Welcome to another edition of *The Commons Digest*! In this issue’s **Commons Forum** we present papers for a panel on the Urban Commons at the 2017 Biennial Conference in Utrecht. The issue opens with the introduction to the Urban Commons by **John Grin** and **Linda van de Kamp** where they speak to new uses of the urban commons and the transformation of urban governance. Next, **Christian Iaione** and **Sheila Foster** present a methodology for a network of collaborative, commons-based cities. **Kris Gyselle Steen** and **Ellen Van Bueren** then discuss the applicability of Ostrom’s Design Principles for the commons and the management of Living Labs. The Commons Forum closes with **Vanessa Castán Broto** presenting her work on environmental governance and politics of the urban commons.

As always, this issue of the Commons Digest also has **Emily Castle’s** newest listing of **Recent Publications** on the commons. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Bienniel Meeting in Utrecht July 10-14, and in the meantime, *Enjoy!*

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**CONTENTS**

**COMMONS FORUM: Urban commons at the 2017 IASC Biennial Conference in Utrecht**

- New uses of the urban commons and the transformation of urban governance
  John Grin and Linda van de Kamp.................................................................1

- Studying and practicing the commons in the city: designing a methodology for a network of collaborative, commons-based cities
  Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione..............................................................5

- The LABoratory for the GOVernance of Commons..........................................10

- The applicability of Ostrom’s design principles for the Commons on the management of urban living labs
  Kris Gyselle Steen and Ellen Van Bueren......................................................11

- Environmental governance, experimentation and the material politics of the urban commons
  Vanessa Castán Broto......................................................................................13

- **Recent Publications**
  Emily Castle........................................................................................................15

- **Announcements**............................................................................................19
New uses of the urban commons and the transformation of urban governance

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This essay – and Digest issue- presents papers for the session **New uses of the urban commons and the transformation of urban governance** held at the IASC 2017 Biennial Conference. The session explores what, and how, local, national and transnational networks may promote mutual exchange and joint action. In an era of transformative change - welfare state reforms, the shift to non-fossil energy and a circular economy, and increasingly diverse societies - many initiatives pertaining to these changes involve the urban commons. Thus, in cities around the globe, we are witnessing the mushrooming of experiments with novel forms of (community) care, energy neutral dwelling areas, neighbourhood integration etc. Over the past few years, people engaged in such initiatives have started to unite themselves in transnational movements, such as the ‘transition town movement’ and the City Makers movement.
That such bottom-up initiatives arise may be ascribed to long term trends such as the retreat of government since the mid-1980s, the emergence of network society, individualization with a growing desire for autonomy and the emergence of the millennials with a rather entrepreneurial, pragmatic take on societal problems. For instance, both as a response to austerity policies and as an expression of socio-cultural trends towards increased autonomy and independence, neighbourhoods and regions are developing new forms of community care. These same trends coalesce with concerns about climate change and dissatisfaction with tempo and nature of national governmental action lead to local energy initiatives and co-operations; or, as a third example, with a desire to maintain opportunities for artistic work, yielding a new use of abandoned industrial real estate which otherwise might just wither away.

These and other initiatives share three key features. First, generally citizens (often with various forms of expertise), civil society organizations and local firms play key roles, and want to have the lead, but simultaneously have vested their hopes on some form of support from local government. Second, they bring novel modes of value creation into practice, which often draw on existing spaces, places and infrastructure. In some cases, such capital takes the form of the collection of solar cells on roofs of participating dwellers’ homes and neighbouring firms’ buildings, in others it may be a piece of public space used for a care farm, and in still other cases it consists of empty office spaces. In all cases, there is some form of common management of these resources. Such management is often accompanied with ambiguous forms of ownership – for instance a building being not only used but also maintained and run by actors who lack the right of formal owners, while the formal owner either accepts this or is simply absent. These 21st century forms of commons thus are, as it were, looking for ways to organize themselves as commons, in an institutionally diverse and ambiguous context (an ‘institutional void’). Third, they generally employ cities’ nationally and transnationally embedded assets: knowledge infrastructures, communication and transportation infrastructures, industrial and service networks, and a proper infrastructure for a vibrant, creative civil society.

These three features together imply that these initiatives for novel forms of the societal value creation may be seen as representing organizational forms and modes of coordination that deviate from both traditional forms of governance and new public management. As such they may be seen as small-scale governance experiments. To the extent that they are successful in their attempts to raise local governmental support and connect themselves to cities’ embedded assets, on the longer run they may even appear the cradle of new forms of urban governance. This implies that some serious reflection on these initiatives is in place. In the remainder of this essay, we raise some – interrelated - key issues to be addressed.

The first key issues involve some pertinent issues on these initiatives themselves. As Avelino & Wittmayer (2016) point out, if the point of gravity in producing societal value shifts to networks of civil society and firms, power differentials and diversity within these networks become more important. Moreover, important questions are raised by Castan Broto and Bulkeley (2013), who have investigated actor composition and leadership of 331 initiatives around the globe. Most partnerships involve firms: 169. Firms also are the largest group of leaders of partnerships. 60% of all partnerships that involve private actors are led by private
actors. Interestingly, the second largest group in leading roles are Community Based Organizations. Both private actors and CBOs nearly always have local government as their main partner. While local government is thus the most frequent partner (239 of 339 cases) only in a few cases it plays a leading role. This raises pertinent questions of democratic accountability and legitimation. Tellingly, both in the city makers’ movements and in the transition town movements, and amongst scholarly work there is now indeed increasing attention to questions of inclusion, legitimacy, dealing with conflicts and contestation and other ‘politics’ around these experimental initiatives. Proper attention seems justified also against the backdrop of wider processes of alienation associated with the rise of this novel middle class.

A second key issue concerns the precise nature of the pieces of commons that are central to these novel modes of value creation. What are, in actual practices, the relations between legal ownership, de facto responsibility for maintenance, actual use, and investments? What (new) institutional arrangements may do justice to these realities? To what extent do they fit incumbent legal framework, what legislative change is needed? What institutional capacity building is necessary and how may it be realized?

A final issue concerns the relationship between emerging new governance arrangements and existing ones. As noted, initiatives often seek support from local governments. But, especially if the above two issues are to be properly addressed, the incumbent arrangements in which local governance is embedded may imply institutional inertia in meeting these needs; and there is an important risk that these novel commons are more shaped by than that they are shaping incumbent arrangements. Disco & Kranakis (2013) have raised similar questions on the role of transnational epistemic communities of experts involved in the ‘cosmopolitan commons.’ What happens in actual practice when such initiatives seek to raise support and connect to incumbent arrangements? What forms of inertia are encountered, and how do initiatives deal with them? How do incumbent arrangements shape novel initiatives?

The objective of the session is to explore these issues by drawing on experiences gained in cities on various continents – exploring on what, and how, local, national and transnational networks may promote mutual exchange and joint action. Also, studying these contemporary practices of the commons will contribute new insight to existing literature on the governance of the commons in different cities.

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Further reading


**Jhagroo**, S. 2016 *Urban Transition Politics. How struggles for sustainability are (re)making urban spaces*. Rotterdam:


Studying and practicing the commons in the city: designing a methodology for a network of collaborative, commons-based cities

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Introduction

Urban residents share a number of resources in common—from open squares, parks, abandoned buildings, vacant lots, roads and other urban infrastructure. There are many ways in which these resources can be managed collaboratively through the cooperation of many actors who have a stake in, or rely upon, these resources. In many cities worldwide, urban residents are collaborating with public and private stakeholders to co-manage community gardens, cooperative housing, parks, and neighborhoods. They are also co-creating new infrastructure for neighborhoods and implementing innovative forms of collaborative and commons-based services. This essay presents our 2017 biennial IASC conference paper where we introduce and analyze a particular methodological approach, rooted in the conceptual pillars of the urban commons¹, to transition cities towards a commons based, collaborative social and economic ecosystem. This methodological approach, what we call the “Co-City” protocol, is being applied and tested in various cities across Italy, and being introduced in select European and American cities. The paper further offers a fresh analysis of this protocol by situating it within the context of the extensive literature on commons governance. Starting with the findings by Elinor Ostrom regarding the management of complex natural resources, and her cautionary lesson that there is no one model applicable to all commons, we consider the extensive body of work on the commons to gain insight into the conditions and factors that increase the likelihood of collective governance and long-term sustainability of a commons.

Towards a Co-City: from the Urban Commons to the City as a Commons

Cities and many kinds of urban commons are different from natural resources, first, because they are typically not exhaustible nor nonrenewable. Cities also do not exist in a pre-political space. Rather, cities are heavily regulated environments and thus any attempt to bring the commons to the city must confront the law and politics of the city. As such, the governance features of the urban commons must be analyzed with attention to the literature on democratic governance and its
understanding of urban law and politics.

The concept of the Co-City situates the city as a platform for sharing and collaboration, participatory decision-making and peer-to-peer production, supported by open data and guided by principles of distributive justice. A Co-City is based on urban shared, collaborative, polycentric governance of a variety of urban resources such as environmental, cultural, knowledge and digital goods which are co-managed through contractual or institutionalized public-private-community partnerships. Collaborative, polycentric urban governance involves different forms of resource pooling and cooperation between five possible actors—social innovators (i.e. active citizens, city makers, digital collaboratives, urban regenerators, community gardeners, etc.), public authorities, businesses, civil society organizations, and knowledge institutions (i.e. schools, universities, cultural institutions, museums, academies, etc.). These partnerships give birth to local peer-to-peer experimental, physical, digital and institutional platforms with three main aims: fostering social innovation in urban welfare provision, spurring collaborative economies as a driver of local economic development, promoting inclusive urban regeneration of blighted areas. Public authorities play an important enabling role in creating and sustaining the Co-City. The ultimate goal is the creation of a more just and democratic city.

Another aim of the paper is to identify the main drawbacks of ongoing “Co-cities” experimental projects, which are governance labs carried out by the authors in several Italian cities and at the metropolitan regional level. The Co-cities project first arose out of a series of experiments conducted mainly in cities in Italy, starting with the widely-lauded Bologna “collaborative city” experience. We participated in the Bologna experiment to achieve a collaborative city through “CO-Bologna”— an applied research project aimed at developing, testing and adapting to the urban environment the design principles for the governance of the commons developed by Elinor Ostrom. In 2011, the City of Bologna initiated a policy process to introduce collaboration as a method for governing the city and many of its resources. After two years of field experimentation in three city neighborhoods, and in the context of the “City as a Commons” project supported by the Fondazione del Monte di Bologna and Ravenna², in February 2014 the City of Bologna adopted a regulatory framework, the Bologna Regulation on Civic Collaboration for the Urban Commons. Since the approval of the Regulation, more than 280 pacts of collaboration have been signed.

The City of Bologna has been internationally recognized for this regulation and the successful implementation of these pacts to govern urban commons throughout the City. The second phase of the Bologna Collaborative City program (2015-2017) process, the CO-Bologna³ program, is an open pact of collaboration between the City and the De Monte Foundation and operated under the scientific coordination of LabGov. It aims at experimenting the co-design of governance institutions in three fieldwork sites which correspond to three city areas that mirror the pillars of a Co-cit⁴. During the CO-Bologna experimentation, other testing phases of the Co-city protocol have been experimented in Italian cities⁵. The paper provides an overview of the Italian context, in which several cities adopted
the Bologna Regulation engaging in a sort of “regulatory race” towards the commons, without much consideration of how creating a city based on commons principles might differ (even in the same country). Notably, other Italian cities have chosen a different path, avoiding this regulatory race and engaging in more context-specific approaches to the city as a commons. Both the City of Naples and Palermo have focused on the idea of new kinds of urban civic uses, and the City of Turin that has chosen to tackle the problem of urban poverty through a “Co-city” project supported by EU funding. Finally, the City of Naples and the City of Messina have tried to reframe the governance of public utilities through re-municipalization which can take participatory or cooperative approaches and involve communities in the governance and provision of local public services.

The paper compares these Italian-based experimental grounds with other urban commons-based policies or projects in different geopolitical contexts, providing insights from a dataset of 100 cities that we surveyed over 18 months (from December 2015 to June 2017). The dataset provides 150 examples of urban commons projects and public policies from the cities mapped. The dataset consists of examples from cities located in different geopolitical areas. Among the better-known examples of cities from the dataset are the so-called “sharing cities” (McLaren and Agyeman, 2015) that promote the development of an on-demand economy, based on the sharing of resources and public goods in the city, such as Seoul, Amsterdam, Milan; cities from Southern Europe (Athens, Madrid and Barcelona) that are implementing radical reforms for the commons; innovative governance experiments and public spaces management innovation in African cities (Nairobi, Voi, Accra, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Tanger); Indian cities (Bangalore, Mumbai); Latin American Cities (Costa Rica, Medellin and San Jose); US cities (New York City, Chicago, Boston, Detroit).

The goal of these case studies is to enhance our knowledge about the possible ways to govern urban commons, and the city as a commons, in different geographic, social and economic contexts. The case studies, both community led and those that are institutionalized, allow us to further explicate the dynamic process, or transition, from a city where urban commons institutions are present to one where we see the emergence of networked urban commons which are transforming the city into a commons — a collaborative space—supported and enabled by the State. What are the conditions that foster the development and consolidation of these efforts and the characteristics of a “Co-City Transition”? What are the constraints that impair the emergence of a Co-city, a city in which the ground is fertile and ripe for local actors to share, collaborate, and cooperate to generate and manage common goods? The dataset collects examples from cities of the Global North and the Global South which are representative of community or city-level initiatives that are pushing urban areas
towards new frontiers of participatory urban governance, economic growth and social progress. The analysis of the dataset aims to highlight common patterns and differences and to test empirically the relevant dimensions of the Co-City.

The Co-City protocol: measuring the transition from the Urban Commons to the City as a Commons

In order to make visible the conditions necessary to transform from the presence of urban commons institutions to the city as a commons, we have conceived a specific Co-City “protocol”, or algorithm, constituted by three elements: the process, the principles, and the tools. In the last section of the paper, we will focus on the detailed description of the phases of the Co-City process, building on the above literature and our own experience with the Co-Cities experimentations in Italian cities. We will then focus on the description of the five design principles or dimensions of the Co-City, that have been observed also in the examples from the dataset of 100 cities.

The basic design principles, or dimensions, that constitute the “Co-City” are the following: collective governance, the enabling state, social and economic pooling, experimentalism, tech justice. Collective governance refers to the presence or absence of community-organized or collaboratively-organized institutions for the governance of the urban commons. Enabling State expresses the role of the State in the governance of the commons and identifies the characteristics of a state that facilitates collective action for the management and sustainability of the urban commons. Social and Economic Pooling refers to the presence of forms of a pooling economy, as opposed to the existing sharing economy. Experimentalism embodies the principle of experimentation, adaptiveness and iterative capacity in designing processes and institutions of government urban commons. Finally, Tech Justice highlights the potential of access to technology and digital infrastructures, and digital urban data sovereignty, as a tool for achieving urban development that potentially promotes social and economic justice. The design principles articulate the types of conditions and factors necessary to instantiate the city as a collaborative space in which various forms of urban commons not only emerge but are sustainable. In the end, we will also propose a kind of “gradient” that offers a set of tools that can be used to measure and test the implementation of urban commons-oriented policies.

The conclusions of the paper provide guidelines for future research, teaching and policy experimentation. The final section highlights the methodological lessons that one can learn from the Co-City protocol, that might be applicable as an approach to research, teaching and policy experimentation. The teaching approach to the study of the commons might in fact be guided by the willingness to investigate an interdisciplinary, critical and innovative approach to the study of the law and policy with the aim of exploring the possibility to understand law in modern, hyper complex societies as the “urban law and policy of society”, through insights provided by democratic experimentalism. From the research standpoint, the study of the commons and the city as a commons offers a good observation point for questioning traditional approaches to law and political science precisely because of the crucial
role played by social norms, social institutions, and social duties. Finally, from a policy standpoint, it allows the understanding of an experimental process of urban policy making, through the development of field experimentation of actual collaboration between urban actors with the aim of developing an applied governance scheme for public-private-community/commons partnerships that might provide innovative solutions to pressing urban problems.

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Further reading


Notes


2- Info on the City as a Commons project are available here: http://fondazionedelmonte.it/progetti/territorio/le-citta-come-beni-comuni. And, in English, here: http://www.labgov.it/governancelabs/bolognaab/

3- All the information on the CO-Bologna project, including outputs and relevant materials and reports are available here: http://co-bologna.it/.

4- The urban governance labs are: Pilastro (making together, urban commons) Bolognina (living together, social innovation) and Croce del Blacco (growing together, collaborative economy district). Another core aspect of the CO-Bologna process is the establishment of an Office for Civic Imagination. The Office for Civic Imagination is a policy innovation lab, structured as a co-working area internal to the municipal administration through which civil servants can work together in order to find innovative solutions to common urban problems and to implement those solutions in accordance with the principle of civic collaboration.

5- At the regional policy level, through the Collaborative Tuscany; through the CO-Reggio Emilia experimentation, a collaborative on citizen knowledge is been implemented; in the CO-Rome experimentation, the focus is on the experimentation of a collaborative district in the city of Rome.
The LABoratory for the GOVernance of Commons

*Here we present a general overview of LABGOV, one of the most prominent research projects on urban commons. If you would like to know more about their work, please visit http://www.labgov.it/

LABoratory for the GOVernance of the Commons ("LabGov") was created to train a brand-new breed of professionals, the “experts in the governance of urban commons.”

LabGov is a place of experimentation in all respects. However, instead of alembics and tubes you can find students, scholars, experts, entrepreneurs, policymakers, activists discussing, imagining, practicing the future shapes that social, economic, democratic and legal institutions may take.

As part of its activities, LabGov involves about thirty students in a yearly series of workshops mixing theoretical training, soft skills training and real in-the-field action. Considering its nature as an in-house clinic and place of experimentation, LabGov continues its work beyond these workshops acting as a “gymnasium” for future social and institutional designers, engineers and innovators, engaging them in research, training, project management, and communication activities.

LabGov is based on the idea that, in order to achieve social and institutional regeneration, it is necessary to create collaborative relationships between citizens, administrations and businesses to share the scarce resources and to take care of the commons, whether tangible or intangible, in urban and local communities.

LabGov also engages with organizations and local governments in order to develop projects, regulations, and policies surrounding the urban commons. In November 2015, LabGov hosted a global conference on the urban commons entitled “The City as a Commons,” which successfully brought hundreds of international scholars on the urban commons together in Bologna, Italy.

LabGov’s activities are currently developed under the umbrella of a joint venture between two world-renowned research institutions, LUISS International Center on Democracy and Democratization led by Professor Leonardo Morlino and Fordham Urban Law Center led by Professor Sheila Foster. This partnership will enable LabGov to develop the international research and experimentation protocol “Co-Cities” to design the city of the future based on the governance of urban commons, collaborative land use, social innovation, sharing economy, collaborative economy. LabGov’s activities are coordinated by professor Christian Iaione.
The applicability of Ostrom’s design principles for the Commons on the management of urban living labs

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Urban living labs present a new mode of urban governance that has become increasingly popular in the past two decades. While being concerned with the co-creative creation of new urban solutions by all urban stakeholders (knowledge institutes, public actors, private actors and users) in a selected, small-scale urban area, they also aim at replicating these urban innovations in future contexts by formalising a culture of collective learning in the overarching urban development system.

Commons is a general term that refers to resources shared by a group of people whose size or characteristics makes it costly, but not impossible, to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use (defined by Elinor Ostrom as common pool resources). Besides potentially producing common products as solutions (such as community gardens), urban living labs provide common processes that are shared by people, in the shape of the co-creative decision-making process leading up to the generation of new solutions and knowledge. Besides, urban living labs for sure aim to create knowledge as a commons, aiming to establish a collective learning structure from which everyone can draw and to which everyone can contribute.

These illustrations clearly display similarities between urban living labs and the commons, especially in the light of the existing, more modern scientific perspectives on the commons, discussing knowledge as a commons and presenting the commons as a process rather than just a resource describing the commons as a relational process, and Stavrides (2016) even transitioning towards the use of the term as a verb: ‘urban commoning’). This latter point of view is particularly dominant in the context of the urban commons, as Dellenbaugh, Kip, Bieniok, Müller, and Schwegmann (2015) subscribe in their book ‘Urban Commons; moving beyond state and market’, attributing the commons a three-fold definition of being made up of a) resources; b) institutions for regulating those resources; and c) the community that devises the institutions, both shepherding and benefiting from the resources.

According to Schlager (2016), robust governance structures are fundamental to navigate and anticipate changes so as to maintain the ability of the commons to function. Especially in this urban context of commons, clearly regarding commons as both a resource and a practice, urban living labs become interesting, as examples of alternative modes of governance for facilitating processes of ‘urban commoning’ as well as for their collective management approaches that could provide a solution for the urban commons.
Ostrom has provided in this call for governance structures with her ‘design principles for the Commons’: Conditions associated with the likelihood of sustainability of the commons, based on a large set of empirical studies on common-pool resource governance. The eight factors identified were those found to exist in most robust institutions—but they were absent in failed systems. These design principles were found to be associated with successful outcomes and hold up after multiple applications by numerous scholars across many settings by Cox, Arnold, and Tomás (2010), based on a meta-analysis of 91 studies that applied Ostrom’s design principles to instances of local level, self-governance of common pool resources 20 years after their first proposition by Ostrom.

The recommendations on the management of urban living labs, formulated on the basis of extensive theoretical research and the analysis of urban living labs in Amsterdam by Steen & Van Bueren (2017) draw large similarities with the Design Principles for governing common pool resources of Ostrom, although they were drawn up independent of the commons literature. By projecting Ostrom’s design principles for the commons on urban living labs and reversibly reflecting on Ostrom’s design principles from the perspective of the management recommendations on urban living labs, it can be investigated to what extent urban living labs are actually comparable to commons at all, and, consequently, to what extent the respective directives can serve for each other’s optimisation. Ostrom’s design principles may form the key to the successful management of urban living labs, and the other way around.

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Further reading


Schlager, E. 2016. Introducing the“ The Importance of Context, Scale, and Interdependencies in Understanding and Applying Ostrom’s Design Principles for Successful Governance of the Commons”. International Journal of the Commons, 10(2).

Environmental governance, experimentation and the material politics of the urban commons

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Urban commons emerge from within specific and historically situated urban trajectories: they are the product of the co-evolution of ecological transformations, technological transitions and cultural change. As cultural practices are embedded in material environments, such environments are also redesigned to fit urban practices. Urbanists and science and technology scholars such as Hommels have characterised the obduracy of the urban fabric: how the mutual embeddedness of actions and materials limits future change possibilities. Sustainable urban environments will thus emerge from actions that target those interactions. The urban commons cannot be easily delimitated. Instead, they integrate socio-technical and socio-ecological systems that include institutions, political ideas, design, and day-to-day ways of interacting with material environments (green or otherwise).

Research on experimentation has looked into the varied ways in which the governance of urban environments and its commons has shifted in the wake of climate change. As Grin and Van der Kamp intimate in the introduction of this Digest issue, a multitude of bottom-up initiatives have sought to reconfigure urban environments in more sustainable ways, often putting notions of justice at the core of such transformations. These are of course, community groups, users, NGOs and citizen networks, but also SMEs, social enterprises, and local governments, most often operating within multi-level governance arrangements that attempt to orchestrate the ensemble of institutions and material concerns to intervene in the transformation of urban environments. A predictable critique has followed to the experimentation enthusiasm: if all we can deliver is a series of punctual, disconnected, actions, how can we ensure that the addition of all those actions will lead to a true global transition to sustainability?

This question is particularly relevant in urban environments where the complexity of entanglements and the speed of change make it difficult to identify the manner and form of such transition. Governance arrangements around urban commons are ambiguous, because what those commons are is ambiguous as well. For example, in an electricity network where electricity theft is common, what is the common? A single public-owned utility, or a group of utilities may own the network, but when the thefts lead to blackouts and a general decline of service, the electricity users are the ones who suffer most from it. When utilities lack maintenance capacity in poor and deprived urban areas, communities may attempt to control theft as a means to maintain an infrastructure system that works. Thus, the question about the step
social relations and the possibilities of change. I propose a theoretical perspective that brings together debates around the urban commons with new insights from a neo-materialist philosophy. In particular, this paper brings together two key neo-materialist insights: The first one emerges from a heterodox reading of Heidegger’s tool-being, about the integration of material objects in everyday processes of repair and maintenance. The second one emerges from feminist neo-materialism, especially Karen Barad’s definition of intra-agency as emerging within specific relationships, as a means to redefine the nature of urban experimentation. Reading the principles of this neo-materialist approach to urban governance with reference to empirical cases or energy landscapes in Hong Kong, Bangalore (India), Maputo (Mozambique) and the metropolitan area of Great Concepción (Chile), the paper shows how urban sustainability transitions are always unfinished, in the making and open to redefinition.

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Recent Publications

If you have a publication to be included in the 'Recent Publications' list, please send the citation to Emily Castle (efcastle@indiana.edu).

Books


Articles


Development 91:70-83.


Pinkerton, E. 2017. "Hegemony and Resistance: Disturbing Patterns and Hopeful Signs in the Impact of Neoliberal Policies on
Small-Scale Fisheries around the World.” *Marine Policy.*


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Announcements

**Send letters, announcements, and ideas/suggestions for issue topics to Alyne Delaney, Editor-in-Chief, The Commons Digest at ad@ifm.aau.dk**

**Be part of IASC!**

IASC is itself a commons, and depends on its membership dues for many of the critical activities it undertakes. Become a member! https://membership.iasc-commons.org/

Subscribe to the newsletter! Tell a friend! The newsletter is the easiest way to receive all the news about the association. Contact us at iasc@iasc-commons.org to post announcements - conferences, job positions, etc. - and reach the +3K members of our community: https://membership.iasc-commons.org/civicrm/profile/create?gid=12&reset=1

**Call for Assistant Editors for the Commons Digest**

Two new columns are in the works for highlighting the work of our colleagues: Practitioner Profiles and Project Profiles.

For more information, please contact Alyne Delaney (ad@ifm.aau.dk) or Victor Ortiz (victoralejandro.ortizrivera@gmail.com) to hear more about this exciting chance to be an active part of the IASC!

**Announcement of laureates Elinor Ostrom Award 2017**

The Board of the Elinor Ostrom Award on Collective Governance of the Commons has recently announced the laureates of the 2017 Awards. The Elinor Ostrom Award 2017 has been awarded to prof. Ugo Mattei (University of Turin / University of California-Hastings) in the category Senior Scholars, to prof. Joshua Cinner (James Cook University, Australia) in the category Young Scholars, and to the Asociación Forestal de Soria (Spain) in the category practitioners. The Awards will be presented at the IASC2017 Conference in Utrecht, July 10-14, 2017.

The Award, created to honor and develop the legacy of Elinor Ostrom, aims to acknowledge and promote the work of practitioners, young
scholars, and senior scholars involved in the field of the commons. According with Ostrom’s large legacy the scope of the Award aims to be broad, including academic and applied work on traditional commons (forests, water bodies, pasture lands, fisheries, etc.), local commons, interlinked commons (forests and watersheds, fisheries and coastlines, etc), global commons, knowledge, cultural and virtual commons. The 2017 Awards will be presented to the laureates at the IASC2017 Conference 'Practicing the Commons'. that will be held in Utrecht, July 10-14, 2017.

To find out more about the Award, please visit http://elinorostromaward.org/

**New introductory course on commons governance for Spanish speaking audience!**

The National Autonomous University of Mexico, in collaboration with Coursera, is launching a new introductory course on commons study and governance.

This Massive, Online, Open Course (MOOC) is set to be launched on September, 2017. It will be taught completely in Spanish and with no cost to participants!

The duration of the course will be of four weeks, with an estimated workload of 5 hours per week. It is aimed at students with no previous knowledge of the study of commons and common-pool resources (particularly Elinor Ostrom’s work), as well as practitioners or officials with field but little or none theoretical or academic experience.

For more information on the relevant dates and registration process, please visit regularly the following website: susmai.unam.mx