

UNPACKING THE GOVERNANCE OF ENERGY TRANSITION. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.

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Abstract

There is a deep relationship between energy transition and the governance of contemporary societies. However, while existing governance literature has gone a long way to accommodate complex and heterogeneous problems, it has so far fallen short of entirely dealing with the human, social and cultural challenges that this topic incurs. In particular, the deep relationship between energy transition and political dynamics at large has important connections to social, cultural and personal issues that remain underattended in theories of energy transition governance. As a matter of fact, in more or less direct ways, any event moving in the direction of energy transition requires sophisticated levels of coordination among the many actors involved in governance, and mobilizing a wide range of interests that are likely to produce conflicts, tension and resistance. Building on the interim results of the MILESECURE-2050 FP7 project, the authors reflect upon constitutive elements of energy transition regimes, i.e. more or less stable clusters of individual and collective actors, institutional or not, that can develop plans of action, activate social norms and standards and mobilize resources to encourage, manage, anticipate or direct the dynamics associated with energy transition. These elements are presented against existing, more abstract and generic approaches to governance of complex problems, in order to position them as potential operationalisations. Overall, the proposed contribution aims to derive general principles for the governance of Energy transition and Energy security, using both empirical material and existing scholarship on governance of complex problems.

Keywords

Governance, low-carbon transition, energy security

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