

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

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You have had a multifaceted academic career, have international research experience, have taught at various Austrian universities and have now been Rector at BOKU for just over a year. What do you enjoy most about your work?

My innate thirst for knowledge led me, like many others, into research. Dealing with a legal issue can be compared to solving a puzzle that you work your way through and look in all directions with open eyes, compare. In addition, science offers the freedom to set your own topics, work on them impartially and pass on the knowledge gained to an interested public. I see the fact that scientists can now work from home as a matter of course as a positive development.

Above all

Interdisciplinary networked research has given me a lot of pleasure in the course of my later career. My work in the Rectorate now presents me with other exciting challenges, and my experience in research is of great benefit here. are of great benefit. Above all, I find dealing with colleagues and empathizing with their problems as well as working together on future topics that have been researched at BOKU for 150 years and presenting them to the public extremely stimulating. The focus on sustainability has also created a special spirit of optimism in recent years and it's great to be a part of this, to be able to suggest topics and, for example, to be able to contribute to education with two new Master's degree programs („Climate Change and Societal Transformation“, „Green Building Engineering“) at BOKU.

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Institution: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna

Area of expertise: environmental law, climate protection law; commercial law; Austrian and European public law;

Role in the member organization: Rector





With projects such as ClimLaw at the University of Graz or the ClimateProtectionLaw working group at the CCCA, you have been instrumental in promoting the synthesis of climate and legal issues in Austria. Where do you see the greatest challenges in dealing with these interdisciplinary issues?

My experience with colleagues and students from different disciplines has shown me that the basic prerequisite for good interdisciplinary science is finding a common language. To achieve this, it is necessary to simplify and also to sharpen them. Language is an even more important tool when it comes to communicating the resulting solutions to society and making them accessible to people. However, this process is anything but simple and in order for it to succeed, you have to listen a lot, develop an awareness of the problem and invest time in learning new things. Within the specialist disciplines, too little value is still placed on interdisciplinary knowledge. It is therefore particularly important to improve the scientific culture in this respect.

What do you think is the exchange and networking with the climate research community within the CCCA and how can the existing potential be better utilized?

Science needs a loud voice and this is where the CCCA in Austria makes an immensely important contribution. Furthermore, large joint projects such as the APCC status reports or the special reports would otherwise not be possible in this form. I see potential for improvement above all in the creation of permanent and secure structures and in going one step further when working together on major issues, as in the aforementioned projects.

Where do you personally see the most important levers in the fight against climate change in the next 5 years?

I am relying on positive incentives to combat the climate crisis. The first step must be to use the energy crisis to strengthen renewables. The unique opportunity is that public and personal interests coincide in energy issues. This is where environmental protection and self-interest meet, so to speak. The momentum in the field of photovoltaics, for example, is one such lever, but we need more of them. We also need new channels for science to share its messages with people. And last but not least, we need momentum, which was brought into the climate debate by the younger generation, and bring them into politics.

