



Press Release

Dresden,
1 July 2021

Spatial research for sustainability transformations: IOER adopts new mission statement and structure

In order to preserve a liveable planet for future generations, much has to change fundamentally – and also rather quickly: Ecological processes induced by human activity are increasingly irreversible and lead ever deeper into a global crisis. With its new vision and mission statement (*Leitbild*) and new structure, the IOER focuses on this challenge and develops spatial science based responses for sustainability transformations in regions, cities and neighbourhoods.

The coming decade will confront societies around the world with challenges on an unprecedented scale. While the pandemic is far from over, it remains essential to get a grip on climate change, species extinction and resource consumption, as well as environmental pollution. New development pathways must be taken rapidly in order to be able to move from the current ecological crisis towards a liveable and sustainable future. In this, spatial structures and interrelations play a crucial role – from allotment gardening to the construction sector, regional structural change and landscape transitions on a continental scale.

In view of these urgent and complex tasks, the IOER has developed a new vision and mission statement (*Leitbild*) that sets out an integrative framework for its future research work and defines principles for its approach and organisation. The *Leitbild* was developed for the first time in an open co-creation process with the employees, also involving the scientific advisory board as well as national and international stakeholders. Simultaneously, the institute has also restructured its research organisation in order to ensure an effective implementation of the *Leitbild*.

Through its integrative perspective, the institute reinforces attention to systemic interactions, goal conflicts but also synergies between the diverse and cross-scale social, ecological and technological aspects of spatial development. *“We want to use our known core competencies to enable stakeholders to cope with the complexity of the decisions ahead, and see information creation, participation and innovation processes as a key to this,”* says Professor Marc Wolfram, the director of the IOER. He goes on: *“This includes in-depth knowledge of the various ecological implications of planning, building and economic activities in cities and regions as well as a powerful data infrastructure and consistent redesign of intervention approaches, processes and instruments.”*

In the new structure of the IOER there are four research areas with a long-term agenda: The area *“Transformative Capacities”* examines innovative approaches to initiate and influence deep socio-ecological and technological change in different spatial contexts. The areas *“Landscape, Ecosystems and Biodiversity”* and

Contact

Heike Hensel
Press and Public Relations

E-Mail: H.Hensel@ioer.de
Phone +49 351 4679-241

Leibniz Institute of
Ecological Urban and
Regional Development
Weberplatz 1
01217 Dresden/Germany





“*Built Environment – Resources and Environmental Risks*” deal with the principal ecological aspects of spatial developments and their interaction with individuals and society. The fourth area “*Spatial Information and Modelling*” underpins data-intensive analyses and visualizations in all areas and also expands the research data centre (RDC) of the IOER. This structure is complemented by two IOER institutions in cooperation with the Technische Universität Dresden: The *Interdisciplinary Centre for Transformative Urban Regeneration (IZS)* in Görlitz, which conducts research in close cooperation with local and regional stakeholders, and the *Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS)* restructured in 2020, which now trains international young academics in the field of spatial sustainability sciences.

The IOER's *Leitbild* provides the basis for the development of its new research program, which will come into force next year. This will set priorities for the period up to 2028 and attach particular importance to an effective transfer with regard to the outstanding need for practical action. The kick-off for the new programming period will be IOER's Annual Conference in autumn 2021 under the title “*Space & Transformation*”, which will be accompanied by several smaller events on this topic under the leadership or participation of the IOER.

IOER vision and mission statement on the internet:

<https://www.ioer.de/en/institute/ioer-leitbild>

IOER Annual Conference on the internet: <http://jahrestagung.ioer.info/en/>

Contact at the IOER:

Prof. Dr. Marc Wolfram, director of the IOER,
e-mail: M.Wolfram@ioer.de

The Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER) is a non-university research centre and a member of the Leibniz Association. We contribute to a spatial development that enables humanity to thrive within ecological boundaries while ensuring planetary justice. Our research aims to accelerate and achieve deep and encompassing transformations that shape sustainable and resilient regions, cities and neighbourhoods. [<https://www.ioer.de/en/>]