How to create space for change?
Local governments & sustainability transitions

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ICLEI
Local Governments for Sustainability

Local Solutions to Global Challenges
Connecting Leaders - Accelerating Action - Pioneering Solutions

1100+ members
200 cities in Europe
20+ years experience
Learning & exchange
ICLEI in Europe: thematic areas

Sustainable Resources, Resilience and Climate

- integrated sustainability management and indicator systems, climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and ecosystem services, water, mobility

Governance and Social Innovation

- local governments and other actors (research, civil society, regional and national governments), public participation, strategic planning

Sustainable Economy and Procurement

- social and environmental criteria in public purchasing, green and circular urban economy, sustainable consumption and production, procurement of innovation
Regular policy not enough to respond to sustainability challenges

**SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES**
- multiple causes & consequences
- range of domains, actors, scales
- deeply embedded in societal structure, calls for social innovation

**REGULAR POLICY**
- domain focus & fragmentation
- cannot deal with loss of direct control, no feeling for what happens “outside”
- incremental improvements, focus on technological innovation
Transitions are fundamental changes of structure, culture and practices in a societal (sub) system.

Source: DRIFT
Transitions can be influenced, supported, accelerated but NOT planned, steered, controlled

Source: DRIFT
Introducing transition management

WHAT IT IS

- governance approach designed to accelerate social innovation
- joint searching and learning process
- framework that brings together long-term vision and short-term actions

WHAT IT’S NOT

- replacement of regular policy
- universal set of rules or procedures
- process that takes place in a vacuum
- foolproof recipe for making your city more sustainable
Transition management principles

- **dig deeper:** acknowledge complexity & question assumptions
- **aim high:** system innovation vs. system optimisation
- **keep your options open:** explore multiple pathways
- **co-create:** everyone is a decision-maker
- **find change agents:** alternatives are already out there
- **learn, always:** short-term action + long-term vision
What do you get out of it?

- **sense of direction**: shared narrative & future perspective

- **impulse for local change**: new ideas & initiatives

- **collective empowerment**: new networks & roles
I was confronted with how little I actually knew of what was happening in my city.

City officer, Ghent (Belgium)

Transition management is not just another participatory process, it is about transforming from inside.

City officer, Montreuil (France)
Which way to the future?

Strategies, tools and inspiration for transforming cities

4th Informed Cities Forum
A co-production of the ARTS & MUSIC project consortia

Save the date 26-27 March 2015, Rotterdam (The Netherlands)
Thank you!

Transition-related projects
- acceleratingtransitions.eu
- themusicproject.eu
- incontext-fp7.eu

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