

Thinking, Planning and Making Futures: Towards a Better Understanding of Energy Scenarios in Interdisciplinary Research Settings

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Grand challenges such as a socio-technical transition towards low-carbon energy systems require a joint effort of various disciplines from the social sciences and humanities as well as the natural and engineering sciences. However, interdisciplinary co-operation is often characterized by several weaknesses jeopardising the successful collaboration and promising strengths of interdisciplinary research settings.

Drawing on experience and insights from a current research project at RWTH Aachen University (HumTec Seed Fund Project “Szenarien als Medien der Erschließung von Zukunft: das Beispiel Energieversorgung/Scenarios as media of making futures accessible: the case of energy supply”) this contribution aims at elucidating the strengths and weaknesses of interdisciplinary energy research. Choosing energy scenarios as an example, it will particularly focus on how interdisciplinary dialogue may or may not contribute to a better understanding of how to engage with energy futures in the light of uncertain circumstances. In addition, the contribution will deal with divergent views on how futures can be thought, planned and made as well as how these three dimensions interact.

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Conference theme: Towards Low-Carbon Energy Systems