

BOKU PhD Programmes: 6 brand new offers of PhD topics in the attachment; it is possible to do a whole PhD programm in English at BOKU (own topic). General information for PhD programmes:

http://www.boku.ac.at/fileadmin/_cdr/CDR_Doctoral_Study_Manual_20100614.pdf

BOKU English Master programmes (8): <http://www.boku.ac.at/16728.html?&L=1>

BOKU Course database (Bachelor, Master, PhD):

<https://online.boku.ac.at/BOKUonline/webnav.ini> (-->Search-->courses)

Announcement of a PhD-Project within the Doctoral School Sustainable Development (dokNE)

The Doctoral School Sustainable Development (Doktoratskolleg Nachhaltige Entwicklung, dokNE) at BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria, is a structured doctoral program. After the first program phase from 2007 to 2010 the second program phase is now in preparation and will be open to international Erasmus Mundus doctoral candidates. Interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are central research principles of the program; both the doctoral candidates and supervisors come from a wide range of disciplines and each thesis project is supervised from at least two different disciplines and teachers from BOKU University. The project should be designed for a period of three years (starting with September/October 2011). Further information on the Doctoral School: www.dokne.boku.ac.at and http://www.dokne.boku.ac.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=117

Proposed topic: *“Adaptation to climate change: policies and governance issues”*

After years of climate change mitigation efforts with limited success, governments around the world are now increasingly concerned with the adaptation to climate change. Adaptation to climate change is understood as adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic changes or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. The thesis project should analyse how the governments of particular regions aim to facilitate the adaptation to climate change with both concrete adaptation policies and with government arrangements that help to develop better adaptation policies. Regions of interest are those that are expected to suffer most from climate change (e.g. cities, alpine regions covering several states, coastal areas), and that have already adaptation policies in place. The thesis project can focus on adaptation policies and governance in a particular region or it can compare two or more regions facing similar climate pressures (e.g. different cities, etc.).

Requirements:

- The thesis project requires a strong background in political science, policy analysis or governance studies. Questions of development assistance are not at the focus of this topic. Knowledge on climate policy issues is advantageous.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German (Excellence in English writing has to be documented with a writing sample, e.g. own publication.)
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comparative case studies outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.

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Proposed topic: “Assessing aquatic ecosystem services as basis for integrative river basin management ”

Long-term use of freshwater resources will only be guaranteed, if natural processes and structures of river floodplain systems and their ecological functions are maintained and diverse, conflicting human activities are balanced in a careful way. Integrative river basin management plans provide in general appropriate tools to achieve this.

This thesis project should aim to develop a methodological framework to identify and quantify the potential of river systems to provide ecosystem functions and services in different geographic regions. Applying these methods, management plans and different scenarios of measures for protection and restoration of river-floodplain systems should be analysed with regard to their effects and consequences for providing ecosystem functions in the future.

Inter- and transdisciplinary methods will assist in identifying the crucial ecosystem functions and conflicting use demands in the context of the specific geographic framework of case study regions.

Requirements:

- Experience with environmental planning and management methods, training in GIS
- Knowledge on aquatic ecology
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comparative case studies outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.

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Proposed topic: *“Common ecosystem services – a property rights analysis for agricultural and forest land”*

The ecosystem services concept has considerably contributed to the valorisation of ecological, environmental, recreational and cultural goods and services on agricultural and forest land. The thesis project poses the question if this valorisation process can be retraced in changing property rights structures. Related shifts of property rights between landholders and land users, between local and (inter-)national, between rural and urban, private and public or the resulting consequences for sustainable land use and rural development could be analysed in comparative case studies. They can also grant valuable insights into the allocation of costs, benefits and risks or into suitable mechanisms for the co-ordination of different claims to land.

Requirements:

- Experience with empirical social science methods, institutional (economic) analysis or governance studies; training in rural development, in agricultural, forest, environmental or resource economics or another relevant interdisciplinary or social sciences Master degree.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comparative case studies outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.

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Proposed topic: *“Institutions for Integrated River Basin Management”*

Throughout the world water policies and management institutions are embodying new strategies for sustainable water resources management, including the integration of environmental concerns into different sectors' and governmental level's policies (Environmental Policy Integration, EPI). In the case of waters, EPI is often strived for by concepts of integrated river basin policies and management. However, the actual allocation of responsibilities for water policy formulation and implementation usually does not correspond to the demarcation of river basins, and potentially adverse effects on water bodies rest with a variety of different sectoral administrations. Hence, politically such bioregional policy approaches raise the need for more integrated and coherent rules, procedures and programmes for managing water bodies. From a scientific perspective, they provide highly interesting cases to study processes of institutional change and resistance to the challenges of cross-sectoral and multi-level policy coordination, and definitively, to study the effectiveness of this kind of EPI approach, e.g. in comparative research design.

Requirements:

- Research on this topic requires a candidate's interest and educational background in natural resource policy and policy analysis. Knowledge in water ecology, hydrology and social science methodology is advantageous.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comparative case studies outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.

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Proposed research fields: The proposed projects should focus on aspects of sustainable development and can be conducted at the interface between the research fields of e.g. ecosystem services, water management, climate change, quality of life and spatial development. We welcome to submit creative and innovative topics on sustainable development.

Requirements:

- Outstanding graduates of social, natural, technical or planning sciences (master degree)
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comparative case studies outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.

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Proposed topic: *“Universities as multipliers of sustainability”*

Universities are the workplace for a large number of persons: Students, teachers and the administrative staff spend a considerable time of their life at universities, which therefore as an institution can play an important role in promoting the ideas of sustainability both in teaching, research and in the practical organization of life on campus. The goal of this thesis project is to investigate the approaches to implement sustainability in universities, to compare strategies and processes across universities, to categorise activities and to characterise their effectiveness.

Requirements:

- Knowledge of the “system university” and of planning and/or organisational theory
- Candidates should be familiar with social science methods
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English or German
- Personal interest in interdisciplinary research and debate
- For those proposing comprehensive comparative case studies in regions outside Austria, a co-supervisor for the respective geographical context has to be suggested.