

Trust and Knowledge Creation in the Regeneration of the Szprotawa Brownfield: A Project Ecology Perspective

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Ecology is *internal* to human organization

...Human society can be regarded as an ecological system, or "ecosystem," something like a great pond, filled not with fish and frogs, plants and bacteria, but with workers and employers, gas stations and power companies, counties, states, and nations, churches and lodges, automobiles and refrigerators [...] These populations [...] act and interact on each other in a great variety of ways (Boulding 1958).

Different ecologies in Europe?

In Western Europe, a scheme 'might start off with a small guy who finds the site, who brings in a big guy who builds it, and then sells it on to an enormous guy who's got very deep pockets' (Henneberry and Parris 2013)
 In the Eastern regions, there are challenges for this scenario: 1) There are few "big guys" & fewer "enormous guys"; 2) "Bringing in" and "selling on" requires knowledge & trust.

How can actors in the East manage to get organized in the face of complex brownfield regeneration tasks?



With many unknown problems...

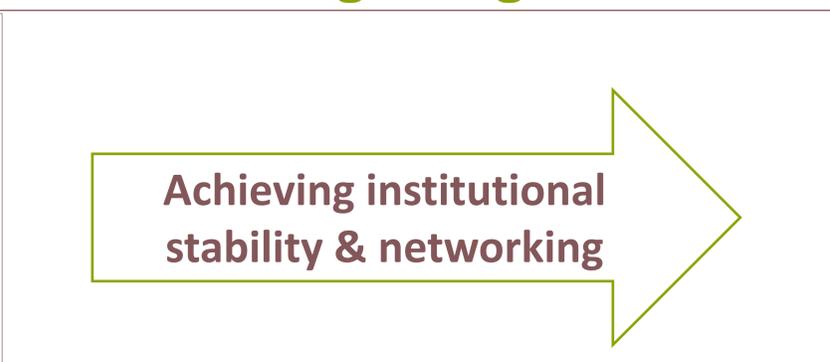
What does it mean for actors to get organized in the Szprotawa case?

Initial context
 Inability to control the conditions on the site – "thousands of liters of petroleum were drawn up" from the site by local people known as the "sheiks" (early 1990s).
 Contrast to a developed urban areas: Unclear liabilities under conditions of newly established property relations

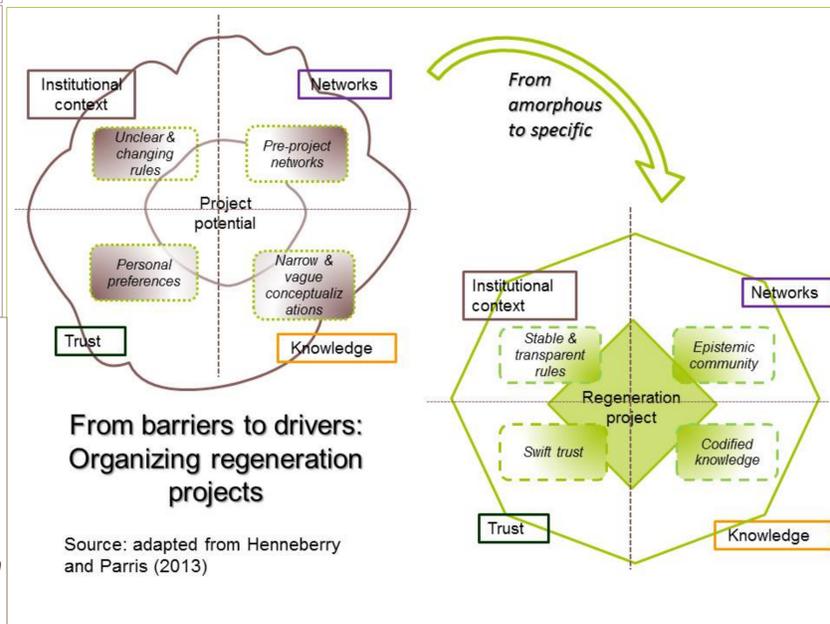
Pre-project networks
 Initial organizing by the local community on a solitary basis, with a limited pool of partners to draw on.
 Contrast to "institutionally thick" locales, where the level of cohesion and interdependence among actors is very high.

Trust
 Initially difficult to establish trust in investors, the mayor had to carry out "undercover" interviews to screen unworthy investors (e.g. landfilling hazardous wastes).
 Reputations have not been well established in the early transition years.

Unsystematic knowledge:
 Recognition of the problem of contamination, but local actors could not advance this knowledge on their own.
 Knowledge, tacit or explicit, is not accumulated in a systematic way.

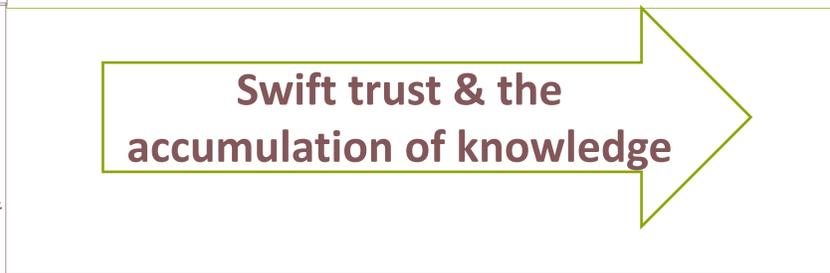


Developing the institutional context
 Changing the local spatial plan towards production, services and investment (1997) and the establishment of the local Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone (2006).
 Actors link their local development plans to regional and national investment mechanisms



Project networks
 Expansion of number of partners: Ministry of Environment, Military Technical Academy, consulting firms, Catholic University of Lublin, local investors etc.
 Actors establish cooperation with others, who support the carrying out of tasks

Swift trust
 Swift trust sets in when project partners do not need to be checked, because they can be relied on given their professional roles.
 After several episodes of successful cooperation, actors learn to trust experts.



Codified knowledge:
 Knowledge is codified when actors find a common language to talk about the problem.
 Actors reach the stage of codified knowledge when using tools for decisions.

Conclusions



Actors in Western and Eastern brownfield contexts act in similar ecologies when organizing regeneration projects
 Building a project ecology means establishing networks of trust & knowledge transfer at national & European scales



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