



**Eco-Social Forum,**  
**WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business**  
**and**  
**SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research, University of Sussex**  
with financial support from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research

## **Ecological macroeconomics – next steps**

25 May (15:00-18:00) and 26 May 2010 (09:00-16:00)

WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business  
Departments of Social Sciences and Economics  
Seminarraum D 316 in UZA 4  
Nordbergstraße 15, 4th floor, Area D, 1090 Vienna, Austria

GDP growth is an unquestioned imperative for macroeconomists throughout the world. This is understandable in less developed countries where rising labor productivity is deemed as necessary condition for the alleviation of poverty and the advancement of development. However, even in the OECD countries macroeconomists see growth as a socially stabilizing necessity. The pathway to growth for the last 250 years has been increasing energy use.

For the past years and decades IPCC and many other scientists have been pointing towards the unsustainability of this process given important ecological boundaries. Climate change may bring us close to one of these boundaries, and it is estimated that in order to contain global warming within 2°C above pre-industrial levels, per-capita emissions in developed nations must be reduced by 80-95% by 2050.

While neoclassical macroeconomics assumes that setting caps and price signals are sufficient to steer the economy towards a sustainable pattern of growth, others believe that such a transition is fundamental, requiring serious rethinking of the growth paradigm and associated standard economic assumptions. Ecological economists have been focusing on these issues, but have paid little attention to macroeconomic relationships.

This is the second scientific workshop on the topic of ecological macroeconomics hosted by WU and SPRU. The first one took place on 11 December 2009, with presentations from Peter Victor, Paul Ekins, Steve Sorrell, Richard Douthwaite, Fritz Hinterberger, Andrew Mearman and Armon Rezai.

The **aim of this workshop** is to continue making steps towards combining ecological and macroeconomic thinking. More specifically, it will explore and discuss the following questions:

1. How dependent are current societies on economic growth for their well-being and social cohesion? How are productivity improvements, economic growth, and energy use interconnected?

2. Under what conditions is sustainable development compatible with full employment? What kind of distribution of income is necessary on a global and national scale? How can this be achieved? What role does a reduction of working hours play?
3. What role does the monetary system play in making economies dependent upon continued growth? In what ways could it change to facilitate the transition to a sustainable economy?
4. Macroeconomic models measure success by a set of indicators of which GDP is most important. How would success be measured in ecological macroeconomics? How can ecological limits be included in macroeconomic models?

<b>Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2010</b>	
14:30-15:00	Coffee
15:00-15:30	Sigrid Stagl: Opening and Introduction
15:30-17:00	<u>Lance Taylor</u> : Energy Intensity, Greenhouse Gas, and Global Warming
17:00-17:15	Coffee Break
17:15-18:00	<u>Kurt Kratena</u> : TTBA
18:00- open end	Dinner at Heuriger Feuerwehr-Wagner
<b>Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> 2010</b>	
9:00-9:30	Coffee
9:30-11:00	<u>Giorgos Kallis</u> : The Degrowth Proposition(s) and Research Questions
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break
11:15-12:45	<u>Irmi Seidl</u> : Social and Economic Interactions in Ecological Macroeconomics
12:45-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	<u>Tim Jackson</u> : Prosperity without Growth
15:00-15:15	Coffee Break
15:15-16:00	Reinhard Mechler and Armon Rezai: Synthesis

**Organising team:**

Michaela Hickersberger, Eco–Social Forum, Vienna

Özlem Onaran, Middlesex University, UK

Reinhard Mechler, WU and IIASA, Vienna

Armon Rezai, WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business

Klemens Riegler, Eco–Social Forum, Vienna

Steve Sorrel, SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research, University of Sussex, UK

Sigrid Stagl, WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business