Call for Papers

Workshop “Climate Change, Decarbonization and the Urban Energy Transition”

October 12-13, 2017, University of Hamburg, Germany

Scientific Orientation

The workshop is aiming for developing key concepts and synthesizing the state of the art of urban transformation processes in relation to climate change, decarbonization and energy transition. Thematically the workshop is motivated by the worldwide growing urbanization which leads to a spatial concentration of population, economic activity and mobility on the one hand and by increasing CO2 emissions and climate change on the other. In order to promote pathways towards urban energy transition and decarbonization several strategies should be considered. Among those, the production, distribution and consumption of renewable energy are relevant key areas. There is still a lack of systematic integration of concepts, models and empirical evidence, combined with an insufficient knowledge base and a broad range of uncoordinated and dispersed solutions.

Research Areas

The workshop focuses on developing and integrating concepts and tools of sustainable urban energy landscapes and transformation, particularly renewable energy and low-carbon pathways. Furthermore, the workshop contributes to evidence-based strategies and experiences for climate and energy policies on the urban scale. Four research areas will be addressed:

1) Socio-technical and environmental topics of urban energy transition
Replacing the old fossil-based energy provision with one which builds upon renewables includes new rural-urban relations, e.g. urban energy from rural space (bio-energy) and a range of reconstruction of the existing technologies. This part of energy transition will be related to climate change as rising temperatures and the frequency of extreme events have to be taken into account if we construct a new socio-technical system.

2) City structure, urban land use and energy consumption
The existing urban land use and morphology has been created during the 20th century and reflects the abundance of energy, the orientation towards a car-friendly functional division of space and weak resilience to climate change. Urban reconstruction towards rising energy efficiency, decoupling of urban growth from rising energy consumption and retrofitting has become a major issue of urban planning and design. During the workshop we will elaborate a typology of urban answers in relation to city structure (e.g. matured European cities, fast growing Asian or African cities) and ecological contexts (coastal cities, cities in different eco-zones).
3) Distributional effects of urban energy policies
Climate change and energy transition have effects on social inequalities and urban vulnerabilities. The research area of environmental justice and energy poverty takes up these issues and points to distributional effects of transition policies.

4) Multi-level models and governance concepts to manage transition processes
Transition models and governance are important issues in order to manage transition processes including a broad range of actors, actions, institutions and strategic decision making. There are already some promising ways of comprehensive concepts like the multi-level perspective (MLP), but there are still uncertainties about where, how and who is able and willing to contribute to a climate-friendly urban energy system.

Invited Speakers
Derk Loorbach (DRIFT and Erasmus University Rotterdam)
Janette Webb (University of Edinburgh)
Jochen Monstadt (Universiteit Utrecht)
Jonathan Rutherford (ENPC Paris)
Sergio Tirado Herero (RMIT Europe)
Stefan Bouzarovski (University of Manchester)

Intended post-workshop publication
Edited volume of contributions or a special issue in a journal

Submission and further Information
Please submit your abstract (300 to 500 words) focusing on one of the above areas to the workshop coordinator Ms. Ting Ting Tracy Cheung (Email: ting.ting.cheung@uni-hamburg.de) by Wednesday, 31st May 2017. Notice of acceptance is communicated by the end of June. For further information, please visit our webpage (https://www.clisap.de/research/b:-climate-manifestations-and-impacts/b5:-urban-systems-test-bed-hamburg/workshop-2017/). We look forward to your submission and hope to see you soon in Hamburg!

Workshop Organizers
Jürgen Oßenbrügge and Jürgen Scheffran, Institute of Geography, University of Hamburg