

Elements of transitions thinking in formal governance processes for sustainable materials management

Aim

Within the cluster on system analysis, research line 2 focuses on global and European governance initiatives for sustainable materials management (SMM). Like any transformation of socio-technical systems, a transition towards SMM is strongly embedded in international dynamics. Materials are particularly rooted within global patterns of production and consumption, and linked to various international rule systems. We therefore focus on different multilateral processes that frame and govern the transition towards SMM, both at the European and at the global level, in order to gain a full understanding of the transnational context of the Flemish ambitions regarding the transition.

The main objective of this second work package is to trace how elements of system innovation and transition are embedded in formal governance processes at the global and EU level. It wants to analyse how those elements are translated into (1) fundamental principles, (2) policy goals and (3) policy instruments of international governance processes.

The research will focus on three case studies: (1) the EU's resource efficiency policy, (2) the OECD's SMM strategies and (3) UNEP's initiatives in the field of resource efficiency.

Timeframe and output

This study corresponds with work package 2B of the SuMMa multi-annual plan. It is executed by Dr Sander Happaerts (HIVA – KU Leuven) between 2013 and 2014. The study will result in a SuMMa working paper towards the end of 2014. The paper will be accompanied by preliminary policy recommendations, outlining the main points of interest for Flemish policy processes.

In the meantime, this work package already resulted in a number of [academic publications](#).