

Ecological Ungovernability?

civic empowerment – state overload – ungoverning

International Research Conference
23-25 September 2026

Convenors: Lena Alwang, Ingolfur Blühdorn, Veith Selk, Benjamin Seyd

Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN),
Vienna University for Economics and Business

Draft Programme

Wednesday, September 23 2026	
9:30 – 10:00	Registration (D5.0.002)
10:00 – 10:30	Welcome and Introduction (D5.0.002) Lena Alwang & Daniel Hausknost
10:30 – 12:00	D5.0.002 Chair: Karoline Kalke Ecological ungovernability: Reactionary project or sociological diagnosis? Ingolfur Blühdorn, Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN), Vienna, AT Discussant: Jörg Kemmerzell
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 15:15	D5.0.002 Chair: Daniel Hausknost Session 1 Ecological ungovernability, ideological power, and the “logic of subversion” of progressive thought Marit Hammond, University of Warwick, UK Discussant: Georg Diezi From Beck to Backlash: climate change and the sociology of threat Philipp Golka, Max Plank Institute for the Studies of Societies, Cologne, DE Discussant: Manuel Arias-Maldonado
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:30	D5.0.002 Chair: Georg Diezi Session 2 Gradually, and then suddenly: Ungovernmentality, ecology, and the agony of losing credit Benjamin Seyd, Berlin Journal of Sociology & Erfurt University, DE Discussant: Lena Alwang Ecological ungovernability and addictive consumerism John Foster, Lancaster University, UK Discussant: Veith Selk
17:30 – 19:00	Dinner
19:00 – 21:00	AD, Ground Floor, 0.114 Sitzungssaal 1 Chair: Benjamin Seyd Panel: John Foster, Margaret Haderer, Marit Hammond, Peter Newell Public Lecture, Discussion and Wine Democracy, governability, and resource regimes: exploring the coming socio-ecological transformation Peter Wagner, Universidad de Barcelona, ES

Thursday, September 24 2026	
10:15 – 12:00h	D5.0.002 Chair: Veith Selk Session 3 Facing Ecological Delusions: Sustainability and Democracy after the Populist Turn Manuel Arias-Maldondo, University of Málaga, ES Discussant: Ingolfur Blühdorn Alternative Democracies? Political Transformation in the Japanese Periphery and Beyond Paul J. Kramer, University of Munich, DE Discussant: Marit Hammond
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 15:15	D5.0.002 Chair: Lena Alwang Session 4 From Sustainability to Securitization: A Cultural Political Economy Analysis of the Shift in Political-Economic Narratives Nora Dornis, WU Vienna, AT Discussant: Philipp Golka Transformative state failure Daniel Hausknost, Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN), Vienna, AT Discussant: Peter Wagner
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:30	D5.0.002 Chair: Ingolfur Blühdorn Session 5 Looking Beyond the End of the World: On the (De)Stabilising Potential of Artificial Intelligence between the (Un)Certainties of Late Modernity and a Next Modernity Georg Diezi, Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN), Vienna, AT Discussant: Peter Newell Techno-Fascist Domination and Submission: The Nonidentical of Nature, Ecological Ungovernability, and Organized Labour Hauke Dannemann, Goethe University, Frankfurt, DE Discussant: Karoline Kalke
17:30 – 19:00	Dinner

19:00 – 21:00	LC, 2nd Floor, 2400 Clubraum Chair: tbd. Public book launch in German: Transformation regressiv? – Zur Krise und Zukunft des ökologischen Projekts Panel: Nina Degele, Daniel Hausknost, Florentine Maier, Andreas Novy
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Friday, September 25 2026	
09:00 – 10:45	D5.0.002 Chair: Marit Hammond Session 6 The un-politics and un-governance of fossil fuels Peter Newell, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK Discussant: Daniel Hausknost From Neoliberalism to Oligarchic Ungoverning: Rethinking Eco-Emancipatory Politics in an Era of Political Chaos Andrew Scerri, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, USA Discussant: Nora Dornis
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 – 13:00	D5.0.002 Chair: Peter Wagner Session 7 Towards a Left Postliberalism? Exploring the Collapse Movement amid the Politics of Ecological Ungovernability Lena Alwang, Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN), Vienna, AT Karoline Kalke, Institute for Social Change and Sustainability (IGN), Vienna, AT Discussant: Hauke Dannemann Ignorance, Pie in the Sky, and Hysteria. Reactions to the Narcissistic Injury of Second-Order Ungovernability in Social Science Veith Selk, University of Vechta, DE Martin Seeliger, Bremen University, DE Discussant: Andrew Scerri
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 – 16:00	D5.0.002 Chair: tbd. Thinking towards synthesis and publication Brief inputs by all participants