

Press Release (Final: links highlighted in yellow / photos to be added)

Patrizia Nanz Joins IASS as Scientific Director – New Leadership Team Takes the Helm

*Potsdam, 31 March 2016. With its focus on knowledge- and research-based transformations towards a sustainable society, the new leadership of the **Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)** presents itself to the public. Patrizia Nanz, an expert on public participation, will join the current board on 1 April and will work alongside atmospheric scientist Mark G. Lawrence, risk researcher Ortwin Renn, and administrative director Katja Carson. The new leadership team has set itself the task of further positioning the IASS, which was founded in Potsdam in 2009, as a major international platform for inter- and transdisciplinary research for global sustainable development.*

The new board has made a conscious decision to adopt a collaborative leadership model. “As an institute that promotes the active participation of societal actors in shaping the future together, it is imperative that this participatory approach is reflected in our leadership structure,” explains Patrizia Nanz, the newest member of the board. The four board members intend to coordinate the institute’s research agenda, transdisciplinary practice, and dialogue with policy-makers and societal actors as a team. The long-standing member of the board, Mark G. Lawrence, has been elected to the post of managing scientific director and confirmed in this role by the General Assembly of the IASS. Appointments to this position are made for a term of two years.

Board unites expertise from broad spectrum of research

The four directors have backgrounds in different disciplines and areas of study, with expertise in the social and natural sciences as well as experience in knowledge co-creation at the intersection of science, policy-making and society, and the management of effective and flexible organisational structures for institutions working in the field of sustainability research.

▪ Patrizia Nanz: Political scientist and expert on public participation

As well as serving on the board of directors, Patrizia Nanz will take up a joint appointment as professor of transformative sustainability studies at the University of Potsdam. Her research at the IASS will address the challenge of embedding the values of intergenerational justice, self-reliance and long-term thinking within the democratic system, and will seek to identify the normative goals on which transformation should be focussed and the narratives that could anchor the principles of sustainability mentally and culturally within our society. Nanz also intends to contribute to the development of an empirically informed political theory of sustainability. In her capacity as the head of the research area “Culture of Participation” at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI), she has studied the role of participation as a mode for transformation and has initiated and supported numerous participatory processes with her expertise since 2013. Over the last three years, she has worked closely with the IASS and its founding director Klaus Töpfer in the joint IASS-KWI

project *Demoenergy*. Nanz has held a professorship at the University of Bremen since 2002 and was a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg, Institute for Advanced Studies (Berlin), Westminster University (London), and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Her latest book, *Die Konsultative. Mehr Demokratie durch Bürgerbeteiligung* [The Consultative. More Democracy through Citizen Participation], co-authored with Claus Leggewie (KWI), was published in early 2016.

- **Ortwin Renn: Environmental and technological sociologist**

Ortwin Renn joined the IASS as scientific director on 1 February 2016. His research activities at the Institute will focus on the systemic risks that hinder sustainable development and threaten the environment, the economy, and society. The prerequisites and conditions of the transition to a sustainable national and international energy supply system will form a key focus of his work. Prior to his appointment, Renn was professor of technology assessment and environmental sociology, and dean of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Stuttgart. He was also the scientific director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Risk and Innovation Research (ZIRIUS) attached to the university. His career has included teaching and research positions in Germany, the USA, and Switzerland.

- **Katja Carson: Administrative director**

A qualified business administrator with a BA (Hons) in European Business Administration from Middlesex University London and an MBA from Henley Business School in the United Kingdom, Katja Carson has over twenty-five years' experience in leadership and management roles in Germany and abroad. She is a member of the management board of the IASS and will support the Institute's activities through the development of an effective administration model that fosters sustainable work and research practice. Carson develops and implements the Institute's internal sustainability strategies. As the organisational director of Greenpeace New Zealand (2009–2014), Carson held overall responsibility for administration, finance and budgeting, governance, personnel, IT, building services and infrastructure, and the leadership of interdisciplinary teams. In 2015 she held the role of interim head of global finance at Greenpeace International. Katja Carson joined the IASS as the head of administration in September 2015.

- **Mark G. Lawrence: Atmospheric and climate scientist**

Mark Lawrence has contributed to the development of the IASS since 2011 in his capacity as scientific director and has been confirmed in this role by the General Assembly for a further five years. His research interests lie in the development of integrated solutions to climate change and air pollution, and the opportunities and risks presented by targeted interventions in the climate (climate engineering) as a means of reducing climate change, especially in the context of the Anthropocene and the relationship between humans and nature. The US-American scientist was previously a research group leader at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry in Mainz, Germany. He was an interim professor of meteorology at the University of Mainz in the 2009/2010 academic year and has held an honorary professorship at the University of Potsdam since 2014.

Press contact: Corina Weber | +49 331 28822 340 | corina.weber@iass-potsdam.de