

# Guidelines for the supervision of master theses

by members of the research group “Global Resource Use” / Institute for Ecological Economics

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- The topic of the master thesis must be closely related to the core areas of research in the group “Global Resource Use”. A **list of currently open topics** is available at the webpage of the group: <https://www.wu.ac.at/en/ecolecon/research/global-resource-use/theses>
- The applicant should have explicit **interest in working in quantitative analyses** and analyses based on environmental and economic data. Exceptions are possible and depend on the topic.
- The target is to jointly elaborate – based on the thesis – an **article for publishing in a peer-reviewed, international journal**, with the candidate serving as first author and one or several researchers of our group (and possibly beyond) as co-authors. Experience in writing English texts and motivation to contribute to the scientific literature are therefore important.
- There is no strict minimum **length of a master thesis**, but a scientific manuscript usually ranges from 15 to 40 pages, in many cases accompanied by a comprehensive appendix or supplementary document(s).
- Citations should be included in the text (Harvard Style), not in footnotes. The use of a **reference manager** (e.g. Citavi, Endnote) is strongly recommended. Page numbers must only be included in the in-text citations, if certain passages are directly cited in the thesis text. If sources with three or more authors are cited, the citation should be using the main author plus “et al.” (e.g. Max Muster et al., 2018).
- Master theses should normally be finalized in a **time frame** of 6-9 months. Alternative arrangements can be negotiated.
- The **supervision process** is organized in the following steps:
  1. Personal meeting between the candidate and the supervisor at the very beginning of the thesis process. Discussion and decision on the topic. Explanation of guidelines and clarification on any open procedural issues.
  2. After 1-3 weeks: elaboration of a research outline, i.e. 1-2 pages including background, objectives and research questions, applied methods and data sources, expected outcomes; plus a 1-page table of content, i.e. expected chapters of the theses including indicative page numbers.
  3. Personal meeting between the candidate and the supervisor. Discussion of the research outline and the table of content. Discussion of the relevant literature, methods and data sources.
  4. The candidate starts reviewing the literature, preparing the data, and conducting calculations (depending on the topic and focus of the thesis).
  5. Regular personal meetings and feedback by the supervisor to ongoing work, until a final draft of the thesis and of the journal submission are ready.
  6. Presentation of your work at the team meeting of GRU
  7. Submission of the manuscript to a journal (e.g. Ecological Economics)
  8. Uploading of your thesis to Bach.
  9. Celebrate :)