

SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR ADAPTATION & MITIGATION – EXPERIMENTATION FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVE

Experimentation is key for transformative change. **Testing climate and sustainability solutions in practice** can facilitate the rapid realization of viable **paths to a resilient and livable future**. Yet, experimentation is not just about testing new technology. The deep transformation of society calls for a change of practices and social interactions as well. Hence, social innovation is just as important. However, we still know little about the socially innovative dimension of experiments, which complicates their amplification and generalisation. This is where SIAMESE comes in. The project studies selected **socially innovative adaptation and mitigation experiments in Austria**, aiming to understand what fostered **their emergence and impact**. Based on that, SIAMESE develops the **architecture for the EXAM Hub**, an intermediary knowledge broker that **supports the realization of future transformative climate experiments**.

- **Showcase** spectrum of socially innovative climate experiments in Austria
- **Understand** the geographies, knowledge and agency of experimentation
- **Transfer** keys for amplification and routinization into Hub architecture

PROJECT PLAN

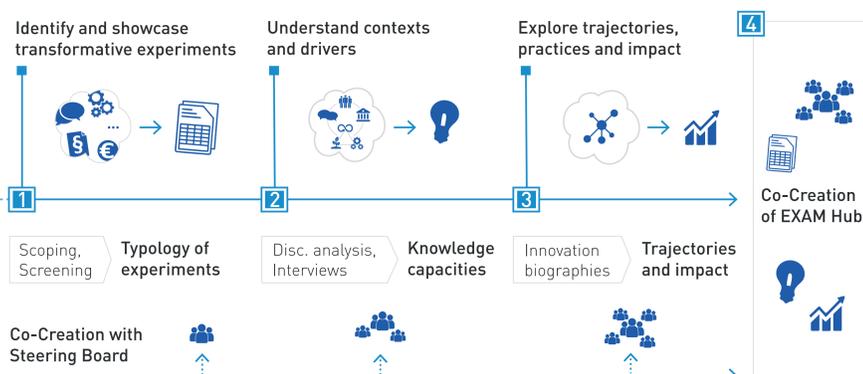


Figure 1: Project Plan; Illustration by the project team

1 Based on scoping **interviews with experts, a screening and an online survey**, relevant recent experiments are collected and systematically processed according to descriptive criteria. The resulting overview serves as a showcase for good practice in social innovation.

Oct. 2021

- Literature review on Socio-technical Experiments, Urban Experimentation, Climate Experiments, and Transformative Change
- Scoping Interviews with 12 Austrian research, policy, and practice actors in relevant fields of expertise
- Screening of approx. 1,500 climate and sustainability experiments in AT
- Selection of 200+ experiments for online survey
- Implementation of online survey (on-going)

— We are here

2 **Five experiments will be selected and examined in detail** with regard to their context of emergence as well as conducive/obstructive framework conditions.

3 Using innovation biographies, **selected initiatives will be analyzed in-depth regarding agency, interactions, and impacts**.

4 An **intermediary EXAM hub will be developed** to link actors, competences and resources for future transformative projects.

2023

CONCEPT

ANALYTICAL DIMENSIONS

Learning & Routinizing

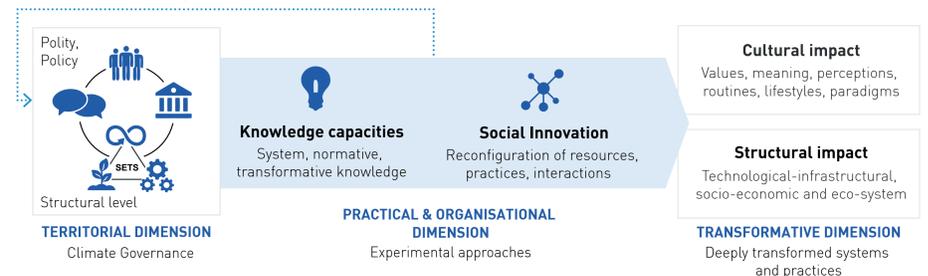


Figure 2: Analytical dimensions; Illustration by the project team

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

„Does context matter for experimentation?“

- SIAMESE examines the political activity space, territorial specificities and implicit and explicit knowledge about SETS trajectories to critically **reflect the role of context** for the emergence and impact of experiments.

PRACTICAL & ORGANISATIONAL DIMENSION

„How does Social Innovation (SI) unfold?“

- While experiments are primarily discussed in terms of their impact, the **experimental process itself** is often neglected. SIAMESE analyzes the SI process, the associated agency and interactions, the process of knowledge production and learning, and reproducible success factors.

TRANSFORMATIVE DIMENSION

„How do experiments contribute to transformation?“

- Climate experiments can have **impact beyond adaptation and mitigation** (e.g. health, quality of life). SIAMESE looks at these connections to highlight such transformative approaches and how they can be amplified or routinized.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

TYPES OF EXPERIMENTS

Climate- & Sustainability Experiments put innovative solutions for adaptation, mitigation and sustainable development into practice to test their practicability and effectiveness in real social settings. **Common characteristics** that describe such experiments are:

- limited in scope, time, and spatial extent.
- open-ended and thus risky.
- critical of established, unsustainable system states.
- a form of learning-by-doing.

SIAMESE distinguishes

THREE TYPES OF EXPERIMENTS:

Governance experiments:

Ad-hoc testing novel instruments and governance mechanisms, e.g. participatory budgets

Transformative research:

Co-creation of technical, social, or nature-based solutions in labs or similar settings

Grassroots innovation:

Trialing alternative social practices bottom-up and/or with activist means, e.g. food cooperatives

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

- **Publications:** Journal article in The Public Sector, 47(2) (02/22) | Book chapter in „Transformationsgesellschaft. Strategien und Visionen für den sozialökologischen Wandel.“ (09/22)
- **Conferences:** SIAMESE session @TIPC2022 (01/22) | Presentation on The Geography of Experimentation @GCEG 2022 (06/22)
- **Web & Social:** SIAMESE website launch (02/22) | Project info and updates on ResearchGate, Twitter, LinkedIn
- **Other:** Research Seminar @TU Wien, Institute of Spatial Planning (11/21) | 42nd STRN-Newsletter (12/21) | SIAMESE Steering Board Workshop (01/22)



- COSIMA
- TRANSREAL
- Build Back Better

