



**W**elcome to another issue of *The Commons Digest*. 2011 brought many exciting experiences to our membership, especially in the form of interesting and vibrant conferences. This newsletter reports on the most recent of these IASC conferences: the European Meetings held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria September 14-17, 2011. We start the issue with the conference report from one of the organizers, **Insa Theesfeld**. Following the report, two essays provide a sampling of the sessions from the conference. The first is from **Achim Schlüter** and **Björn Vollan** where they write about experiments for analyzing the commons. The next essay by **Chris Short** presents a discussion on delivering public policy on the commons. The issue closes with summaries of two of the conferences keynote speaker presentations by **Tine De Moor** and **Jouni Paavola**. We hope you enjoy the conference news.

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**Governing Pooled Knowledge Resources  
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**September 12-14, 2012**

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## Conference Report: Commons in Europe and a post-socialist perspective

Insa Theesfeld

Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (IAMO), Halle (Saale), Germany



**T**he IASC European Meeting 2011 was hosted by the [Agricultural University Plovdiv](#) in Bulgaria from September 14th-17th, 2011.

It was chaired by Insa Theesfeld from the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe in Halle (Saale), Germany and by [Achim Schlüter](#) from the [Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology in Bremen](#), Germany. The conference was scientifically and organizationally supported by [Audun Sandberg](#) from the [University of Nordland](#) in Bodø, Norway and by [Ivan Penov](#), [Violeta Dirimanova](#) and Boryana Ivanova from the [Agricultural University Plovdiv](#) in Bulgaria.

The 2011 conference theme, "Shared Resources in a Rapidly Changing World," put emphasis on the currently well-recognized fact that many, if not most, resources require a shared management regime, due to complex socio-ecological interactions, which neither stop at national boundaries nor at private property. Yet, a multitude of combined and mixed governance regimes are necessary to manage these resources in an efficient and sustainable way. Accelerated change creates a

particular threat to joint management regimes, but it likewise opens a window of opportunities for us as researchers to study new natural resource management solutions.

One aim of the conference was to increase the awareness of commons questions in Middle, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. In that regard, the two field trips on Thursday 15th in particular highlighted challenges of managing salinisation of formerly arable land and community pasture land in Bulgaria's post-socialist context.

The conference contributions were organized into four subthemes:

1. Multiple Drivers to Change in Common Management
2. Post Socialist Commons: the Road Ahead
3. Methods Investigating Complex Common Property Regimes
4. Multi-level Governance

Thinking of climate change, globalization, migration, etc., shows that many factors challenge collective governance regimes, thus the drivers determining change in commons management have become more diverse (Theme 1).

Complexity and rate of change are probably best exemplified in the region of the conference. Therefore, Theme 2 focuses on post-socialist commons and the process of change they have been going through during the last 20 years. An increasing rate of change and more complex management regimes create new methodological challenges. In order to investigate the observed phenomenon empirically, one needs to move far beyond e.g. case study, regression analysis or theoretical explorations. Thus, conference Theme 3 explores the methodological diversity emerging in the last decades. Theme 4 deals



with the inherent complexity of resource systems and thus with the required multiplicity of governance levels involved. Further, it sheds light on the question in how far we are on the road towards a polycentric governance system in Europe.

We welcomed over 80 participants from 21 countries, including distinct officials from Plovdiv's local and regional governmental bodies. One quarter of the participants of the conference came from Middle, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. Vicerector Vasko Koprivlenski from the Agricultural University Plovdiv was the first to welcome us on Wednesday 14th in the big lecture hall of the Agricultural Economics Department. Following the welcome session, the opening ceremony was held in the courtyard of the Georgialdi House after a guided walking tour through the picturesque old town. The legacy of the ancient cultures can still be seen in the city center; just to mention the Amphitheater.

morning with his perspective on "Polycentric governance and climate change?" followed by Ruth Meinzen-Dick (International Food Policy and Research Institute, USA) who talked about "The Commons Future." Ruth made sure that we all could start from the same basic understanding of the current state of commons research and concepts. She ended with a future outlook on where the scholarship is heading in the near future.

On the third conference day, Konrad Hagedorn (Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany), who also holds an honorary doctor of the Agricultural University Plovdiv, talked about the "Institutional analysis of shared resources. Different perspectives on analytical frameworks." After this 'food-for-thought' conceptual thinking, Marco Janssen (Arizona State University, USA) took us to the world of methods to study the commons with his talk on "Governing the global commons from the bottom-up. Lessons and opportunities from a multi-method approach to the study of the commons." Susan Buck (University of North Carolina, USA), the current president elect of IASC, started off the closing panel discussion with her impressions of the conference and her view on commons scholarship.



Participants of the IASC 2011 European Meeting in Plovdiv.

We feel very delighted that we had excellent keynote speakers enriching our program and addressing the key themes of the conference.

We started our welcome session with an introductory talk by Tine de Moor (Utrecht University, The Netherlands) who took us on a history tour to understand the historical roots of Europe's commons dilemmas. Following this historic view, Jouni Paavola (University of Leeds, United Kingdom) started the next

sessions with extremely promising paper presentations.

While experiencing remarkable hot days with up to 33 degrees Celsius in some conference rooms, we listened to a comparatively large set of framework and method papers including some really inspiring new ideas of applying well-known methods from other disciplines to commons analysis. This is symptomatic for a relatively young and interdisciplinary scientific





Photo: IASC

meeting on Friday evening we discussed future collaborations and corresponding funding opportunities.

The conference dinner on Friday 16th came along with traditional Bulgarian folk dances and music introducing the delegates to the rich culture of Bulgaria and an actual dancing experience. In that respect, we cannot stop to thank the Bulgarians for the enormous hospitality and their organizing capacity, without which we would not had such an easy going event with lots of room to discuss and interact academically.

Not only the participants felt hot these days.

association like IASC which is constantly looking for new solutions to actual problems on the ground. Those contributions dealing directly with investigating commons management focussed on the traditional commons such as pastures, forests, water or fisheries.

We arranged a poster presentation session which was combined with a walking lunch to test a new format with more time for the poster presenter and the inquiring conference participants to interact. At a European network

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## Experiments as thriving and diverse methods for analyzing the commons

Achim Schlüter and Björn Vollan

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**W**hen Insa Theesfeld and I (Achim Schlüter) reflected on which of the topics from the IASC European Conference to focus a special reports upon—all of which, of course, are worth reporting on in *The Commons Digest*—, it was quickly clear that experiments of all, kinds played such an important role in the conference that it seemed obvious to select them as an area to point out. This was before we realized that in the report on the US meeting last year experiments had already been featured. Yet, this underlines the importance of experiments for the scientific community of IASC.

Why are experiments so important? This is explained in *Working Together* by Poteete, Janssen, and Ostrom (2010). Experiments are the methodological complement to case study research and come exactly from the opposite direction to case studies, which—as could also be seen at the conference—are essential and manifold within the IASC community. Case studies, no matter whether they follow an inductive or deductive research design, are perfect for capturing the complexity of a real situation, in which, for example, one wants to understand why people cooperate or do not cooperate in organizing common



Photo: IASC

Achim Schlüter, during a panel session.

pool resources. Case studies provide the details and the connection between various details. However, the complexity of case studies makes a relation to or a validation of any theoretically derived hypothesis extremely difficult (see, for example, the laborious effort of IFRI). In experiments, the opposite is the case. Under more or less controlled conditions one particular aspect, such as communication, scarcity or sanctions can be varied. Most likely, at the cost of external validity and not considering what the resilience alliance people call panarchy, the interrelatedness between systems, determinants or choices.

The combination of experiments, case studies and other methods does seem to advance our scientific knowledge best. Let us dig deeper and report on what we heard during the experimental sessions at the European conference.

There seems to be a clear trend towards diversification and a trend away from the replication of the standard experiments to measure social preferences, like the ultimatum game or trust game. Today 168 replications of the latter exist (see Johnson and Mislin, 2011) with minimal differentiation of the original trust game (Berg et al., 1995). Also there is a move away from studying

the effectiveness of rules within a standard public good or common-pool resource game.

A particularly interesting diversification was presented by the keynote address on the methods provided by [Marco Janssen](#). He is currently analyzing different ways to motivate people to contribute to global or large-scale common-pool resources, moving the experiments away from the lab onto smart phones, initially of Arizona State University students. This might mimic in a much better way the dilemmas in which millions of anonymous users (forgetting about the www or the mobile phone grid) need to get collective action organized in order to evade dilemmas pertaining to electricity use or vaccinations.

Another strong diversification move observed was towards the particular consideration of changes within the ecosystem. Looking at the historical development of IASC-related experiments, the emphasis was primarily on observing changes within the social system: what happens, for example, if communication, a particular punishment or participatory rule making are suddenly allowed? (see, e.g., Ostrom Gardner and Walker 1994).

However, of greatest importance in the various papers presented was the further development of the SES framework (Ostrom 2007), replacing and transforming the IAD (Institutional Analysis and Development) framework. In these, where the ecological system plays a very prominent role, changes in the ecological system and therewith related changes in human behavior were important. Sergio Villamayor et al., for example, analyzed in particular the changes of behavior in an irrigation situation, where scarcity conditions were altered. Thomas Falk et al. used a combined ecological and economic simulation model with a computerized field experiment to find out information about the institution-building process of resettled vs. non-resettled people jointly using a water CPR. Andreas Landmann et al. analyzed



coping mechanisms of shocks, risks and uncertainty. All features which are often, but certainly not exclusively, determined by the ecological system.

Another trend is definitely moving towards using games for testing the effects and, if possible, even the effectiveness of real-life-occurring policy measures. Simone Gobien et al. analyzed the effects of a resettlement project carried out by the Cambodian Government and the GIZ (German Development Cooperation). The authors compared risk-taking and solidarity behavior between resettled and non-resettled villagers. Vena Aggarwal used the trust experiment to find behavioral differences between inhabitants of slums with a very high degree of collective self-help organization in comparison to slums that do not have many such organizations.

The last, but not least, diversification to point out is the move away from lab and field experiments towards natural experiments, as shown in the presentation by Björn Vollan et al., but also by Marco Janssen. In natural experiments the "player" is not aware that she is part of an experiment, which obviously increases the external validity. With natural experiment one for example studies, the effects of a small change in the presentation of the decision situation (e.g., a smiling face, a sentence or a picture). This has shown to have a large impact on behavior of a person in real life. Natural experiments are often difficult to implement (obtaining necessary permission, ethical considerations and finding a suitable setting). However, they strongly increase our general knowledge about causality in the real world.

The various approaches have undoubtedly enhanced these discussions, and we are proud to have been able to attract scholars also from outside the IASC community to contribute to experimental presentations. Summing up the quintessence of the various papers, we can conclude that the key to understanding the management of common-pool resources is definitely (methodological) diversity, especially combining qualitative work, lab

experiments and testing the effectiveness of policies with the help of impact evaluation and natural experiments.

## Literature

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Johnson, N.D. and Mislin, A.A., (2011). Trust Games: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 32, 865-889.

Ostrom, E., 2007. A diagnostic approach for going beyond panaceas. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* 104, 15181-15187.

Ostrom, E., Walker, J. and Gardner, R., 1994. *Rules, games and common-pool resources*, 1st ed. The University of Michigan Press.

Poteete, A. R., Janssen, M. A., & Ostrom, E. (2009). *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice. Policy Analysis*. Princeton University Press.

## Referenced Contributions from the IASC European Meeting:

Marco Janssen: Governing the global commons from the bottom-up. Lessons and opportunities from a multi-method approach to the study of the commons

Esther Blanco, María Claudia López, Sergio Villamayor: Does water scarcity lead to overuse? Evidence from field experiments

Simone Gobien, Björn Vollan: Playing with the social net: Consequences of resettlement on solidarity in Cambodia

Andreas Landmann, Björn Vollan: Does network strength and reported collective action influence solidarity: Evidence from a field lab in the Philippines





Björn Vollan, Achim Schlüter: Promoting morality: "Who" is more important than "how". Evidence from a field experiment

Thomas Falk, Dirk Lohmann, Nadege Azebaze, Bertus Kruger, Michael Kirk: Institution building in water supply cooperation in Namibian land reform projects

Christine Werthmann, Bibhu Nayak Prasad, Veena Aggarwal: Trust and reciprocity among urban slum dwellers in Hyderabad, India

Sergio Villamayor-Tomás, María Claudia López, Esther Blanco: Field Experiments in Rural Colombia Testing the Relationship between Costly Communication and Cooperation in a Changing Water Common Pool Resource (CPR).

## Experiments as thriving and diverse methods for analyzing the commons

Chris Short

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Photo: IASC

were considered in the session were the extent to which:

- integrated policy delivery is possible on commons and the unconventional notions of property that they represent;
- common land institutions, and the traditional governance they represent, are able to cope with and deliver new policy demands;
- common land institutions facilitate or obstruct the making of a clear link between action and reward or action and penalty;
- the peculiarities of common land in all its forms are considered in the policy-making process.

Chris Short during a panel session.

A joint panel convened at this year's IASC European Regional Conference by the [European Forum for Nature Conservation and Pastoralism](#) (EFNCP) and the [Countryside and Community Research Institute](#) (CCRI) looked at the impact of delivering public policy on commons in both South Eastern Europe and Western Europe, under the title 'Delivering public policy on commons – dilemmas of property and tradition'. Among the core questions that

These are important policy and academic questions. From the policy perspective common lands are increasingly recognised as being crucial in terms of biodiversity, carbon capture and other ecosystem services but they also continue to present the old opportunities for farmers in terms of access to land and still have the same, or possibly greater, transaction costs arising from joint





use of land that they have always had. Given this importance, society needs reassurances that the institutions and governance are 'fit for purpose' but from what perspective does it make this judgement? This is a philosophical question that touches on issues of governance and property rights.

The first two presentations by [Yanka Kazakova](#) (EFNCP) and [Laura Sutcliffe](#) ([University of Goettingen](#)) looked at Bulgaria and Romania respectively.

Laura showed that the use of common grazings in Romania remains the norm, strongly linked to the predominance of subsistence and semi-subsistence farming in much of the country. Although its importance varies across the country, a rough estimate is that 30% of all permanent pasture is under state or community ownership. However, as in the West, the role of the common pasture in the community is changing. The number of active users is decreasing, mainly through giving up farming, affecting all sizes of smallholding. Using a case study of the Tarnava Mare region of Transylvania, the presentation discussed how the commons institutions are coping with the change of common pastures from a source of fodder, to one of subsidy money.

Yanka also outlined the historical tradition of common grazing in Bulgaria. Here there is very limited experience in the implementation of collective support schemes for Common Agricultural Policy payments for common pastures. Two main reasons for this are the lack of legal base in the national legislation for such actions and social reasons: as a consequence of the existing cooperatives in the period 1950-1989, there is unwillingness of the farmers to undertake any kind of collective management activities.

The introduction of the CAP support measures and direct payments in 2007 made it evident that the existing legislative framework needed amendment to meet the realities of common grazing in the country. Structures are now being developed in order to include collective action and the areas of 'meri' (common grazing land) within the CAP support framework.

The three western European presentations began in Spain, where [Álvaro Picardo](#) (Natural Environment Directorate-General, Government of Castilla y León) outlined a new model of pastoralism that has been developing in his region of Spain. It is estimated that there is 20 million ha of common land in Spain, representing 20% of all forest land and this rises to 60% in Castilla y Leon and a third of all land. There is considerable demographic and economic change, meaning that marginal land has been abandoned. The government has prioritised the need to maintain pastoralism as the most effective means of reducing forest fires. This is done through a partnership with local municipalities, where contracts are drawn up with local farmers who in turn take responsibility for an agreed area of common. This new arrangement has to be reflected on the ground and as a result some areas are fenced, but they remain common land. The approach seems to be working with forest fires reducing by 70% in some areas.

Gwyn Jones ([EFNCP](#)) shared his work in Scotland, where common grazings make up c.13% of actively farmed land and account for around 20% of Scotland's semi-natural, High Nature Value, and farmland. Here, agri-environment, afforestation and investments in holdings support is delivered through the grazings committee, bodies set up voluntarily under legislation dating from 1891, but with considerable legal powers. However at least 1 in 5 grazings has no current institutions and in possibly another 20% they are moribund or have very limited capacity. In grazings where there is an active committee, support delivery is made difficult by the need to agree both on participation and on the disbursement of funds. He concluded that should a more integrated policy approach be adopted, then either a more flexible approach to property is necessary or the governance institutions will need to change, probably both.

Finally, Chris Short (CCRI) shared some recent research that assessed the impact on the active commoners in England of the incremental implementation (starting from a low base in 2006) of an area-based the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). The paper linked

data on the economic impact of CAP changes on uplands and the particular challenges on common land and highlights that there are clear implications for the future management of commons and the significant areas of high nature value (HNV) land they represent. Key lessons from the English experience included how the relevant agencies might respond to these now and ahead of the 2013 policy review. It also considered the impact on

local institutions and governance on common land and whether this has strengthened the locally based decision making. This has important implications for wider issues such as responding to climate change.

The session was convened by Chris Short (CCRI [cshort@glos.ac.uk](mailto:cshort@glos.ac.uk)) and Gwyn Jones (EFNCP [gwyn@efncp.org](http://gwyn@efncp.org)).

## “In tempore non suspect.” Understanding the historical roots of Europe’s commons dilemmas

**Tine De Moor, Ph.D.**

**Associate Professor Research Institute for History and Culture Utrecht University, the Netherlands**

*Tine De Moor spoke as a Keynote Speaker at the IASC’s 2011 European Meetings. The following provides a summary of her talk.*



Photo: IASC

the changes in society –be it of an economic, social or political kind–, the repertoire of instruments and mechanisms of those cooperating must have been considerably large and refined. This is also what European history shows: a very large number of commons have developed over time, but a closer look also shows that this development was not evenly spread over the territory of the European continent. For the actual start of the development of the European commons we have to go back to the second half of the Middle Ages, in particular around the North Sea area. At that time, from about 1000 AD, Europe went through a

Tine De Moor during her keynote presentation.

**D**ue to their long history, many commons offer us an opportunity to study the dynamics of cooperation over a lengthy period of time. Cooperation cannot only be a momentary act, but can also consist out of a large number of repeated acts between different people, often of different consecutive generations. In order to adjust to

remarkable stage of development, and one of its key-characteristics was collective action. Remarkable about these late Middle Ages in Europe is that instead of solving problems within the family, or within the clan, people started to make alliances with others that followed a similar course in life. Within a world where the household was still the

most important unit of decision making in all different spheres of social life, this is rather remarkable and to a certain degree even exceptional.

The idea of an “interest group” was born and spread within the different layers of society, on the countryside as well as in urban settlements. The formation of commons was only one form of collective action that could be found within Europe. Besides the commons in the rural areas, guilds, fraternities, communes developed in the urban areas as examples of the new trend. Outside of Western-Europe, such alliances did also develop but often only in later times and at a much slower pace. For centuries after their origination the commoners lived more or less in accordance with the rulers over the division of the use of the common: the lord could hunt on the land and profit from some of the other resources (like wood); the commoners could use the land for pasture, peat digging, wood for building and as fuel, etc. Gradually, in particular from the 18th century onwards, the government imposed its own legislation upon the commons, and with the introduction

of the new civil legislation the government—both on the local and the national level—also started claiming the land. The parallel rise and demise of the different types of collective action shows that commons were part of a much larger “wave of collective action” that swept through Europe.

As yet, however, we not yet understand why such a development took place, and why in particular in Western Europe and only to a much lesser extend in the rest of Europe. Essential to understand this evolution and its further dynamics is the idea that commons were a response to some external factors, and not the result of a long-term evolution, as was long the belief among legal historians. In my view the causality behind the emergence of commons in Western Europe must be explained on three levels; on each level several factors play a role.

First, as the figure (below) shows that as basic conditions for institutions for collective action to emerge, states should offer the necessary “room” for development, such as with such bottom-up forms of collaboration.

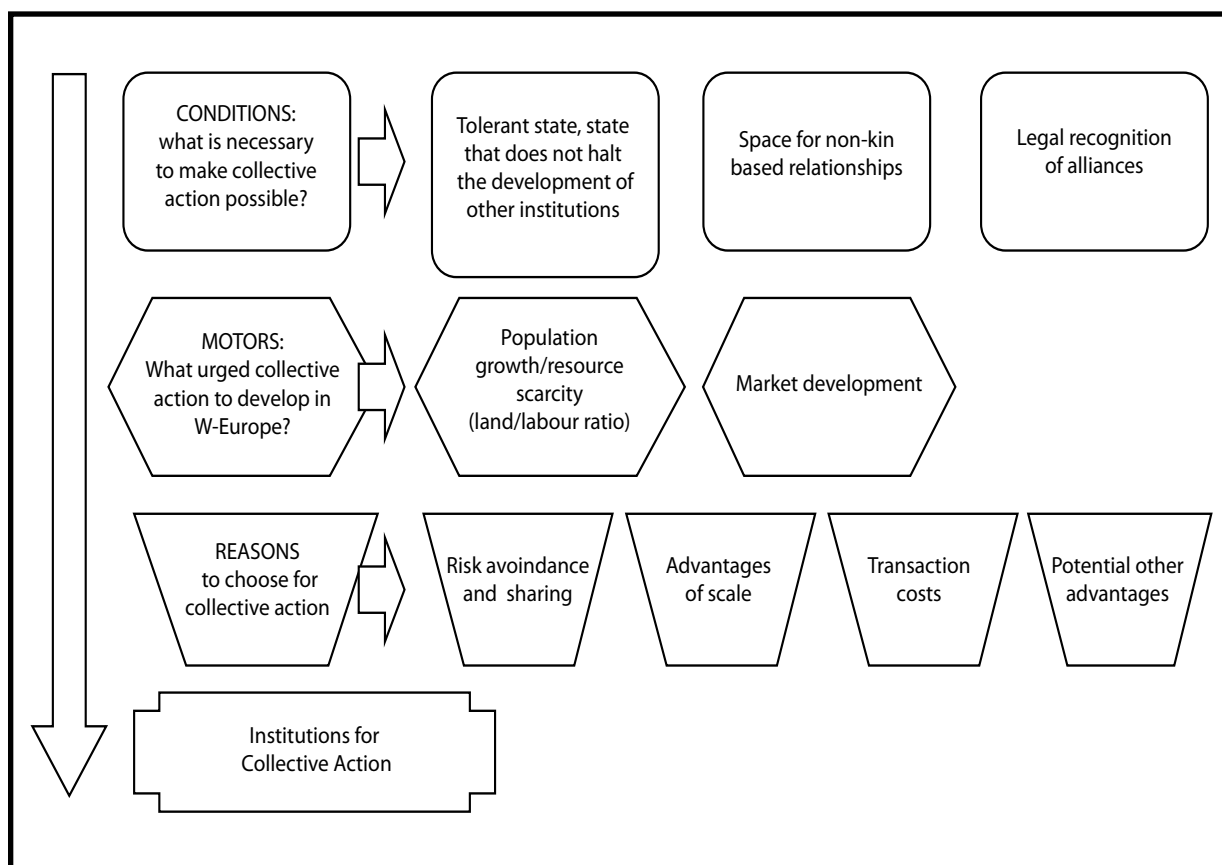


Figure: Corporate Collective Action, De Moor (2008)



The model described above is designed on the situation in Western Europe and is not necessarily applicable for other places and times. However, when comparing to e.g. Eastern Europe —with the risk of generalising far too much— it is striking to note that the late development of institutions such as commons go together with pretty much the reverse model as shown in figure 1. Whereas Western Europeans were predominantly organised in nuclear families, the extended family was dominant in Eastern Europe, with also less migration and urbanisation as a consequence. The freedom to organise was also severely restricted by the continuing —until the 19th century in many parts of Eastern Europe— of serfdom, with only a short period in the late 14th and 15th centuries where top-down control was less omnipresent. Commercialisation and market development took a much slower pace to develop in Eastern Europe as well. These factors taken together, and no doubt others that are not covered in this short contribution, may well explain divergences in the dynamics of institutions for collective action on the European Continent.

## References:

Figure from T. De Moor, 'The Silent Revolution: A New Perspective on the Emergence of Commons, Guilds, and Other Forms of Corporate Collective Action in Western Europe', *The International Review of Social History* (special issue on guilds), 53 (suppl. 16) 2008, pp. 175-208.

A second condition is the weakening family ties, or high levels of migration. When such are sufficiently "weak," institutions for collective action can be created outside the family network.

A third factor is the legal recognition of alliances. Such alliances are of groups taking collective responsibility for decisions taken by the group, rather than having individuals deal with the consequences.

Once these conditions have been met, there should also be sufficient reason to set up new forms of institutions. In European history, the population dynamics—in particular population growth and concentration— have played an important role, together with the increasing market development this brought along, and as such created the need for protecting resources from the commercialisation that went hand-

in-hand with such market development. If the conditions are met and individuals are stimulated to form new institutions, they also need good reasons for collaboration. Avoiding and sharing risk, creating scale economies, and reducing transaction costs are but a few of the potential advantages that commoners may have hoped to obtain when joining into collective resource use and management.

For further information on the research on this topic: see [www.collective-action.info](http://www.collective-action.info)





## Polycentric governance and climate change?

**Professor Jouni Paavola**

**Sustainability Research Institute, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds, UK.**

*The following essay provides a summary of Professor Jouni Paavola's Keynote Talk at the 2011 IASC European Meetings, September 2011.*

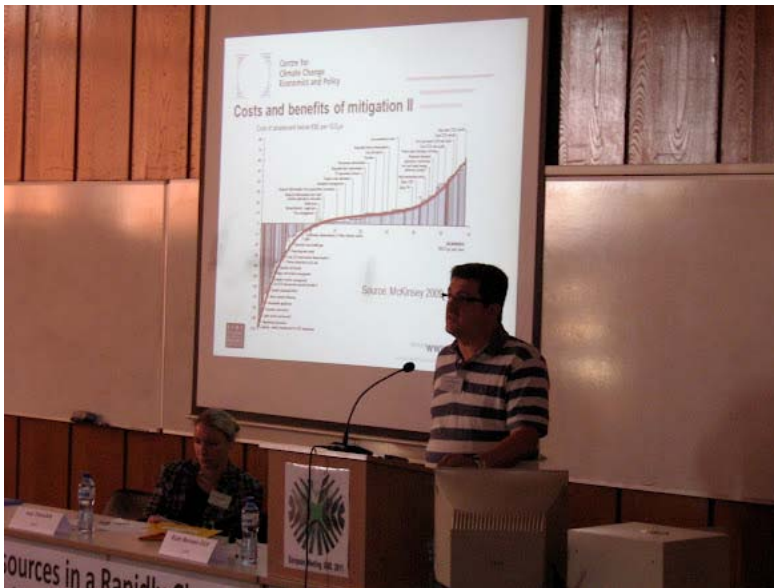


Photo: IASC

Professor Jouni Paavola giving his keynote talk.

The dominant view among scholars and policy makers has been that climate change governance should be based on wide international agreements, which involve most nations. Yet progress in international negotiations has been slow and the effectiveness of governance based on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol (KP) has been modest. Recent debates have focused on regional, sectoral, building blocks, and other less comprehensive climate change governance strategies. But the wider rationale of moving away from a comprehensive solution to a mosaic of specific ones has received little attention.

This talk focused on examining the rationale and potential of institutional diversity and polycentric governance in the area of climate change. It suggested that polycentric governance of climate change is already a reality. However, voluntary initiatives are

likely to be at their best in realising cost-saving mitigation opportunities and thus polycentric climate change governance will also need to involve hybrid and state-based solutions. While the dynamics of different kinds of institutional solutions as part of a wider polycentric governance strategy largely remains to be studied, something can be said about it. Voluntary and hybrid governance initiatives can clearly be comparable to major Annex 1 countries in terms of GHG emissions and emission reduction achievements. They can also help to create markets for carbon friendly products and abatement technologies, and help to bring down the marginal abatement cost of carbon over time. However, climate stabilisation will also require emission reductions that will entail economic sacrifices. This means that state based governance solutions will remain a part of the wider polycentric governance strategy.

The question is: how will different governance solutions within the wider polycentric strategy interact? Voluntary solutions may benefit from political commitment which can provide a basis for longer-term planning and investment. State-based governance solutions can also foster hybrid solutions involving markets. Voluntary initiatives may in turn play a role in mainstreaming and legitimising climate change to actors participating in them and to external political and economic decision-makers. They can lower the threshold of participating in voluntary climate change measures and create pressure for making progress in state-based forms of climate change governance. Voluntary and hybrid



forms of climate change governance also offer a decentralised, flexible and incentivised way of learning about low-cost and promising ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and targeting R&D investments effectively.

There clearly is an urgent need to improve the evidence base on the performance of non-conventional forms of climate change governance and the interaction of different

types of governance solutions that form parts of a wider polycentric governance strategy. The scholarship on common-pool resources and polycentricity is well-placed to make a contribution in this area because it has both conceptual apparatus and comparable empirical evidence from which to draw upon.

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## Recent Publications

### December 2011

**Emily Castle**

**Director of the Digital Library of the Commons, Indiana University**

#### BOOKS

Barbier, E.B. 2011. *Scarcity and Frontiers: How Economies have Developed through Natural Resource Exploitation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brams, S.J. 2011. *Game Theory and the Humanities: Bridging Two Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

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**European Regional Conference of  
the International Association for  
the Study of the Commons *papers***





## COMMONERS AND THE CHANGING COMMONS: LIVELIHOODS, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY, AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE



KitaFuji  
Mount Fuji, Japan  
3-7 June 2013  
SECURITY, AND SHARED  
KNOWLEDGE

### IASC 2013

14TH BIENNIAL GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
STUDY OF THE COMMONS

MONDAY JUNE 3 – FRIDAY JUNE 7, 2013,  
MOUNT FUJI, JAPAN

SPONSORS: **ONSHIRIN REGIONAL PUBLIC  
ORGANIZATION** AND **RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
FOR HUMANITY AND NATURE** (RIHN).

**I**ASC's 14th global conference will be our first meeting sponsored by resource commoners, and also the first to be held on a commons. The two chief sponsors for the meetings are Onshirin and RIHN. The Onshirin Regional Public Organization is a federation of 11 villages – Yamanaka-ko, Oshino, and 9 villages now amalgamated into Fujiyoshida City – that have shared the 8100 hectares comprising the commons of the North Fuji or Kitafuji slope since the early 17th century. The Kitafuji commoners have struggled mightily, particularly over the last 150 years of economic modernization and political change in Japan, to maintain their commons, and we are immensely grateful that they are now welcoming us to their commons and plan to share their experiences and knowledge with us at the conference. RIHN, Japan's Research Institute for Humanity and Nature based in Kyoto, is an inter-university consortium established by the Japanese government's National Institutes for the Humanities, founded to promote 'integrated

cooperative research toward the solution of global environmental problems' and to create the field of global environmental studies.

An IASC global meeting in Japan offers the opportunity to examine both newly created commons of the digital age as well as natural resource commons with very long history, and also to consider the experience and consequences of bringing a system of commons through the processes of industrialization into an affluent society. Some themes are also inspired by Japan's experience with natural disaster and the global protests embodied in the Arab Spring and the Occupy movement. The field trips attached to the conference will of course include the opportunity to meet with commoners, visit the Kitafuji commons, as well as trips to forests, grasslands, irrigation works, geothermal hot springs commons, and fisheries.

The call for proposals soon to appear on the conference web page, encourages panels, papers, and posters on the following themes:

- Commons and Social Capital for Livelihood Security in Crisis
- Commercialization and the Commons
- Urban Commons
- Collisions in Law and Culture
- Mobile Resources and Fluid Spaces
- Equity and Distributive Justice within the Commons
- State-Society Relations and the Protest Politics of Commons
- Commons, Complexity, and Multi-layered Governance
- Commons and Local Energy Alternatives in Climate Change
- The Global Digital Commons
- Biodiversity and Genetic Resources as Commons
- No-Consumptive Cultural Commons
- Campaigning on the Commons: Practical Lessons and Strategy Advancing Research on the Commons: methods, comparable data, and theoretical research frontiers

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**Research Institute for Humanity and Nature**



## ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

**Tahoe Science Conference  
May 22-24, 2012**



Hosted by Tahoe Science Consortium and Sierra Nevada College on the campus of Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village, Nevada



[www.tahoescience.org](http://www.tahoescience.org)



[www.sierranevada.edu](http://www.sierranevada.edu)

Event support provided by Nevada Water Resources Association. For more information visit [www.nvwra.org](http://www.nvwra.org) or contact Tina Triplett at [creativerno@charter.net](mailto:creativerno@charter.net) or 775-473-5473

**T**he Tahoe Science Consortium and Sierra Nevada College will host the 2012 Tahoe Science Conference May 22-24, 2012 on the scenic campus of Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village, Nevada. The theme of the 2012 Tahoe Science Conference will be "Environmental Restoration in a Changing Climate." Lake Tahoe and many other high alpine lakes around the world are being increasingly stressed by climatic changes and urban development. Compounding these factors are economic stresses on government agencies, local communities, the environmental community and the public. The 2012 Tahoe Science Conference will encourage creative dialogue among scientists, artists, environmental managers, public officials, and the general public about how to protect high alpine ecosystems under changing environmental and social climates.

**Anyone interested in learning about and shaping the future of Lake Tahoe and other mountain ecosystems around the world is encouraged to participate.**

Conference proceedings will be organized into three Tracks: Science, Management, & Visualization

### **Track 1 (Science): Mountain Ecosystem Science: From Alpine to Zooplankton**

Innovative scientific approaches and key findings will be presented on mountain ecosystem science topics including alpine lake limnology, watershed ecosystem functions, hydrologic cycles from mountains to lowlands, air quality & airshed modeling, climate change indicators and response, aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, changes in biodiversity, wildfire hazard reduction & land management, and extreme event risks & response.

### **Track 2 (Management): Environmental Management: Finding Solutions in Economic Stressed Times**

Pioneering methods for modeling environmental risks, modeling human adaptation and institutional change will complement discussions of best practices in environmental management, regulation, and economic development. Scientists, managers, regulators, developers, and the public are encouraged to exchange ideas for implementing adaptive management approaches that are scientifically-based and cost effective for protecting the environment, while promoting sustainable growth.

### **Track 3 (Visualization): Seeing is Understanding: Learning through Lens and Aperture**

Visualization tools from photography to overhead satellite images are invaluable for understanding change in environmentally complex areas. Historic photographs are often the best record of changes in vegetation, topography, development, and storm damage. Overhead imaging techniques allow researchers to discover earthquake fault lines, track the impacts of climate change, and understand the impacts of human activity on wildland areas. Presentations are encouraged from the visual arts, overhead imaging, and 3-D education



## Invitation From Elinor Ostrom

February 24, 2012

To Colleagues Interested in the Commons:

Scholars interested in a variety of common-pool resources and public goods are scattered across the world and in multiple disciplines interested in diverse common resources. We were fortunate to be able to establish the International Association for the Study of the Commons two decades ago. This has provided us a forum that disciplinary meetings do not. We can engage in a very serious and cumulative discussion of how diverse groups at multiple scales have or have not solved problems of great importance.

IASC is now itself a "global commons" committed to the production and dissemination of knowledge, which is a "public good," about how many diverse institutions help or hinder the solutions of common-pool resources, in complex social-ecological settings. As members, we also face a social dilemma in keeping IASC funded. Without our contributions, IASC is not sustainable over time.

I have learned so much from being a member of IASC, and I hope that you will join in this effort by renewing your membership or becoming a member.

Regards,

**Elinor Ostrom**  
**Former President and Current Active Member**  
**of IASC**

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## Membership Drive

Dear members,

Thank you for supporting the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) by means of your membership. IASC is itself a commons, and depends on its membership dues for many of the critical activities it undertakes, such as organizing the Global Conferences and the Regional and Thematic Meetings, publishing *The Commons Digest* and the *International Journal of the Commons*, supporting the Digital Library of the Commons and other networking among IASC members that we are working on. Your support has increased the financial viability of the organization over these years.

Elinor Ostrom's Nobel Prize and the increasing attention to the commons have given our association a big lift, but we can't rest on our laurels. We need to move forward to meet the (old and) new challenges to the commons.

The individual membership dues are based on incomes as listed in the categories below:

- Incomes US \$19,999 and below dues are \$20.00
- Incomes US \$20,000-49,999 dues are \$75.00
- Incomes US \$50,000-79,999 dues are \$120.00
- Incomes US \$80,000 and above dues are \$175.00

You can make your renewal in a clear and simple way in the following electronic address:

<https://membership.iasc-commons.org>

**or you can go to**

<http://www.iasc-commons.org>

Then follow the links in the bottom right corner:

**[Join IASC / Renew IASC Membership](#)**

If you do not have a credit card, we have two alternatives for you to pay your membership. You can send a check by mail or pay through a bank transfer (wire transfer) to our account.

For more information about these options, please contact Gabriela Ortiz

[gabrielaortiz@iasc-commons.org](mailto:gabrielaortiz@iasc-commons.org)

Finally, we invite you to visit IASC's new website at:

[www.iasc-commons.org](http://www.iasc-commons.org)

Our site is being upgraded to provide you with better information about: conferences, organization's activities, publications (*The Commons Digest* and *International Journal of the Commons*), and contacts with other members.

We look forward to your continued support!

Best Regards,

**Susan J. Buck**

**President, International Association**  
**for the Study of the Commons (IASC)**

[iasc@iasc-commons.org](mailto:iasc@iasc-commons.org)