

European Forum Future Earth

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Humanities and Social Sciences in the new framing of Future Earth

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The framing of the “climate regime” from Toronto to Copenhagen

- **A global ‘Pollution Problem’ on the model of the Ozone problem solved by the Montreal Protocol**
- **Political Process and Scientific Expertise : are separated mais closely linked**
- **A construction totally top-down looking for a global treatise assuming the burden sharing**
- **Shift between developed countries and developing countries, and shift also about solutions concerning these countries**
- **Social sciences (except economics) were marginalized**

Lessons coming from social sciences (and from political failures and events):

The climate challenge:

- is not only global but multi-scalar.
- The convergent critics coming from social scientists (Hulme, Jasanoff, Beck etc.) showed that it doesn't belong to pollution problems
- We have to face to the crucial question of articulating different scales of governance

Furthermore:

- the notion of *climate policies*,
- the *environment* category (cf U.Beck)
need to be redefined and rethought.
- A new Social Contract is maybe necessary ?

The new framing of Future Earth

- **Aggravation of the ecological crisis**
- **The Anthropocen Diagnosis**
- **Authority of Natural Sciences : planetary boundaries**
- **Demand of pluridisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity**
- **New Role assigned to Social Sciences :**
 - **as important as natural sciences**
 - **towards more performative solutions**
- **Combining with cosmopolitan principles**

We have to live within several tensions:

- **Social sciences: “usable” or only useful ?**

Social Sciences are interpretative, reflexive, critic, but non predictive. They cannot be reduced to a functional role (behaviorism...) They must help emerging new imaginaries and new narratives about sustainable societies, exploring a plurality of scenarios (ex: what could be a sustainable Urban Earth ?)

- **Social sciences and global framing ?**

Social Sciences (sociology, anthropology, geography) are locally situated. They fit well with a bottom –up approach. But the the change is global..

- **Do we have to revise the three pillars of sustainable development ?**

Communicating on Uncertainties, Taking in account the conflictual dimension of environmental stakes

- **Uncertainties are the space of porosity between disciplinary boundaries**
- **They are a point for engaging social dialog and raising the question of political choices**
- **Interactions with the social world seem crucial and are perhaps the key of future scientific dynamics**
- **Plurality of transitional processes towards sustainability**
- **Social sciences and economics must analyze how global change solutions could overcome the concrete economic and geopolitical context, confront the diverse interests.**