

Panel 5.2**A successful example: Communities and interest groups as promoters of LCS**

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Speakers: Anette Bickmeyer (E.ON/Initiativkreis Ruhr)
Masanobu Ishikawa (Kobe University)
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Overview

Often, research and policy focus on the role of government (at national, regional and local levels) in delivering action for a low-carbon society. In this session, however, the role of alternative actors in promoting a low-carbon society was discussed both in terms of their capacity to lead initiatives and the importance of enrolling them in government processes. The session also showed that the roles of these actors are varied. Policy-makers should consider, within their context of action, the role of non-state action in promoting low-carbon societies.

Major findings**Anette Bickmeyer, E.ON/Initiativkreis Ruhr, Germany**

The first presentation, by Anette Bickmeyer of E.ON/Initiativkreis Ruhr, focused on the role of private actors in promoting innovation in a city region. In particular, Annette explained how a private led initiative to foster LCS innovation had emerged in the metropolitan city Ruhr (northern Westphalia, Germany). The metropolitan city Ruhr is the most populated part of Germany (53 million inhabitants) and has a long industrial history. A group of 61 multinational companies with a specific link with this area, emerged in 1989 with the aim of taking responsibility for the development of the region, and more recently, promoting an LCS.

How are they promoting an LCS? Their current initiative aims at bundling company innovations in different relevant fields (e.g. energy, materials, mobility) which can later be implemented in a typical model city of the metropolitan city in Ruhr (e.g. middle-sized, with an urban area of about 50.000 people). While in the early stages of the project they are building partnerships with scientific institutions (such as the Wuppertal Institute) to identify measures and the potential for GHGs emissions reductions, later phases in the project (concept phase, to be completed in 2011 and the implementation, to be completed in 2012) will require stronger links with local governments. In particular, she highlighted the role of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) as private actors are not capable to implement these projects alone; instead, she argued, they need the support of 'Science and Politics'. Fortunately for their initiative, they have the support of mayors in Ruhr who 'are excited about becoming an innovation city'. In summary, she concluded that their success will depend of the presence of visionary politicians 'who are not afraid of big multinational companies', open-minded creative scientists and citizens who are open to new ideas to follow innovative entrepreneurs.

Steve Thorne, SSN, South Africa

The second presentation from Steve Thorne from SouthSouthNorth focused on the role of NGOs in promoting innovation to catalyse a LCT in least developed countries. The presentation focused on two experiences promoting the use of Solar Water Heaters in Lwandle and Kuyasa, both in Cape Town, South Africa. In these projects, they focused on two questions: How can they create demonstrations of innovation for poor people? And considering that "policy is often a shopping list but there is not money to go shopping", how can they create the

hooks to scale up low-carbon innovations?

These projects have to be understood against the backdrop of growing informal settlements in the outskirts of Cape Town, under-serviced areas. In this context, the SouthSouthNorth experience has demonstrated that poor people are very good at managing the services within the constraints they live, and this is something that can be used to achieve an LCS. The central issue targeted in these projects is the issue of “suppressed demand”, that is, the energy demand that is constrained as a result of poor or lack of infrastructure. Their project in Kuyasa helped to set a precedent within the Clean Development Mechanism that suppressed demand can be included within baseline methodologies if proof of livelihoods improvement can be shown. Their projects also showed that their sustainable technologies projects have additional benefits such as creating female jobs.

The project in Lwandle targeted municipal hostels in Cape Town, where residents requested warm water on demand. In Kuyasa, low-carbon technologies were provided to low-income houses. Following a bottom-up process of decision-making, solar water heaters were identified as a suitable technology in both cases. During the process of development and implementation, early adopters opened up spaces to test and verify the technology. The project helped to learn about technology and costing and provided affirming demonstrations to drive replication to city level, although both projects encountered obstacles within their political and financial contexts.

Masanobu Ishikawa, Kobe University, Japan

The third presentation from Masanobu Ishikawa from Kobe University in Japan focused on the promotion of dialogue in policy making (stakeholder dialogue) for a long-term significant reduction in GHG emissions. This project tackles the opaque decision-making that, due to history and culture, is a specific problem in Japan. In particular, this project aims at challenging conventional decision-making in Japan, based only in bilateral negotiations between the government and stakeholders, to focus on providing a multi-lateral forum for discussion, with a long scope (50 years).

In this forum for the discussion of the LCS, the crucial issue is mediation between a range of industry, non-industry and scientific stakeholders. The process is aided by the use of scenarios to help stakeholders understand how different actors frame the problem. The forum opened opportunities for stakeholders to fix the agenda and the form of the debate. Based on their discussions, the forum selected two themes (Theme 1: How far shall we increase renewable energy by 2050?; Theme 2: What is the ideal lifestyle in the low-carbon society?) which have led to the creation of two sub-forums - one on energy supply and another on lifestyle, both of which are very promising in terms of their ability to contribute ideas for an LCS in Japan.

Main issues discussed

- The dialogue between stakeholders and the government is crucial.
- Private initiatives like the one in the metropolitan city of Ruhr build on regional networks.
- In terms of whether it is possible to move from these examples to provoke systemic change towards an LCS, in the example of Ruhr, private actors expect that although only one pilot city will be developed, this will make resources available for the other cities.
- There was a question about how these projects gain currency and whether a focus on climate change in developing countries reduces attention from other development priorities? In the case of SouthSouthNorth, they were interested particularly on the potential for co-benefits.
- Another issue is about the potential to coordinate between actors which may be acting with different timescales. The example of Japan demonstrated this, as they had started this before Japan announced its commitments to climate change, which has changed the dialogue completely.
- The main added value in these processes is what is happening to the stakeholders themselves because what

they take from these dialogues may affect how they behave in their respective organisations. In particular, as society changes, these actors find themselves changing, adapting to new legitimisation requirements.

- Although the role of science is important, these cases also highlight that there is not one but ‘many sciences’, which often have to be mediated. What is needed for the LCS is not only scientific experts but also “translators” - people able to translate between different people.

Items and ideas for future research questions

Future research questions emerging from this section should focus on the role and potential for non-state actors to drive initiatives towards LCS. For example:

- What LCS initiatives are best led by the private sector or by civil society actors? How they combine with the ideals to achieve a sustainable society, balancing the twin objectives of improving quality of life and protecting the environment and the climate?
- What obstacles do they find in the development of these initiatives? What facilitates their action?
- What is the potential of initiatives led by non-government actors to create systemic change towards an LCS?
- What is the role of experts?
- How relevant is stakeholder/public participation to achieve an LCS?

Policy Relevant Questions

These experiences may help policy-makers to rethink their role in the transition to an LCS and in particular their relationship vis-a-vis non-state actors. Relevant questions should be directed towards how can public actors best exploit the synergies between non-state and state actors. In particular, questions of different framings of the problem and different timescales are going to influence the potential of non-state actors to work in partnership. There is a role for policy-makers as well as translators/mediators between different sectors of society.