



Invitation

Hybrid workshop on “Co-production of knowledge in climate governance”

Strategic scientific workshop sponsored by the Humboldt-Centre of the University of Bayreuth

Thursday, 5 May from 9.00 a.m.

We invite you all to join us in an international and comparative workshop on co-production of knowledge and will be happy about your questions and interventions.

Where: in presence at the University of Bayreuth, K 3, or hybrid via live stream (Zoom)

How to attend: Please register by sending an email to uer3@uni-bayreuth.de. We will provide you with further information.

Who can attend: every student, post-doc and scholar interested in this relatively new field of research or in (legal) solutions to climate change. Students of the “Zusatzstudium Nachhaltigkeit” at the UBT will be able to attain 3 ECTS by handing in a short paper. If you are interested, please state so in the registration email.

What is it all about:

Climate change requires solutions from multilevel and polycentric perspectives. A growing number of scholars involved in inter- and trans-disciplinary environmental research have applauded the value of knowledge integration in decision-making to extend the “collective knowledge base”. We hypothesize that such a collective knowledge-base is more likely to effectively address the complex nature of the contemporary ecological challenges (especially of climate change) when it is the result of a co-production of knowledge (CoPK). Our central assertion is that CoPK can successfully counter the perceived lack of effectiveness of conventional legal approaches, such as participation of the public concerned, in administrative decision-making processes. They are based on uni-directional decision-making and unilateral knowledge transfer processes, where the role of access rights is limited to the procedural realm. In contrast, CoPK takes into account and integrates bottom-up perspectives of different knowledge bearers.

However, an integrated, systematic, and implementable definition of CoPK is currently missing in legal research. Consequently, it is hardly used in decision- and policy-making. Yet, insights from legal research illuminate the resulting detriment. Legal frameworks and their underlying conceptualization often overlook or even exclude fundamental dimensions of key branches of knowledge beyond the discretionary powers of the decision-makers, such as indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge, as well as local eco-logical knowledge. In order to make use of those various aspects of knowledge for policy-making and regulation on the national, regional and international level, it is important to describe the process of “co-production” and reflect critically on the existing and emerging instruments that allow – within the respective legal frameworks – for CoPK.

The workshop aims to address the research gap by setting a common framework for CoPK in climate governance through the mapping and evaluation of existing climate-smart practices in order to develop guidelines for policy-makers and legislators. Drawing from the conceptual framework of participatory rights in international environmental decision-making (Århus Convention and the Escazu Agreement) as well as national (constitutional) provisions on participatory rights in environmental law, we aim at connecting the narrative of effective participation with best practices of CoPK from local, traditional, and indigenous communities (Germany: Bavarian Forest/Steigerwald and the Alps; selected areas from the Arctic Region: Sápmi; Kenya: Maasai, Ogiek, Endorois, Tana River county and the northern frontier; Brazil: Mato Grosso). These areas are chosen as they have either a strong vocation to participatory processes in environmental decision-making (Germany), or important societies of indigenous and traditional peoples (Sápmi, Kenya, Latin America) with rich and diversified local knowledge, based on the centrality of nature and water for human existence. The problems from climate change, which afflict local communities all over the world, are comparable. It therefore seems legitimate to use a comparative approach so as to find commonalities (despite idiosyncrasies) and to develop a common framework of CoPK.

Questions to structure the panels of the workshop as well as the initial publication are as follows:

1. Are there examples/best practices where CoPK led to effective and implementable solutions to the ecological challenges that we are currently facing (environmental threats and population displacement stress)?
2. How does CoPK produce usable knowledge for climate-vulnerable indigenous communities? How does CoPK combine scientific and traditional knowledge for adaptation and mitigation of climate change?
3. How does CoPK generate usable climate (change) knowledge for policymakers?
4. How do existing legal frameworks include or exclude certain types of knowledge, knowledge producers, and processes of co-production? Is there a difference between small-scale (regional) regulation, like local by-laws, national legislation, and large-scale (international) regulation, like international treaties or regional conventions?
5. What socio-legal surroundings does effective co-production of knowledge in environmental law and policy require? Is there a difference between legal orders as well as between states and the international community?
6. How can CoPK be utilised to influence quality decision-making relating to environmental sustainability, particularly in the context of recurring disputes?

We are looking forward to you:

Prof. Dr. Eva Julia Lohse, Lehrstuhl für Öffentliches Recht III, Universität Bayreuth

Prof. Dr. Margherita Paola Poto, Researcher at the Faculty of Law, Project member of the team SECURE – UiT – Norway

Dr. Robert Omondi Owino, Senior Lecturer and Chair of Private Law Department, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology School of Law, Nairobi, Kenya

Dr. Giulia Parolo, Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law, Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG) – Brazil

Jane Murungi, Lecturer, School of Law, University of Nairobi (Kisumu campus), Kenya