



**University  
of Basel**

# In association with:



# **Goals and principles of transdisciplinary research**

# Defining transdisciplinary research that addresses societal challenges:

WHAT ARE ITS AIMS?

WHICH PRINCIPLES GUIDE ITS PROCESSES?

# Defining aims:

Transdisciplinary research aims at transgressing boundaries between scientific disciplines and between science and practice in order to develop knowledge that can help to solve, mitigate, or prevent societal challenges.

# Defining principles:

- 1) Orientation to societal challenges
- 2) Grasping the complexity of problems
- 3) Develop knowledge and practices that promote what is perceived as common good
- 4) Integrating different perspectives
- 5) Producing systems, target, and transformation knowledge
- 6) Science as part of a social learning process
- 7) Linking abstract and case-specific knowledge

based on: Pohl & Hirsch Hadorn (2007), Rist et al. (2007), Schneider (2015)

# Defining transdisciplinary research that addresses societal challenges:

- It produces knowledge that helps to solve, mitigate, or prevent societal challenges.
- The process brings together many stakeholders: researchers, actors from civil society, the private, and the public sector.
- They jointly analyse the problems, discuss, what could be more desirable futures, and cooperate on strategies and actions that support necessary changes.

Transdisciplinary research links societal problem solving with scientific knowledge production in a process of co-producing knowledge.



# References

- Pohl, C. & Hirsch Hadorn, G. (2007). *Principles for Designing Transdisciplinary Research – proposed by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences*. München, DE: oekom Verlag.
- Rist, S., Herweg, K. & Giger, M. (2007). Wissen gemeinsam erarbeiten. Erfahrungen aus der nachhaltigen Nutzung natürlicher Ressourcen im Nord-Süd-Kontext. *Hotspot*, 17, 22–25.
- Schneider, F. (2015). *Transdisciplinary and Transformative Research for Sustainable Governance of Natural Resources. Towards Intra- and Intergenerational Justice*. Bern, CH: University of Bern.