

# The Limits to Growth: Sustainability and the Circular Economy

## Lecture 0: Organization

Prof. Dr. Benjamin Leiding  
M.A. Theresa Sommer

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- Updated versions of these slides will be available in our [Github repository](#).

## Team



Prof. Dr. Benjamin Leiding  
benjamin.leiding@tu-clausthal.de



M.A. Theresa Sommer  
theresa.sommer@tu-clausthal.de

## Research Group

- **Emerging Technologies for the Circular Economy → ETCE**
- Research focus:
  - Intersection of IT and sustainability
  - Circular Economy
  - Self-organized, decentralized and distributed systems
  - Machine-to-Everything Economy (M2X Economy)
- Other courses:
  - Emerging Technologies for the Circular Economy (SS – M.Sc.)
  - IoT and Digitalization for Circular Economy (SS – M.Sc.)

## Research Group

- ETCE Website – [Link](#)
  - Course material
  - Theses/project topics
- Our research in action:
  - ZDF documentary (German) – [Link](#)
  - Klartext Preis 2020 (German) – [Link](#)

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You want join us? Write us an email!

→ [benjamin.leiding@tu-clausthal.de](mailto:benjamin.leiding@tu-clausthal.de)

## Course Content

- Basics of climate change, environmental pollution, and dwindling non-renewable resources
- Introduction to the circular economy, sustainability, and related concepts (biocapacity, etc.)
- Sustainability goals
- Feedback loops and tipping points
- Implications of closed systems with a finite supply of resources
- Technology-focused and technology-critical approaches towards sustainability
- Circular Societies

## Learning Outcome

- Understanding the concept of a circular economy, sustainability, and related concepts (biocapacity, etc.).
- Gain a basic understanding of causes, dimensions, and the characterization of climate change, environmental pollution, and dwindling non-renewable resources.
- Being able to make high-level, transdisciplinary assessments of decisions and measures in a social, economic, and political context.
- The ability to critically assess upcoming technological solutions enabling/facilitating sustainability and the circular economy.



## Lecture Plan

- 19.04.2023 → Organization (L00) + Introduction (L01)
- 26.04.2023 → Challenges I: Climate Change (L02)
- 03.05.2023 → Challenges II: Pollution and Natural Resources (L03)
- 10.05.2023 → Sustainability and Political (In-)Action (L04)
- 17.05.2023 → Limits to Growth and Planetary Boundaries (L05)
- 24.05.2023 → From Cradle to the Grave: (Over-) Consumption, Environmental Impacts and the Life Cycle of Products (L06)
- 31.05.2023 → Circular Economy (L07)
- 07.06.2023 → Beyond the Circular Economy (L08)
- 14.06.2023 → Towards a Circular Society (L09)
- 21.06.2023 → Technologies And What They Can (Not) Do (L10)
- 28.06.2023 → Critical Thinking and Sustainable Everyday Practices (L11)
- 05.07.2023 → Invited Lecture (L11)
- 12.07.2023 → Invited Lecture (L12)
- 19.07.2023 → Now What? (L13)

## Course Organization

- Course website – [Link](#)
- News and updates:
  - Everyone: Please join the public Matrix room by using the following link:  
<https://matrix.to/#/public--LTG-Course-SS23:matrix.org>
  - We will share news and updates here and you will also have the chance to ask questions to us and your fellow students.
  - CLZ students + DigiTec will additionally receive information via StudIP ([Link](#))
- Slides and lecture recordings will be uploaded to StudIP ([Link](#)) and to Github ([Link](#))
  - Please report bugs ;)
- Questions? Write us an email: [etce-ltg@tu-clausthal.de](mailto:etce-ltg@tu-clausthal.de) ← **We will only respond to emails written to this specific email address!**

# Course Organization - Asynchronous Learning & MOOC content

- **Massive Open Online Course**
  - Remote and (often) asynchronous online courses *not* just for students enrolled in a specific university, but *ideally* open for everybody
  - Usually consist of pre-recorded lectures, interactive content and online quizzes
  - Some of you might have visited MOOC on platforms such as edX, LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, Udacity, etc. before
- We are currently developing a MOOC for the Limits to Growth Lecture
- This semester will be the first test run for this asynchronous and digital learning content
  - We are very happy about any feedback you can give us to improve the course further! Just write us an email: [etce-ltg@tu-clausthal.de](mailto:etce-ltg@tu-clausthal.de)

## Course Organization – Asynchronous Learning

- This semester we will include asynchronous learning for two of the lectures (L10 and L11)
  - Consisting of short pre-recorded videos and interactive content
- We will announce further information about these two sessions during the semester

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31.05.2023 → Circular Economy (L07)

07.06.2023 → Beyond the Circular Economy (L08)

14.06.2023 → Towards a Circular Society (L09)

**21.06.2023 → Technologies And What They Can (Not) Do (L10)**

**28.06.2023 → Critical Thinking and Sustainable Everyday Practices (L11)**

05.07.2023 → Invited Lecture (L12)

12.07.2023 → Invited Lecture (L13)

19.07.2023 → Now What? (L14)

L10 and L11 will **not** be live lectures. Instead, you will find pre-recorded videos and other content on our website.

## Dates/Times/Locations

- Lecture:

- Wednesday **2.15 pm to 3.45 pm** (Berlin time) – **19.04.2023** to **19.07.2023**
- Location: Goslar Gotec (Am Stollen 19 C, 38640 Goslar, Germany) or via BigBlueButton ([Link](#))

- Exercise / Q&A:

- Wednesday **4 pm to 5 pm** (Berlin time) – **19.04.2023** to **19.07.2023**
- Location: Goslar Gotec (Am Stollen 19 C, 38640 Goslar, Germany) or via BigBlueButton ([Link](#))

## Exercises

- Individual work → no group submissions
- Submission of **each** exercise is **mandatory**
- You pass by submitting an exercise – even if it is an empty page
- You will receive feedback on your submission
- Exercise = learning feedback

All exercises should be submitted through the Academic Cloud under the following link:

<https://sync.academiccloud.de/index.php/s/MW3wY8uOVJbTrei>

- We do not accept email submissions, please use the file drop link to upload your submissions.
- **Important:** Always include your full name, your student email address and your student ID, so that we can track your submission.

## Examination –

- Prerequisite for admission to the final exam (all criteria have to be fulfilled):
  - Submit all exercises
- Final exam:
  - No Specific date yet
  - Either written exam (120min) **or** oral examination (20-25min)
  - More Information in the next weeks

## Self-Study Star

Self-Study Star → 

- Slides with the self-study star indicate optional/additional study material that is **not** mandatory but could be helpful or interesting



# Literature

- This course is not based on a single book and you **do not** need to buy a book to pass the exam.
- Donella H. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and Dennis L. Meadows. *The Limits to Growth* (1972).
- Donella H. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and Dennis L. Meadows. *Limits To Growth: The 30-Year Update* (2004).
- Baccini et al. *Metabolism of the Anthroposphere: Analysis, Evaluation, Design* (2012).
- Walter R. Stahel. *The Circular Economy: A User's Guide* (2019).
- XR. *This is not a Drill* (2019)
- W. Brian Arthur. *The Nature of Technology: What It Is and How it Evolves* (2011).
- David Wallace-Wells. *The Uninhabitable Earth, Annotated Edition* (2017).
- James Lawrence Powell. *The 2084 Report: An Oral History of the Great Warming* (2020).
- Rutger Bregman. *Utopia for Realists* (2017).

## Literature

- (German) Stefan Rahmstorf, Hans Joachim Schellnhuber. *Der Klimawandel* (2019).
- David Archer, Stefan Rahmstorf. *The Climate Crisis* (2010).
- Gabrielle Walker, David King. *The Hot Topic: How to Tackle Global Warming and Still Keep the Lights on* (2008).

## Further Resources

- Climate University – Teaching and learning for a sustainable future – [Link](#)
- Circular Societies (German) – [Link](#)
- Server Infrastructure for a Global Rebellion – [Link](#)
- Podcasts:
  - Drilled ([Link](#))
  - How to Save a Planet ([Link](#))
  - 1,5 Grad – der Klima-Podcast mit Luisa Neubauer (German) ([Link](#))

# Questions?