

Prof Benno Werlen: UNESCO Chair on Global Understanding for Sustainability. Founding Member of UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES. Chair at Academia Europaea - THE ACADEMY OF EUROPE

Chair of the IGU Commission on Global Understanding (since 2016), is the initiator and chair of The Jena Declaration on the Cultural and Regional Dimension of Global Sustainability' endorsed by many of the leading organizations in the field, founder and executive director of the International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) including more than 30 Regional Actions Centers, approved by the UNESCO General Conference.

In 2016 Werlen was awarded the Lauréat d'honneur of the International Geographical Union, the highest scientific honorary prize awarded by the IGU, for his lifelong contributions to geographical science, as an internationally recognized scholar, and for opening up new paths of scientific cooperation at the highest level.

Werlen holds degrees from the Faculties of the Humanities, and Natural Sciences. He worked at the Universities of Kiel, Fribourg, Zurich, Salzburg, Geneva, Nijmegen, and the ETH Zurich. He has been a visiting scholar at the University of Cambridge (King's College & Sidney Sussex College), the London School of Economics, and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). As a 'key thinker on space and place' (Sage 2011), he published widely on society-space relations under globalized conditions.

He served as a panel member for the European Research Council for 'Environment and Society' for Advanced Grants (2008-15), the French National Research Agency (ANR) in the field of Social and Human Sciences (2008-12), as Chair of the IGU Commission 'Cultural Approach in Geography' (2004-16). He has published 16 books and more than 200 papers in scientific journals and books and has given over 200 keynote presentations at universities across five continents in the fields of geography, sociology, economics, political sciences, philosophy, history, cultural anthropology, and linguistics, and organized more than 70 scientific conferences and conference sessions on all continents.