

ANNOUNCEMENT



International Expert Workshop:
Understanding processes in sustainable innovation journeys

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Place: Utrecht, the Netherlands

Organised in context of KSI programme 1 (Historical analysis of transitions)

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This is a closed workshop for a limited number of selected participants.

Content

To facilitate transitions in environmentally beneficial directions, there is a strong need to influence the speed and direction of sustainable innovation journeys (Rotmans, 2003). 'Innovation journeys' are non-linear processes, open and uncertain trajectories of search and exploration (Van de Ven *et al.*, 1999). The design and implementation of suitable stimulation programs is a key issue in many national environmental and innovation policy programs. These programs should be based on a detailed understanding of the micro-processes that underlie innovation journeys and the factors that foster or hamper them.

The aim of this workshop is to create a better understanding of the micro-processes and factors that accelerate and slow down sustainable innovation journeys, and how these relate to opportunities and limitations to policy intervention. Several academic (disciplinary) approaches have proposed (partial) conceptual perspectives to understand the emergence of innovations at the community level.

- Socio-cognitive perspectives, which highlight the development of shared cognitive frames/paradigms and social networks (Garud and Rappa, 1995; Howells, 1995; Garud and Ahlstrom, 1997).
- Social systems and community approach (Van de Ven and Garud, 1993; Van de Ven, 1993). Van de Ven (1993) conceptualises the emergence of interorganizational communities as "accretion of numerous institutional, resource and proprietary events which co-produce each other through the actions of public and private actors over an extended period of time". Technological development is conceptualised as an emergent social system.
- Technology-specific innovation systems (Carlsson and Stankiewicz, 1991; Jacobsson and Bergek, 2000 and 2004) and sectoral system of innovation approach (Malerba, 2004, 2005) broaden the scope in innovation studies from firms to larger networks of actors, e.g. universities, policy makers, firms, users and to institutional change.
- Strategic Niche Management (SNM) emphasises the importance of local experimental projects to create 'proto-markets' where users, producers and other stakeholders could interact, learn and exchange experiences (Schot *et al.*, 1994; Kemp *et al.*, 1998; 2001; Hoogma *et al.*, 2002).

This workshop creates a forum for debate between researchers that have developed these different analytical frameworks and in this forum we will compare, contrast and, if possible, synthesise them. Central questions are:

- What are the key processes involved in the dynamics of sustainable innovation journeys;
- How do analytical approaches differ in the types of insights they provide?
- How can our frameworks be improved so that we can better inform decision makers?