



**Public Transport:** Underground lines U11 (for: Messe West/Süd/Gruga), 101 or 107 (for: Bredene) to **Rüttensteider Stern** stop — exit **Museum Folkwang**. From Rüttensteider Straße (upstairs), please follow the signs for **Museum Folkwang**. Pass the museum centre and turn immediately left into **Goethestraße 31 (KWI)** (ca. 10 minutes).

**On Foot:** You can reach the KWI from the Essen main railway station in about 15 minutes along the “**culture path**” (Kulturpfad). From the south entrance of the central station, follow the signs and the **blue, illuminated glass tiles** on the ground along **Huysenallee/** then **Rüttensteider Straße** until you reach a small park on your right. Cross the blue **Folkwang bridge** to reach **Goethestraße 31 (KWI)**.

#### Address of Hotel:

##### Mercure Hotel Plaza

Bismarckstr. 48-50, 45128 Essen  
 phone: (+49) 201 878 58-0  
 fax: (+49) 201 878 58-700  
 email: H4990@accor.com  
 online: [www.mercure.com/de/hotel-4990-mercure-hotel-plaza-essen/index.shtml](http://www.mercure.com/de/hotel-4990-mercure-hotel-plaza-essen/index.shtml)

#### Address of Restaurant:

##### Restaurant Aldegheri

Rüttensteider Str. 14, 45128 Essen  
 phone: (+49) 201 439 999-98  
 online: [www.aldegheri.de](http://www.aldegheri.de)

#### Supported by:

Fritz Thyssen Stiftung  
 für Wissenschaftsförderung

#### Concept and Organization:

Bernd Sommer ([bernd.sommer@kwi-nrw.de](mailto:bernd.sommer@kwi-nrw.de))

#### Place of Conference:

Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI)  
 Goethestr. 31 (Gartensaal)  
 45128 Essen  
 phone: (+49) 201 7204-206  
 fax: (+49) 201 7204-111  
 online: [www.kulturwissenschaften.de](http://www.kulturwissenschaften.de)



KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHES  
 INSTITUT ESSEN

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED  
 STUDY IN THE HUMANITIES

Cultural Dimensions  
 of Climate Change  
 and the Environment  
 in North America

Program  
 28-29 June 2012



## Cultural Dimensions of Climate Change and the Environment in North America

Climate change is an inherently global problem. However, climate change impacts as well as mitigation efforts are always perceived and dealt with locally and in a culture-specific way.

Global warming interacts in multiple ways with North American ecological and social systems. On the one hand, the U.S. and Canada belong to the world's largest per capita emitters of greenhouse gases. On the other hand, the Arctic north of the continent as well as the Deep South is already heavily affected by a changing climate. Despite the US's and recently also Canada's rejection of international binding climate targets, on the local and regional level, some of the world's most ambitious climate initiatives can be found in North America.

Striking about the symbolic representation of climate change in the USA is a relatively huge cultural variety. While in Europe climate change deniers are largely marginalized and without influence on mainstream politics, American views on climate change and the environment become increasingly polarized according to political beliefs. And whereas the U.S. hosts some of the world's leading climate science institutions, religious explanations of why global warming is or is not happening, repeatedly have found supporters in media and politics, too.

How can these contradictions be explained? The participants will deal with these questions in the course of the conference that focuses on the human dimensions and cultural representations of climate change and the environment in North America.

## Thursday, 28 June 2012

1:00 pm **Arrival and Registration**

1:30 pm **Welcome**

Claus Leggewie, Carmen Meinert and Bernd Sommer (Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, KWI)

2:00 pm **Panel I: Ideas**

Moderator: Carmen Meinert (KWI)

**The 'American Way of Life' and Views on Climate Change and the Environment**

Roland Benedikter (Stanford University)

**'The weather has always been crazy here' - Dealing and not Dealing with Climate Change in Canada's Subarctic**

Claudia Grill (Bielefeld School in History and Sociology)

**The Role of Norms for U.S. foreign Climate Policy**

Frederic Hanusch (KWI)

4:30 pm **Coffee Break**

5:00 pm **Panel II: Past**

Moderator: Franz Mauelshagen (KWI)

**Environmental Historiography of Climate Change in North America**

Richard Tucker (University of Michigan)

**A 'frighening Phenomenon': New Orleans's first Hurricane Experience**

Eleonora Rohland (KWI)

**From Conservationists to Environmentalists: The American Environmental Movement in the 20th Century**

Angela Mertig (Middle Tennessee State University)

7:30 pm **End of Day 1**

8:00 pm **Conference Dinner**

## Friday, 29 June 2012

10:00 am **Panel III: Present and Future (Part I)**

Moderator: Bernd Sommer (KWI)

**Climate Change Attitudes and the Role of social Practices**

Karin Schürmann (KWI)

**Who speaks for the Climate? Making Sense of Media Reporting on Climate Change (in the Context of the U.S. Presidential Election)**

Maxwell T. Boykoff (Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Science, CIRES)

12:00 pm **Lunch Buffet**

1:00 pm **Panel IV: Present and Future (Part II)**

Moderator: Bernd Sommer (KWI)

**The U.S. and International Climate Politics**

Jonas Meckling (Harvard University)

**What next on Climate? Climate Action on the Regional, State and Local Level**

Arne Jungjohann (Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America, tbc)

3:00 pm **Conclusion and Good-Bye**

Bernd Sommer and Carmen Meinert (KWI)

3:15 pm **End of Conference**