



WHAT CAN WE LEARN FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE POLICY MIXES FROM TRANSITIONS RESEARCH ?

Conference Ambassador Report by Mara Weiß on:

Keynote Speech by Karoline Rogge: “What can we learn for transformative climate policy mixes from transitions research?” (21th of August 2020, 15.00-16.30)

Discussant: Klaus Kubeczko

What are policy mixes and what makes them transformative?

In recent years, two main policy mix definitions emerged in transitions research, both going beyond the “ideal” combination of policy instruments: Kern & Howlett (2009) define policy mixes as “complex arrangements of multiple goals and means which, in many cases, have developed incrementally over many years”. Rogge & Reichardt (2016) extended the concept to include policy elements (policy strategy and instrument mix), implementation processes (which result into policy elements) and characteristics of policy mixes (such as consistency of elements, coherence of processes, credibility and comprehensiveness of policy mixes).

Over 60% of policy mix studies deal with *transformative* policy mixes. But what makes transformative policy mixes transformative? According to Rogge, transformative policy mixes (TPM) contain a broader, heuristic way of thinking. Participatory visioning can help to understand in what kind of society we want to live in. With a vision, it is easier to build policy mixes around it and make the direction on where we want to travel to more concrete. TPM are about creating the new and phasing out the old. This should be done with a consistent instrument mix that protects niches against harmful regimes. The goal for policy-making should be to cope with arising issues, such as the climate crisis. To fight the climate crisis, we must drastically change our ways of producing and consuming. **So how should climate policy transform?**

→ Climate policy mixes need to be credible to accelerate low-carbon transitions

Credibility is generated when the public feels that targets can actually be achieved. Hereby, not the policies themselves, but the policy style is decisive for generating credibility. The way how policy makers are interacting with other actors, how much they are addressing issues quickly, and if stakeholders are invited, are deciding factors for credibility. As stated by Rogge, a greater focus on stakeholder interests and participation in policy making may help boost public acceptance.

→ Phasing out policies that support carbon-intensive fuels, technologies or practices can accelerate low-carbon transitions

When phase-out policies are set in place, radical change becomes visible, and action is taken seriously by the people. Acceleration decarbonization calls for enhancing policy coordination across governance levels and policy fields. A negative example are the current Covid-19 recovery packages, which are not yet consistent with the Paris agreement. Over 40% of funding of the recovery packages in G20 countries go to fossil fuels unconditionally (see www.energypolicytracker.org). If we want to be serious about low-carbon transitions, no funding should go to fossil fuels unconditionally anymore.

→ **Transformative climate policy mixes have to navigate resistance from vested interests**

For transformative change, we need to combine and integrate much more politics & policy. Rogge calls for the need to build coalitions with those willing and interested in positive change, instead of those who stand in the way. Transformative policy mix researchers to be an active voice and influence the discourse. However, we should not forget those who lose from the envisioned transformative change. There needs to be a compensation for losers as part of transformative climate policy mixes.

What should policy mix research focus on?

- 1) First, *combining transition and policy studies*. For a wider societal transformation, we need to pay more attention to TPM including research of innovation policy and environmental policy. The IST community should work together and even go beyond the community for research on policy mixes.
- 2) Second, *bringing in feedbacks*. Researchers should engage with willing policy coalitions, who actively offer knowledge. The post-Covid-19 & Green Deal window of opportunity is open.
- 3) Third, *going beyond technological innovation*. Social innovation and societal pressure are necessary for policy change.