

## **Proposal for a Master Thesis**

### **Impact of Post-socialist Institutional Reform and Climate Change on Land Use in Tyumen Oblast, Western Siberia**

The interface between the steppe and the northern forest zone in Western Siberia is affected by climate change. Climate-induced agricultural expansion and increasing cultivation of energy plants in this region will trigger fundamental changes in land use. Negative impact on the budgets of greenhouse gases (GHGs), on sustainable soil and water resources management, and on biodiversity are anticipated. However, the climate-change impact and the changing area that may be available for crop cultivation are not the only challenges to sustainable agriculture. Besides other unresolved agri-environmental issues such as land degradation, the post-socialist economic and institutional changes have produced a huge “sustainability gap”. For example, intensive agriculture is more and more concentrating in the south around the city of Tyumen, while formerly cultivated land in remote areas is increasingly left fallow because physical infrastructure and institutional arrangements have been insufficiently adapted to the new system.

Thus, agriculture and its institutional environment will still undergo a process of change to account for drawbacks of the transition process in terms of sustainability before it may be able to cope with the new sustainability challenges mentioned above. Against this background, one or more master theses may be written within this topic. They are expected to describe this situation and its historical background in more detail and to outline the process of change in agrarian institutions and governance structures in the past. It may identify the main problems in post-socialist transition and show how natural resources are governed in this context. A focus will be on the change in agricultural structures and the role of regulators in the region. The master theses will be integrated in a larger research project called SASCHA - Sustainable land management and adaptation strategies to climate change for the Western Siberian corn-belt - ([www.agrar.hu-berlin.de/struktur-en/institute-en/wisola-en/fg-en/ress-en/forschung-en/verbundforschung-en/sascha](http://www.agrar.hu-berlin.de/struktur-en/institute-en/wisola-en/fg-en/ress-en/forschung-en/verbundforschung-en/sascha)).