

Customizing Commons: Methods for Diversifying Institutional Design

Call for papers for a panel at the 2011 Conference of the International Association for the Study of Commons (IASC2011)

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How can communities customize commons governance to fit their needs? What processes and tools can help? This panel is intended for practitioners, academics, commons managers, and others to share experience with methods useful for communities, and those working with them, in deliberately crafting and adapting governance of shared resources. It will concentrate on learning about techniques and approaches that help in dynamically adapting commons governance to fit community circumstances and goals. Papers drawing on practical experience, comparing multiple sites or sectors, and synthesizing ideas, would be particularly welcome.

This would fit under the governance theme for the conference, but could address other topics as well. Depending on the papers and author interest, opportunities for joint publication may be pursued. Some of the main challenges for institutional design arise because design occurs amidst problematic and contested processes of framing decisions, defining community and individual identities, making collective choices, and working together in commons. In the spirit of diversity, panel papers may engage a variety of ideas and approaches applicable for improving institutional artisanship, including but not limited to:

- processes for participatory problem-solving,
- recipes and ingredients for institutional design,
- appreciative inquiry,
- exchange visits,
- deliberative dialogue,
- conversations in network governance,
- action research
- and other methods useful for customizing governance in commons.