



CERN Colloquium

SPEAKER: Mario Giampietro

TITLE: **Telling the story of Sustainability quantitatively: a critical appraisal of today's narratives**

DATE: 12 Oct 2017, 16:30

PLACE: 500-1-001 - Main Auditorium

ABSTRACT

In these days we are told that we are living in a "post-truth" world in which facts are no longer significant or relevant. This statement is misleading. There is nothing wrong with the world we are living in, the problem is that we are no longer capable of understanding it. We cannot understand it, because we are using obsolete narratives and analytical tools developed decades ago to interpret a "reality" that no longer exists. The talk starts with an overview of "conceptual blunders" used right now to frame the analysis of sustainability. These blunders are behind the assumption that we will be able to sustain further economic growth by implementing a more circular economy, using the rationale of bioeconomy, reaching zero-emissions, and by developing green-energy. The widespread acceptance of these assumptions flags the existence of a serious crisis in sustainability science, that is incapable of handling complexity. In fact, dealing with sustainability issues requires the ability of integrating in a coherent representation information referring to different dimensions and different scales of analysis. This result is outside the reach of reductionism. In the final part, the talk illustrates the existence of new scientific approaches based on complexity theory (relational analysis) and new conceptualizations of the interaction of human societies and their environment (the metabolic pattern of social-ecological systems) that can improve the usefulness of scientific inputs to be used for governance

Organised by: W. Lerche/TH-SP & F. Spano EP/UAT.....
Tea and coffee will be served at 16h00