

# The planet has a fever! Polycentric Climate Governance after Paris?

18.04.2018

Early career Researchers from the INOGOVCIN network and well beyond convened a workshop on “Polycentric Climate Governance after Paris: Expectations, Challenges and Pathways” from 12-14 April in Freiburg, Germany. A team from the University of Freiburg and the Technical University of Darmstadt organized the workshop, which had attracted funding from the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies.



The first day started with a public event and a Keynote by Jonas Schönefeld, who substituted Andy Jordan, who was unable to travel due to severe weather conditions. Mr. Schönefeld enlightened the audience on how climate policy had become more polycentric in the last decade or so, meaning that cities, companies, NGOs and many others had joined the effort to combat climate change in many different ways.

The keynote was followed by Inspiring Climate Talks of Professor Frank Biermann, Professor Philipp Pattberg and Dr Sabine Reinecke. Professor Biermann stressed the vital importance of equity and power as core categories of any climate governance research design. Philipp Pattberg vividly depicted the complexity of polycentric governance by arguing that the planet has a fever, but that taking many different medications (i.e., policies) in conjunctions could lead to all sorts of unexpected effects. Sabine Reinecke rounded off the discussion with reference to a popular Greenpeace campaign that featured a break-up between Ken and Barbie because her packaging contributed to deforestation.

A highlight of the evening was a short skit from the members of the Freiburg Scientific Theatre, who highlighted the injustice of offsetting carbon emissions. The public event concluded with the presentation of the three best photos submitted to the “Prima Klima Freiburg” competition. Each winner received a cash prize and will have their photo, along with the other seven photos of the top ten finalists, showcased in Freiburg. The Sustainability Center Freiburg supported the event.

During the following days, the workshop participants presented scientific paper drafts and received feedback from peers and renowned professors from the field of climate and sustainability governance. The workshop was characterized by its interactive formats like Walk and Talk and a World Café, which aim to provide enough time for exchange, reflection and discussions. Many discussions asked to what extent polycentric governance is a helpful concept to study efforts to contain or deal with climate change. Outputs include a new ResearchGate group, and new ideas for future publications and workshops.





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