

From Regimes to Grassroots innovations: a framework for understanding the causes of the barriers to community-based initiative and their impacts on transitions

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A transition to a low-carbon society is needed to address the urgent issue of climate change. Community-based initiatives (CBIs) offer one potential pathway to achieving such a transition. CBIs do the work of experimenting and institutionalizing grassroots innovations, which are alternative practices and technological novelties that have the potential to make society more sustainable. However, despite research branches focusing on how to govern such a sustainability transition, barriers have prevented CBIs and their grassroots innovations from bringing about a transition. This thesis will explore the research question: what are the causes of barriers experienced by community-based initiatives and through what process do they hinder community-based initiatives from contributing to a transition to a low-carbon society? It will do this using discourse analysis, process-tracing, and grounded theory, and by using data from semi-structured interviews, structured interviews, academic articles, newspaper articles, and websites. The goal is to develop a deeper understanding of the causes of barriers to community-based initiatives and of how barriers impact CBIs and transitions.