

Urban Footprints - Towards Greater Accountability in the Governance of Cities' Carbon and Material Flows

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Global warming and the depletion of resources are enormous environmental and societal challenges of our time. Globally, scientists and politicians agree that meeting these challenges requires major transformation processes compared to business as usual. The Footprints project focuses on the current as well as the potential future role of cities in combating climate change and resource depletion. Cities are crucial actors when it comes to these global problems; they consume about 75 % of world energy and material flows. The research builds on the hypothesis that the design of local urban systems is crucial for global sustainability. It explores accountable modes of governance of cities' carbon and material footprints in order to activate the transformative forces within cities. Bridging the disciplines of legal sciences and urban studies, the project will develop a knowledge base, an analysis of opportunities and challenges, as well as recommendations for enhanced accountable governance of urban carbon and material footprints for eight international cities and their respective national jurisdictions, including China, India and the United States. With its innovative approach to urban governance, the Footprints project aims to function as a catalyst for overcoming national boundaries, established disciplines, and institutions.

Projektbeteiligte

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