



Invitation

Monday
15 June 2015
6:30 pm

Amphitheatre Pefkios Georgiades,
Andreas Themistocleous Building,
Cyprus University of Technology,
Athinou Street, Lemesos

The Cyprus International Institute for Environmental and Public Health in association with Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Science and Technology (*Jean Monnet Module on European Energy and Environmental Policy*) cordially invite you to an open lecture on:

Sustainable Development at a Crossroads: Transformation of the Industrial State during a Perfect Storm

Speaker:

Professor Nicholas A. Ashford

Professor of Technology and Policy and Director of the Technology and Law Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology



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Sustainable Development at a Crossroads: Transformation of the Industrial State during a Perfect Storm



Nicholas Askounes Ashford, PhD., JD

Professor of Technology and Policy and Director of the Technology and Law Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The most important barriers to achieving a transformation to a more sustainable industrial system is lock-in or path dependency due to (1) the failure to envision, design, and implement policies that achieve co-optimization, or the mutually reinforcing – rather than the compromising – of societal goals (economic welfare, environmental quality, and employment/earning capacity) and (2) entrenched economic and political interests that game (and gain from) the present system and advancement of its current trends. System-wide change requires system-wide thinking and action.

Sound legislative and programmatic changes, and an independent judiciary, are compromised by gridlock, corruption, and diversionary tactics while the debates we should be having are sidestepped by the media and self-serving political maneuvering. Sustainable development requires both technological and institutional changes, while opening up the participatory and political space¹ to enable new voices to contribute to integrated systems thinking and solutions. Societal innovations and transformation are also needed but they are insufficient by themselves to transcend technical, economic, financial, and political lock-in. However, technology is neither the major barrier nor the solution. Financial and political reform is key to accomplishing both.