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The Lived Experience of Climate Change

- 3) Interdisciplinary methodologies for investigation into the
'lived experiences' climate change

Textbook

kultur- und
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T869 Climate Change: from science to lived experience

Module 3: Interdisciplinary methodologies for investigation into the ‘lived experiences’ of climate change

TEXTBOOK

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1 Aims, objectives, learning outcomes and how to study this module¹

The concept and analysis of ‘lived experience’ is complex. This is due firstly to the holistic nature of experiential knowledge which rides roughshod over established frameworks for analysing phenomena, for example frameworks provided by academic disciplines. Secondly, it is also due to the many material and social influences on lived experience. Finally, lived experience does not represent a fixed body of knowledge – it evolves over time². Therefore, we need to think carefully about how we investigate and capture the complexity and intricacies of ‘lived experiences’ in any reliable way, particularly in relation to climate change. You may want to do this simply because you want to gain a sounder understanding of how ‘lived experiences’ are shaped by climate change. Alternatively, you may want to explore questions around the issue because you want to develop a dissertation project related to particular aspects of the story. Finally, you may want to carry out a rigorous investigation in a non-academic context, for example in relation to your work, and the approach taken in this module will hopefully be equally useful for that purpose.

The generic aim of Module 3 is to make you think about, and provide guidance for using research tools which will allow you to develop a research question and project around the broad subject of ‘lived experiences’ of climate change. You may already be familiar with dominant methodological tools of your own disciplines (for example, the ‘objective’ quantitative data for natural scientists, and qualitative ‘subjective’ data for many social scientists, to put it crudely). This module aims to cross over such crude distinctions and extend knowledge boundaries which allow you to take an interdisciplinary approach, whilst at the same time acknowledging the value of methodologies that have shaped your own discipline. Another generic aim of the module is for you to think about an interdisciplinary approach to research methods, and the methodological issues that arise out of this.

The specific objectives of the module are to:

- a) Introduce you to recent arguments and discourse (Box 1.1) on research methods that will enable greater insights into key methodological approaches of your discipline.
- b) Explore the disciplinary assumptions and philosophical arguments underlying both natural and social science methodologies as well as approaches to ‘mixed’ methodologies.
- c) Develop tools which allow you to reflect critically on research methods and methodological approaches for your dissertation or other investigation which you might undertake; and
- d) Develop critical and analytical research skills.

¹ There are two other modules in this series. Module 1 is *Introduction to climate change in the context of sustainable development*. Module 2 is *The lived experience of climate change. A Water case study* is also provided as an extended text. These other modules and the Water case study might be referred to from time to time in this e-textbook and corresponding e-workbook.

² For an elaboration of the concept of lived experience see Module 2: *The lived experience of climate change*.