



CMCC Seminar-Webinar The political dimension of climate science

*with Hans von Storch, Director emeritus, Institute of Coastal Research,
Helmholtz Zentrum Geesthacht, Germany*

CMCC SEMINAR - WEBINAR

October 16, 2018 - h.12.00 pm CEST

The political dimension of climate science

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To attend the Webinar, register at bit.ly/webinar-von-Storch

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The event will take place at **CMCC premises in Venice:**

[CMCC@Ca'Foscari](#), Aula Cannelletto - Edificio Porta dell'Innovazione - VEGA (Venice Gateway for Science and Technology) - Via della Libertà 12, Venezia Marghera (VE)

Tuesday, Oct 16, 2018

h. 12.00 CEST

Language: English

Presenter: **Hans von Storch**, Director emeritus, Institute of Coastal Research, Helmholtz Zentrum Geesthacht, Germany

Moderator: **Silvio Gualdi**, Director CSP Division, CMCC Foundation

Discussant: **Roberto Pastres**, Associate Professor of Ecology Ca' Foscari University of Venice, CMCC@Ca'Foscari

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Climate Science has detected that human activities are changing the climate at a speed,

which is, compared to changes in the geological past, fast and with significant consequences for economy and societies as well as ecosystems. Thus, it was science which has made recent and future climate change, and its main driver, the human emissions of greenhouse gases, a key issue in the main global political arena. The science is insofar "settled" that may the change may be steered by the amount of future human emissions, and that all nonavoided climate change, due to past and possible future emissions, needs to be considered as mostly a malevolent and even often adverse change of living conditions, which needs measures to mitigate risks.

Since both adapting to all changes and avoiding all climate change seems hardly impossible, societies of the world have to decide about the right mix of adaptation to and mitigation of man-made climate change. Deciding about this is a political task, not a scientific task.

On the other hand, the concept of man-made climate change is not a recent scientific discovery, but is part of the western narrative of creation, divine justice and a number of social constructions. This should be subject to social science studies, but finds too little attention.

Thus "climate" is made up of at least two competing concepts, one being a scientific construction, and the other a string of social constructions (with the scientific one also being a special type of social construction). The result is that climate change becomes a postnormal science, with urgent decisions, inherent uncertainties, values in dispute and costly risks. Typical for such a situation is that representatives of opposing sides adopt a position of knowledge superiority, scientists now, priests in the past, so that arriving in a social negotiation process at acceptable "solutions" is fraught with heavy conflicts and significant delays as well as demands for "expert governments".

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