INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 11 - 15 2022

#IMC22

>> SYNTHESIZE MOUNTAINS OF KNOWLEDGE <<

Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 598

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Country	Austria
Region	Western Europe
Title	Co-Production Of Innovation In Forest-Wood Value Chains In Upper Austria.
Keywords	Co-Production Of Knowledge, Transdisciplinary Research, Sustainability Transition, Governance Innovation, Stakeholder Engagement
Туре	List Of Focus Session
Focus Session ID	75



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Abstract

The call for new modes of knowledge production has significantly affected the research practice in the field of sustainability transitions in mountain regions. However, the increased emergence of interactive, participatory, and transdisciplinary research approaches has revealed not only effective interactions to solve complex sustainability challenges, but also contradictions and pitfalls. Particularly approaches promoting the co-production of knowledge multiply the diversity of interests and perspectives, which require constant reflection on the requirement for researcher-stakeholder engagement, but also on the ultimate purpose of co-production for science-based pathways.

We reflect on our science-practice-experiences gained in the Horizon 2020 Innovation Action funded InnoForESt project (2017-2020). The project's goal was to establish new knowledge and to explore the feasibility of novel technologies, services and solutions to spark a transformation of the European forest sector. As a science-practice-mixed author group, we evaluate from a post-project perspective in particular the potential of knowledge exchange and co-production processes for governance innovations in forest-wood value chains in Upper Austria. The empirical and analytical work focuses on specific stakeholder constellations and types of knowledge co-production established to support a collaborative network for transformative adaptation of social-ecological systems. We analyse a variety of project strategies and tools, and evaluate their implementation in relation to four principles of knowledge co-production: (1) context-based, (2) pluralistic, (3) goal-oriented, and (4) interactive.