

Vortrag im Rahmen des Workshops „Wissenschaftskommunikation mit Politik und Gesellschaft im Bereich der Klimawissenschaften“ am MPI BGC in Jena

„Klimaforschung und Klimaforscher – was können wir zur politischen Willensbildung beitragen?“

„Climate science and climate scientists - what can we contribute to the process of determining political goals?“

Climate science is presented in the public often as key actor, often the deciding actor, in defining goals and means of climate policy. Some scientists consider themselves activist with the responsibility to convince society to take the “right” decisions. In the past, the differences between climate science and policymaking got blurred, with science becoming politicized and policy becoming scienticed – a situation which we (Werner Krauss and me) have termed “climate trap” (Klimafalle). The problem will be sketched, and an argument is presented that while science can contribute significantly to the process of defining goals, this contribution is unavoidably and rightly limited. Both societal institutions, science and policymaking, are served best if the differences are recognized. On the side of science this implies that we limit our efforts to the explanation of dynamics, links, causes and effects, but withstand the temptation of deciding about societally “right” and “wrong”. On the side of policymaking it implies that societal values and their dynamics determine what is considered “good” and “bad”.