

Speakers

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Organizers and chairing

Maria Backhouse, Freie Universität Berlin, Institute for
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Kristina Dietz, Freie Universität Berlin, Institute for Latin
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Information for participants

Participation in the workshop is free of charge
and limited to 50 persons.

Registration and further information:

Wiebke Thomas
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Please submit your registration only via e-mail
until the 15th of September at the latest.
It will not be possible to participate
without registration.

Venue and access:

The workshop will be held at the Institute for
Latin American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin
Rüdesheimer Straße 54-56
14197 Berlin, Germany
Room 201

How to get there:

You get to the Institute via metro
with line U3 (direction to Krumme Lanke)
and then get off at the station Breitenbachplatz.
Take the exit towards Südwestkorso.

The Political Ecology of Agrofuels

11th – 12th of October, 2012

Rüdesheimer Straße 54-56
14197 Berlin

Workshop of the BMBF Project
Fair Fuels?

Between dead end and energy transition:
A social-ecological multilevel
analysis of transnational biofuel policy



About the workshop

Agro- or biofuels are advocated by many as an opportunity to transform energy-use patterns, reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, alleviating dependency on fossil resources and at the same time “developing” rural regions. Since the adoption of mandatory biofuels blending quotas in Europe, the USA and several non-OECD-countries, vast increases in crop production for agrofuels have been observed.

In recent years the rapid growing of the sector has given rise to intense international debate. At issue are not only conflicts over land and agricultural practices, and new (trans-) national power constellations but also more fundamental issues surrounding underlying political-economic, social, and socio-ecological dynamics. Especially the Political Ecology addresses questions relating to the complex reciprocal relationships between society and nature, including social power relations at and between different scales.

The aim of our workshop is twofold: First we want to work on conceptual and theoretical challenges to using Political Ecology as a meaningful approach to analyzing multiples dynamics related to agrofuels expansion. Second the workshop aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences and empirical insights related to the agrofuels dynamics in and across different countries and regions.

Program

Thursday: October 11, 2012

5:00 – 5:30 pm

Welcome and introduction

Kristina Dietz, Maria Backhouse, FU Berlin (LAI)

5:30 – 7:00 pm

Keynote:

The political ecology of agrofuels – a conceptual introduction

Markus Wissen, University of Vienna

7:00 pm: Dinner

Friday: October 12, 2012

9:15 – 9:30 am

Welcome

9:30 – 10:30 am

Causing Ignition: Biofuels and social-ecological conflicts

Alina Brad, Christina Plank, University of Vienna and Anke Schaffartzik, Alpen-Adria-Universität

10:30 – 11:30 am

Social-ecological conflicts and biofuel crops: The case of oil palm expansion in Colombia

Victoria Marin, University of Twente

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee Break

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

A political ecology of Jatropha in Kenya

Carol Hunsberger, Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague

12:45 am – 1:45 pm Lunch

1:45 – 2:45 pm

Coloniality in the appropriation of nature: Environmentalization, dependency and primitive accumulation in the Brazilian production of agrofuels

Wendell Ficher, University of Rio de Janeiro

2:45 – 3:45 pm

Scaling Up? Space and Labour in Palm Oil's Political Ecology

Oliver Pye, University of Bonn

3:45 – 4:15 pm Coffee Break

4:15 – 5:15 pm

Global Crises, National Policies, Local Impacts: Addressing the Complexity of Competing National and Sectoral Understandings of the Food vs. Fuel Crisis

Aaron Leopold, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

5:15 – 6:00 pm

Concluding remarks

Maria Backhouse, Kristina Dietz, FU Berlin (LAI)

About the research project “Fair Fuels?”

The project “Fair Fuels?” addresses socio-ecological conflicts, potentials and risks related to the agrofuels production from a transnational and interdisciplinary perspective. Case studies are being conducted in three world regions: Africa, Latin America and Europe. The results are being linked to crosscutting issues like shifting global orders, emergence of new transnational spaces and questions of regulation and governance. The project is part of the Social-Ecological Research program (SÖF) of the German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF). For further information, see www.fair-fuels.de/en.

