies, programmes or projects. Evaluations of products, individual companies or technologies are not in the focus of the EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008.



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### Types of contributions

**Papers** – Are you a researcher or practitioner and want to present interesting findings linked to the topics above? We look for contributions facilitating the exchange of research results, methodological trends, and practical experience. Presenters of papers will be expected to give a presentation of 20 minutes followed by a short discussion. Please send your abstract by **10 October 2007**.

Abstracts and full papers will go into the online proceedings on the EASY-ECO website. A collection of outstanding conference papers will be considered for the book *Sustainability Evaluation as a Learning Process: Institutional Challenges and Responses* published in the Evaluating Sustainable Development book series by Edward Elgar Publishing.

**Posters** – Conference participants may submit a poster for display at a dedicated space at the conference venue. The posters will be introduced in a poster session. If you would like to submit a poster dealing with a topic relevant for the conference, please provide a poster abstract by **10 October 2007**. The abstract will go into the online proceedings on the EASY-ECO website.

**Case studies** – Interesting examples of SD evaluations are welcome to be presented as a paper if the case has a strong link to some institutional or governance issues and topics of interest outlined here (case studies without this linkage are welcome as poster presentations).

**Case studies for EASY-ECO Trainings** – Furthermore, we are looking for evaluation projects which can be lectured in one of the upcoming EASY-ECO training courses on SD evaluations. If you are an experienced evaluator and interested in lecturing such a case study to young researchers and present your case at the conference, please have a look at the dedicated call for cases on [www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=training&s=callforcases](http://www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=training&s=callforcases) and get in contact with [judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at).

### Submission of abstracts and timeline

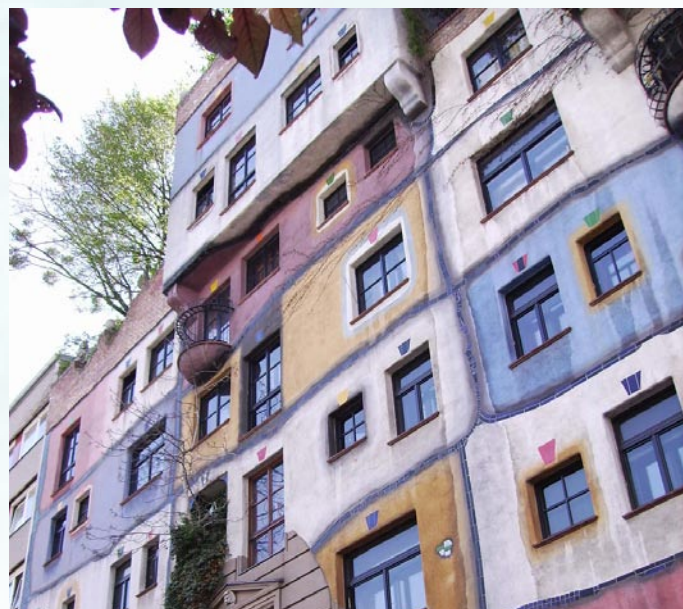
Participants who wish to present a paper, poster or case should send their abstract by **10 October 2007** to [judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at) and a copy to [markus.hametner@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:markus.hametner@wu-wien.ac.at).

**Please clearly indicate which of the key topics outlined above your contribution addresses.** For easier file handling, please send your abstracts as a word-file with the file name „*your last name\_abstract\_Vienna.doc*“.

Abstracts should not exceed 500 words.

The organizers will inform you about the acceptance of your abstract by **30 November 2007**. This is also the time when we will inform those who have applied for an EU grant about their acceptance.

Full papers (max. 6.000-8.000 words) should be submitted until **25 January 2008**.



## Registration and grants

To register for the conference please fill in the online form on

[www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=application](http://www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=application)

We recommend an early registration as places are limited.

### Conference registration: 380,- €

(includes refreshments, welcome cocktail, lunches and dinners during the conference, conference folder, social programme, and the conference fee; not included in this amount: meals during the informal meetings, travel and accommodation)

### EU grants available!

EASY-ECO is organised under the European Community's Sixth Framework Programme Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses action. One of the aims of the programme is to enable leading researchers and practitioners share their experience with those who are new to the field. Therefore grants are available for researchers with less than ten years working experience to cover travel expenses, the conference registration fee, accommodation and living allowance. For further details on eligibility and application for EU grants, please see [www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=eugrants](http://www.sustainability.eu/easy/?k=eugrants).

If you want to apply for an EU grant, please send your CV and a letter of motivation as specified on the website to [judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at) and a copy to [markus.hametner@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:markus.hametner@wu-wien.ac.at) by **10 October 2007**. The organizers will inform you about the acceptance of your application by 30 November 2007.

Registration becomes effective after payment of the registration fee or approval of the EU grant only. Bank details will be e-mailed to you after your registration. Deadline for receipt of registration fee: **9 January 2008**.

### Preliminary conference outline

The event will feature parallel sessions, plenary talks as well as interactive and participatory group work. Networking and informal discussions with experts and peers will be supported by an attractive social programme. We are currently negotiating with international top-class SD evaluation experts to join us – please keep visiting [www.easy-eco.eu](http://www.easy-eco.eu) for news on keynote speakers, conference venue, transportation, accommodation and social programme.

**Tuesday, 11 March:** arrivals and informal meetings, EASY-ECO peer group meeting

**Wednesday, 12 March:** official opening

**Wednesday, 12 March - Friday, 14 March:** conference with keynotes, sessions and social programme

**Friday, 14 March:** closing ceremony



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## Join us in Vienna!

„Vienna is different...“ This Viennese slogan reflects that art, culture and the architecture of the city are unique. The EASY-ECO Vienna Conference 2008 will be an opportunity to discover the different faces of Vienna and experience this fantastic city. Come and join us in March 2008!

## The organizers

The conference is organized by RIMAS, the Research Institute for Managing Sustainability at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration.

We look forward to receiving your contributions and applications and welcoming you to Vienna!

The conference team:

Judith Galla  
André Martinuzzi  
Markus Hametner  
Reinhard Steurer



For further information, please contact Judith Galla ([judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at))

For regular updates on the event, please visit [www.easy-eco.eu](http://www.easy-eco.eu).

As the realisation of the project requires additional funding, further institutional sponsors will be welcomed. Please contact [judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at](mailto:judith.galla@wu-wien.ac.at) for details.



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