



EINLADUNG

zum

VERA - SEMINAR

von

Walter Kutschera

Fakultät für Physik – Isotopenforschung und Kernphysik
Universität Wien

**The Anthropocene –
Reflections on a New Era of our Earth**

The term “Anthropocene” was coined in the year 2000 by the atmospheric scientist Paul Crutzen, the 1995 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry [1]. It could indicate our geochronological era on Earth, where the impact of humans on the environment is noticeable and goes beyond natural variations.

Although we are now well aware about man’s influence on the environment, we are not sure how to deal with it. One of the prime concerns is the increase of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases (e.g. CH₄) in the atmosphere. While Paul Crutzen called the CO₂ reduction “a pious wish” [2], others think that we can actually do it. However, it seems that the political, moral, and ethical forces are not strong enough to induce the necessary changes in our behavior. If humans only change if they must and such a “must” does not yet exist, we continue more or less with business as usual.

However, I am reasonably sure that we can change when we must. The enormous (technological) progress in almost every section of our activities on Earth may help future generations in this endeavor. I will reflect on different issues related to our entrance into the Anthropocene, asking more questions than giving answers and/or predictions.

[1] Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, The “Anthropocene“, *International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme News Letter* **41** (2000) 17-18.

[2] Paul J. Crutzen, Albedo enhancement by stratospheric sulfur injection: a contribution to resolve a policy dilemma?, *Climate Change* **77** (2006) 211-219.

Donnerstag, 18. Dezember 2014, 16:30 Uhr

**1090 Wien, Währinger Str. 17, "Kavalierstrakt",
1. Stock, Victor-Franz-Hess-Hörsaal**