

Eco / Smart City Governance

An approach for comparative analyses of European and Chinese cases

Philipp Späth

spaeth@envgov.uni-freiburg.de

UNI
FREIBURG

Eco Cities / Smart Cities - Just a Hype?

Discussions about sustainable urban development increasingly revolve around the labels 'Eco City' and 'Smart City'.

Although very vague and inconsistently used, these labels have been found to convey different meanings, each influencing urban development in specific ways.^{1]}

The labelling hence seems to be 'performative'.

Project Background

Collaborative project, 3 years, from April 2015

Conducted

in Europe by:

King's College London
Univ. of: Utrecht, Freiburg,
Toulouse, Westminster,

in China by:

N.-Ningbo-China,
Renmin, Tsinghua

Funded

ESRC, NWO, **DFG**, ANR, NSFC

Research Questions

Conceptual:

In what ways can such labels contribute to the **co-ordination** of multiple actors?

Empirical:

What (systemic) effects result from the promotion of such labels **in practice**?

Objectives

Identify re-occurring patterns

in governance of socio-technical change.

Explore potential for learning

in transdisciplinary settings with practitioners

Deduce recommendations for action

for various policy fields & actors.

Appreciate Complexity vs. Comparability

Such processes are influenced by countless factors, many of which are place specific!

To explore main dynamics requires in-depth, rich case studies => **inductive, flexible approach**.

But: Comparisons require a **systematic, selective approach** to case study design.

Select Dimensions for Assessing Success

- A) Cities' measured sustainability performance
- B) Quality of governance processes
- C) Redistributive and accessibility effects
- D) Momentum towards socio-techn. transitions

Iterative Case Study Approach

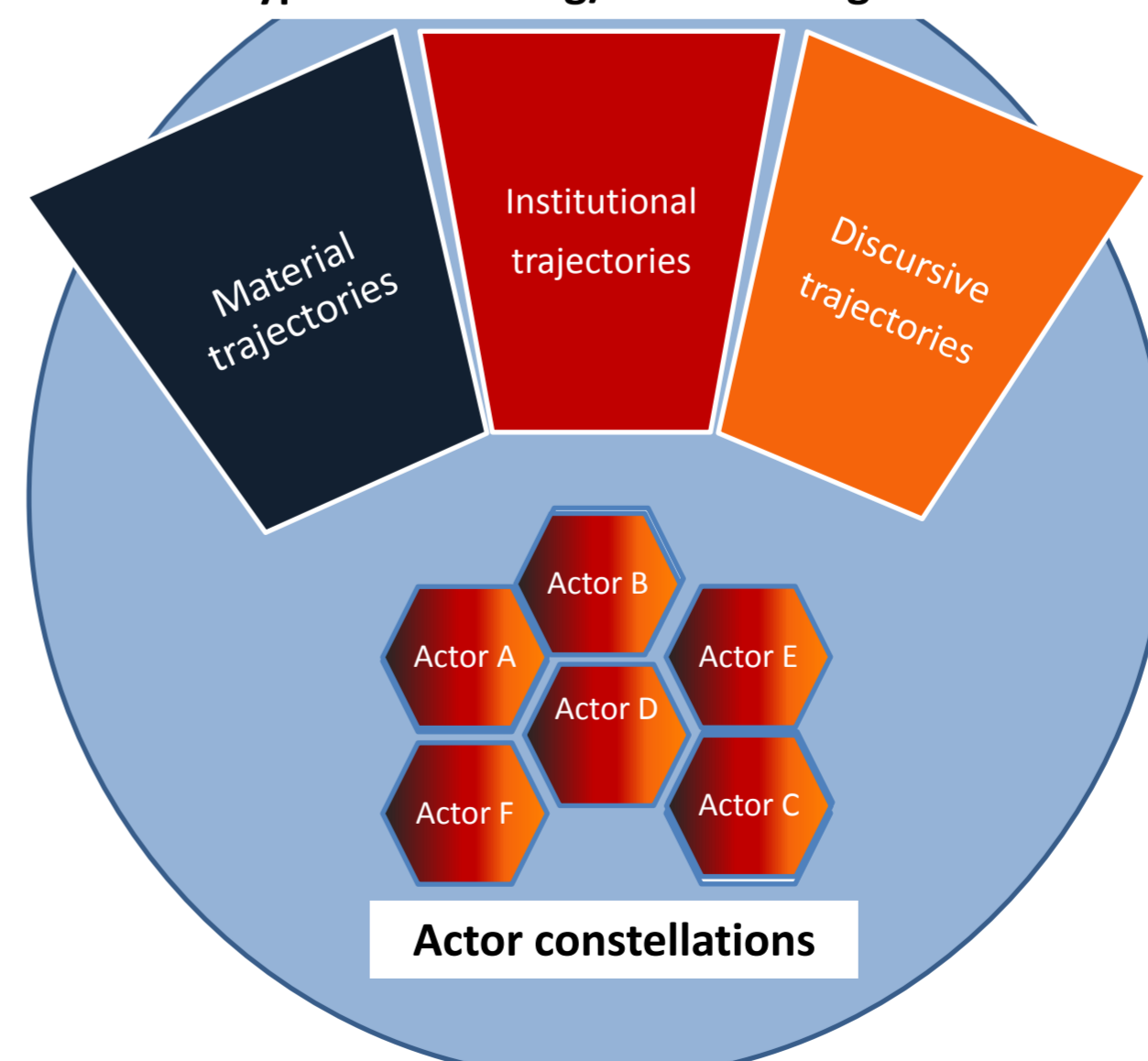
Dia-chronical & syn-chronical comparisons of innovative governance processes in very diverse European & Chinese contexts.

Iterative steps:

- 1) **Review** literatures on Smart Cities/EcoCities.
- 2) **Scan, specify & compare** 30-60 cases
(in a systematic process => public data base)
- 3) Jointly & reflexively **select** 6-10 for deepening
- 4) Perform half-standardized, modular, in-depth **analyses**.

Analytical Perspectives

Three types of enabling/ constraining structures



1] de Jong, M., Joss, S., Schraven, D., Zhan, C. & Weijnen, M. (2015). "Sustainable-smart-resilient-low carbon-eco-knowledge cities; making sense of a multitude of concepts promoting sustainable urbanization." *Journal of Cleaner Production* (in press).

Financial support by:

Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft

DFG