



Lecture Series *Transformations to Sustainability*



The rise of situated innovation in the sustainable city: projects, testbeds, and platforms

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29.10.2019, 10:00 am, building 1.0, lecture hall

Abstract

Cities are increasingly being targeted as sites of social, environmental, political, and technological innovation. This is clearly evident with smart cities and the rise of digital societies but can also be found in a wide range of agendas related to climate mitigation and adaptation, public health and well-being, sharing economies, collaborative and participatory governance, and so on. In this presentation, Andy Karvonen combines ideas from urban geography and planning as well as sustainable transitions to compare and contrast three sites of urban innovation – projects, testbeds, and platforms. The insights reveal the multiple ways that these activities are recasting urban governance and sustainable urban development in fundamental ways.

Andy Karvonen

is Associate Professor of Sustainable Urban Development and Director of Doctoral Studies in the Division of Urban and Regional Studies at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology. He draws on ideas from urban geography and planning as well as Science and Technology Studies to examine the socio-technical dynamics of urban change. He has conducted research on urban water and energy networks, low-carbon housing agendas, experimental governance and urban laboratories, and smart cities and urban innovation. His most recent book (co-edited with Federico Cugurullo and Federico Caprotti) is *Inside Smart Cities: Place, Politics and Urban Innovation* (Routledge, 2019).

The lecture series *Transformations to Sustainability*. Sustainability implies a formidable challenge for a variety of fields. Buzzwords such as bioeconomy, energy transformation, green chemistry, agricultural turnaround or digitalization illustrate the multiple facets at play. Each of these – often deeply interwoven – aspects describe complex processes on their own. Beyond technological progress, transformations to sustainability also require broad societal and institutional change. Against this background, the lecture series *Transformation to Sustainability* reflects on the topic from manifold perspectives: What are the specific targets of transformation processes? How can sustainability targets be translated into viable transformation research programs? To what degree can the transformation processes be consciously managed? What are the main drivers or barriers of transformation and how do they vary in different contexts? The lecture series was initiated by the Thematic Area ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY to offer a comprehensive discussion platform, welcoming colleagues from all disciplines at UFZ. For further information contact the head of RU 6 Environment and Society: bernd.hansjuergens@ufz.de.