

PRODUCTIVE IRRITATION – INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS IN NATURE CONSERVATION

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Managing differences and dealing with heterogeneity is a core element in td-research. As we know, it is both, a chance and a risk. Plurality and diversity might cause fragmented processes and difficulties in reaching common goals, but it also entails a productive form of irritation and the opportunity for fruitful collective learning. Especially in the context of sustainability research and intervention the variety of perspectives, interwoven interests and influencing factors is enormous. Research is facing wicked problems. The differences that hold the chance of productive irritation and collective learning can be observed in the different problem descriptions, different stocks of knowledge, different interests, goals and the ways to reach them. Not least the different system logics have to be mentioned, which are brought into td-processes by the actor groups. Continuing the scientific discourse on heterogeneity, which mostly addresses the question of integration, against the background of a transdisciplinary research project on processes of institutionalization in nature conservation in this contribution the systems logics themselves are focused on and a closer look is taken to the (inter-)institutional dynamics and their consequences in the field of nature conservation and the administrative and legal processes going along with it. The main focus of the research project lies on Red Lists. It deals with the societal and institutional processes, which have the effect that endangered animal and plant species are included in Red Lists, it is analyzed how the lists are maintained and what the significance and practical consequences of Red Lists are. The analysis is carried out on the example of the Vertigo moulinsiana (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail), a snail, which is only a few millimeters in size and still has the potential to strongly influence the implementation of construction projects. The species is anchored in national Red Lists, it is listed in Annex II of the European Community Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora and the IUCN Red List and it is protected by various legislations. The topic is analyzed and discussed from the point of view of several relevant subject areas and public institutions. The starting hypothesis is that Red Lists have the character of values and norms. They derive from the need for standards in administrative and legal procedures and in political

decision making. Referring to institutional theory the following research questions are focused on:

- What are the societal and institutional processes that lead to the high significance of a specific animal species?
- Which societal and institutional processes are represented in the declaration of a species as vulnerable or protected?
- What are the societal and institutional consequences of the declaration as vulnerable or protected?
- Which general conclusions can be drawn from the results of the analysis for theory and practice of nature conservation work and for political, administrative and legal processes on an international, national and a regional level?

The contribution first focuses on the project design, in which the organization of transdisciplinary cooperation is part of the research process. Secondly it gives insight into intermediate results of the research concerning institutional logics and their consequences (for transdisciplinary processes and beyond). As so often the science system reveals as an important player and the question of interface management between the various spheres of acting still seems to be a hot topic.