ANNOUNCEMENT

Networks of action situations in social-ecological systems research

Upcoming Special Feature in *Sustainability Science*

Christian Kimmich^{1,2} · Melf-Hinrich Ehlers³ · Elke Kellner⁴ · Christoph Oberlack⁵ · Andreas Thiel⁶ · Sergio Villamayor-Tomas⁷

Published online: 23 May 2020
© Springer Japan KK, part of Springer Nature 2020

The analysis of Networks of Action Situations (NAS) is becoming an increasingly popular and powerful tool for social-ecological systems research. Social-ecological systems are frequently shaped by decisions, behaviours and practices resulting from multiple interdependent action situations (e.g., Pahl-Wostl et al. 2010; McGinnis 2011; Lubell 2013; Kimmich 2013; Villamayor-Tomas et al. 2015). Action situations are events, venues, arenas or spaces in which actions affect collective outcomes (Ostrom 2005). The action situations relevant to sustainability science are highly diverse. They include market transactions, resource extraction, public good provision, deliberative fora, implementation of legislation and many more. Typically, social (e.g. social networks and institutions), economic (e.g. shared resources and transactions) and biophysical (e.g. material and energy flows) ties link action situations and the actors involved in multiple situations. Such complex networks lack systematic research. How can we account for the heterogeneity of networks and the distinct characteristics of situations and their linkages? Which methods and models appear most promising? How can NAS contribute to middle-range theory building?

Objectives

This special feature aims to:

- consolidate the NAS approach by examining conceptualizations of networks and action situations and by synthesizing the portfolio of available methods and models to analyse NAS;
- explore how theoretical, empirical and transdisciplinary research uses situation-centred network approaches to advance network analysis and synthesis in sustainability science;
- identify those situations and network structures in empirical cases that promise to be powerful levers in the transformation of social-ecological systems to sustainable futures.

We invite contributions that advance theory, methods and empirical insights of NAS research, covering a variety of approaches, including ecologies of games, connectivity science, polycentricity, archetypes approaches, telecoupling and nexus studies, as well as political economy and political ecology studies, ecologies of practices and actor-network approaches.

The special feature builds on a series of conference panels that have been organized at the ESEE 2019, the IASC 2019, the ECPR 2020 and the ESG 2020. It aims to include a number of high-quality articles that complement invited contributions from the panels.

Deadlines

Expressions of interest are due on 31 August 2020. Please submit a working title, authors' names and an abstract of 200–250 words in an email to the editors. Full papers need

✉ Christian Kimmich
kimmich@fss.muni.cz

¹ Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

² Institut für Höhere Studien - Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, Austria

³ ETH Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland

⁴ Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Birmensdorf, Switzerland

⁵ University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland

⁶ University of Kassel, Kassel, Germany

⁷ Autonomous University Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

to be submitted by the end of May 2021. We provide further detail for full paper submissions once the planned contributions have been selected. Papers will be published online as soon as they are accepted.

References

- Kimmich C (2013) Linking action situations: coordination, conflicts, and evolution in electricity provision for irrigation in Andhra Pradesh, India. *Ecol Econ* 90:150–158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2013.03.017>
- Lubell M (2013) Governing institutional complexity: the ecology of games framework. *Policy Stud J* 41:537–559. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12028>
- McGinnis MD (2011) Networks of adjacent action situations in polycentric governance. *Policy Stud J* 39:51–78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2010.00396.x>
- Ostrom E (2005) *Understanding institutional diversity*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, Oxford
- Pahl-Wostl C, Holtz G, Kastens B, Knieper C (2010) Analyzing complex water governance regimes: the management and transition framework. *Environ Sci Policy* 13:571–581. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2010.08.006>
- Villamayor-Tomas S, Grundmann P, Epstein G et al (2015) The water-energy-food security nexus through the lenses of the value chain and the institutional analysis and development frameworks. *Water Altern* 8:735–755

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.