

Tackling 'glocal' sustainability challenges through collaborative bottom-up RRI governance practices

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Science and innovation policies are increasingly focussing on research and innovation that should be accountable to society, and help to tackle society's great challenges. Widely these policies are formulated against the dominant normative 'competitiveness' framing, where research is essentially expected to contribute to economic growth and greater competitiveness. However, there is also a different, alternative normative framing where research and innovation should in the first instance lead to sustainability and human wellbeing in the long term. Such a sustainability-oriented science policy considers research to be innovative if it supports the transformation towards a more sustainable future. In contrary to the 'competitiveness' framing, which is often defined as 'value-free', sustainability science clearly implies a societal relevant value dimension (e.g. due to the ambiguous and controversial meaning of sustainable development).

Moreover sustainability research is challenged by different scales and governance levels. Although many present-day sustainability problems are of global nature, their manifestation is locally situated, and influenced by local conditions. Likewise strategies and solutions to deal with these problems often depend on the local context. Finally, a reduction of scope to a sufficiently concrete level helps to clarify the relevant value dimensions, and the diversity of attitudes that the various stakeholders confronted with the challenge and possible solutions hold.

FoTRRIS, research project funded under Horizon 2020, which will start this autumn, will address how the research inherent issue of values could be addressed. The project will facilitate new governance practices to co-design locally situated transdisciplinary RRI projects that are attuned to local needs, values and opportunities that connect and mobilise local stakeholder in order to address sustainability challenges connected to resource scarcity.

My presentation will outline the project's process architecture, which translates the concept of RRI into the concept of 'glocal sustainability research'.