

**POLICY INSTRUMENTS AND THE MAKING OF SOCIOTECHNICAL FUTURES:  
PRODUCTION, CIRCULATION, AND EFFECTS**

**Nicolas Baya-Laffite**

**Université de Genève**

**Aykut Stefan**

**Universität Hamburg**

**Bilel Benbouzid**

**Université Gustave Eiffel**

**Marlyne Sahakian**

**Université de Genève**

**Abstract:**

(replaces previous submission)

Policy-making and public debate in technological societies are characterized by heavy reliance on science-based visions of probable, desirable or potentially catastrophic futures. Policy instruments play a key role therein, as sites where such futures are produced, circulated and put to work in the governance of very diverse sociotechnical matters at multiple scales. As such, they offer an interesting vantage point from where to examine the politics of technoscientific futures.

In keeping with fruitful developments at the crossroads of political sociology and science and technology studies, this panel seeks to shed light onto instruments and future making in different policy sectors (climate change, energy, agriculture, digital technologies, agriculture, urban development, and industries) and thereby on how instruments and future-production devices circulate from one sector to another.

Papers are invited to consider instruments and issues at different scales - global, national and local. We welcome in particular comparisons across sectors and levels of intervention. They can focus on their production, circulation or effects in regard to future-making practices, techniques, or knowledge. Papers can deal with one specific policy instrument or compare different instruments, in one or in multiple sectors. We welcome, for example, papers examining the use of impact assessments and scenarios in one sector (i.e. in environmental or digital governance) and / or looking at how they migrate across sectors.

Authors are invited to explore, among other issues: What kinds of knowledge, actors, and scales are privileged by / for different policy instruments in the production of futures? How are different instruments framing temporal and geographical scales in the production of futures? What tensions and conflicts can be observed? How do different policy instruments foster the circulation of futures across social arenas ? What effects do they produce in public debate? How is the production of

future-knowledge imbricated in conflictual processes of collective construction of futures ?

We hope to cover as many instruments and sectors as possible to foster potential comparisons during the debate and in future work. On this basis, this panel aims at initiating a research programme gathering scholars from STS and other thematic domains of expertise, ranging from energy to AI, around policy instruments and future making practices.

**Key words:**

Policy instruments; sociotechnical futures; innovation governance