Transdisciplinary research towards transsectoral implementation

**Martin Regelsberger**¹, Astrid Allesch², Benedikt Becsi², Verena Germann², Georg Gratzer², Astrid Gühnemann², Laura Hundscheid², Annemarie Körfgen³, Christian Kozina⁴, Helmuth Kreiner⁵, Thomas Lindenthal⁵, Maximilian Manderscheid², Sophia-Marie Rammier², Marco Scherz², Ingeborg Schwarz⁵, Werner Toth², and Harald Vacik²

¹Technisches Büro Regelsberger, HQ, Austria (office@regelsberger.at)
²Universität für Bodenkultur Wien
³Universität Innsbruck
⁴Universität Graz
⁵Technische Universität Graz
⁶Climate Change Centre AUSTRIA

Research is ever deepening its knowledge in a multitude of fields. Such research contributes in great depth to identifying and understanding problems (e.g. in the field of climate change). However, when it comes to societal implementation, it may ultimately lead to zero knowledge at infinite depth, as it has been ironically put. To tackle sustainability, respectively to achieve the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) set by the UN, science has to come together and work in transdisciplinary teams. Scientists are poorly prepared for such an exercise and standard procedures of scientific work, sharing and publication of results in specialised conferences and journals do not help.

In view of this problem, the Austrian Alliance of Sustainable Universities and research centres has created a project, UniNEtZ (Universities and Sustainable Development Goals), to jointly address the issues raised by the SDGs and develop suggestions for policies in a multidisciplinary approach. In order to facilitate this for the scientists involved, UniNEtZ is preparing collaborative measures and methods to address the issue of cooperation between disciplines to guarantee that all important interactions among SDGs are considered and addressed in equal detail. It is expected that changes in the way science and scientists are used to work together are necessary to achieve that. The developed concepts will be published in a handbook for UniNEtZ.

In a next step, the handbook also hints at the need for municipal, regional, and national administrations to transition towards a kind of governance, that enables implementation of policies towards the SDGs. Current hierarchically organised structures don’t seem ideal for the kind of transsectoral cooperation that will be needed to implement the expected measures.

The contribution presents the findings of this work on cooperative research and governance structures.
Keywords: SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals, transdisciplinary research, transsectoral implementation