The International Doctoral school of Technology and Science — Aalborg University

THE ROLE OF QUANTITATIVE SCIENTIFIC DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS IN DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

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Lecturers : Professor Petter Næss, Aalborg University, Professor Tim Richardson, Aalborg University, and several international scholars

ECTS : 5.0 (3.0 without paper)

Time : August 18 -20, 2010

Length of course: 3 days

Place : Aalborg University

Deadline : July 21, 2010

Max. No. of participants:

Description:

The purpose of this PhD course is to give PhD students theoretical insight into the diverse roles that scientific decision support models can undertake in the policy making process. In addition, the course aims to provide the students with knowledge about how the assumptions stored in the models are shaped by their broader social environment. The course also aims to develop the ability of students to critically evaluate the validity and relevance of the manner in which the models are constructed and applied.

The course is centred around decision support tools and their impact on decision making processes. The concept of decision support tools is considered fairly broad as the issues raised are important to a wide range of research fields. However, it is limited to quantitative tools (e.g. traffic/energy demand forecasts, environmental impact assessments, cost-benefit analyses, etc.), and as the motivation for the project originates from the transport sector this will be the main focus in the presentations from the invited speakers.

The course focuses on the following issues: What is the role of scientific decision support tools in policy-making processes? Are the applications of them objective means to reach political ends or are the models themselves influenced by particular interests that frame such ends and means? How does black-boxing of assumptions stored in scientific decision

support tools influence on the interpretation of results? To which extent does the application of quantitative scientific tools enrich and/or distort democratic aspects of the decision making process? Is it at all possible to make precise predictions in systems influenced largely by human behaviour?

The course will be organized as a combination of presentations from teachers from AAU and guest speakers. In addition course participants are supposed to give short oral presentations of their PhD projects and optionally also short papers, focusing on the role of decision support models and how the models are likely to be shaped by their social environment.

Request Registration Form

The Faculties of Engineering, Science and Medicine

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