

# OWL colloquium: Athena's platform for deliberating science-society interactions

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of wisdom.  
*Athena's monthly colloquium*



We are happy to announce that our next OWL colloquium speaker is

## dr. Dirk-Jan Koch

Date & time: **19 January 2017, 16:00-17:00**

Venue: Room **WN-S655** in VU University Amsterdam, De Boelelaan 1085.

### **Abstract: Thinking outside the box: unintended effects of international health initiatives**

Doctors have been sent out to work in developing countries, billions of dollars of aid funding have been invested in health. Countless of reports and evaluations have studied the intended effects of these external interventions: have infant mortality rates dropped? Have vaccination rates increased? While these questions need to be answered, there have also been a host of side effects to these large external effects, both positive and negative. This lecture stimulates your critical thinking on the effects those interventions on unintended effects, such as school attendance rates, middle class formation, state capacity decline and drug resistance. By integrating ex-ante a better reflection of unintended effect in planning, and ex-post more focus on this in evaluations, negative unintended effects can be avoided or mitigated, and positive unintended effects can be capitalized on. The lecture will draw on personal and professional experiences in amongst others the DRC, and recent academic research.

**About our speaker: Dr. Dirk Jan Koch**, Special Envoy Natural Resources of the Netherlands (incoming), is a diplomat, writer, social scientist and focuses on sustained and sustainable supply of metals and minerals. He pushes the frontiers of the interlinkages between trade and international cooperation,

which are a key priority for the Netherlands government.

Before re-joining the Ministry of Foreign affairs, he served as Search for Common Ground's Regional Director for West and Central Africa, based in the DRC. He oversaw more than 250 staff and conflict (mineral) resolution programs in amongst others the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Angola. He is the author of several well-regarded books and articles focusing on natural resources, international development and diplomacy. Dirk holds a PhD in Social Sciences (cum laude) from Radboud University in the Netherlands and a Masters' from the London School of Economics (merit), and has served as a part-time professor at the Catholic University of Kinshasa.

### **About the Athena Institute**

The Athena Institute at VU University Amsterdam is part of the science faculty. From its early days in the 1990s onwards, it has developed tools and methodologies to successfully deal with science-society interactions at all stages of research and innovation.

### **About the OWL colloquium**

With its monthly OWL colloquium the Athena Institute aspires to stimulate an inter-, multi-, cross and trans-disciplinary process of deliberation about topics relating to the interface between science and society. Speakers from all corners both within and without academia (CSOs, policy, business and industry...) are invited to present on empirical, theoretical and methodological developments topical to bridging the variety of gaps that complicate science and society interactions.

*For more information, please contact us at [OWLcolloquium.falw@vu.nl](mailto:OWLcolloquium.falw@vu.nl).*