
Climate change politics, the problem of change and the new urban geographies of climate change

Vanesa Castan Broto, Linda Westman and Ping Huang
Urban Institute, University of Sheffield

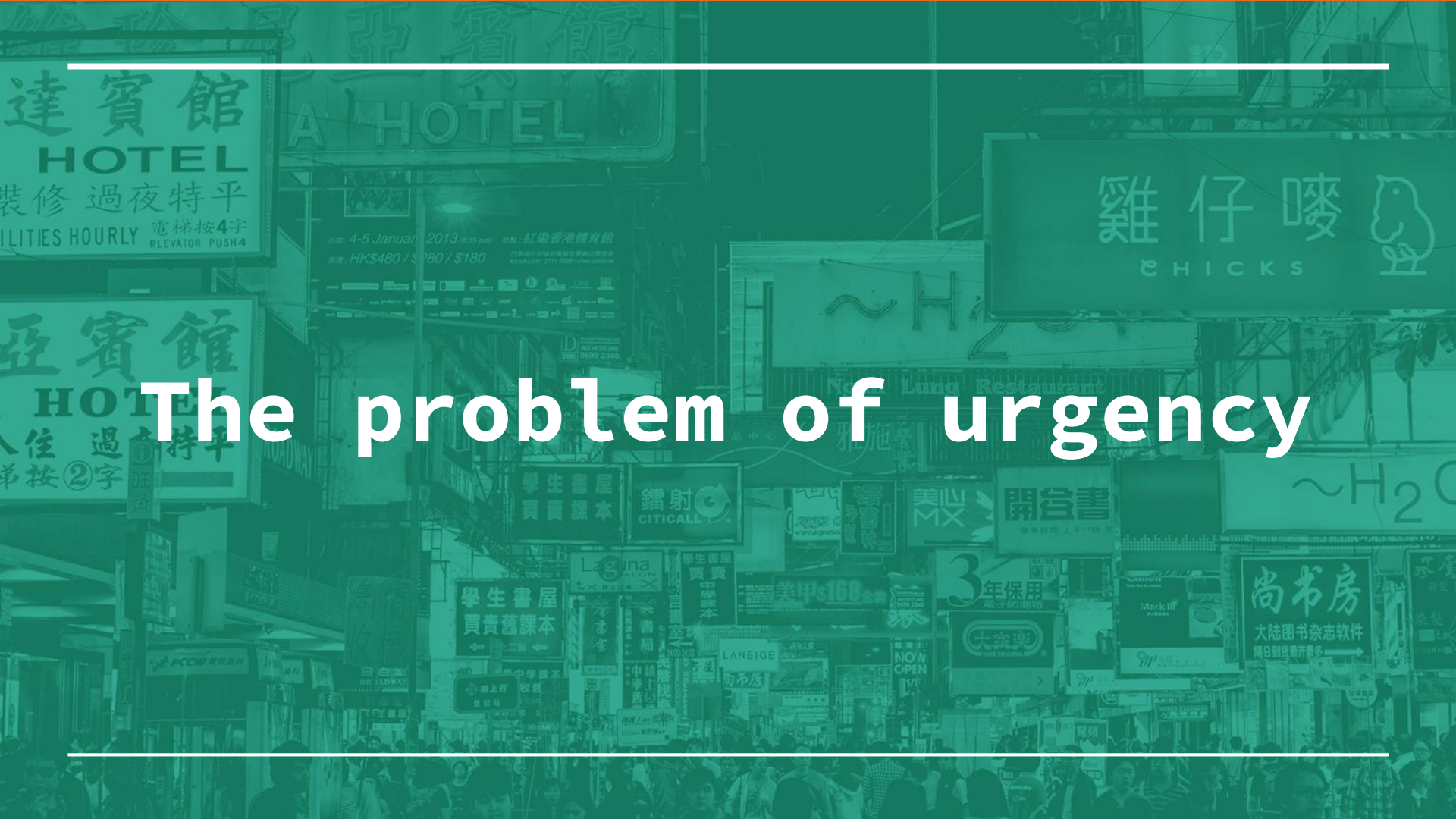


LO-ACT

Low Carbon Action
in Ordinary Cities

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme Grant Agreement No 804051 — LO-ACT — ERC-2018-STG



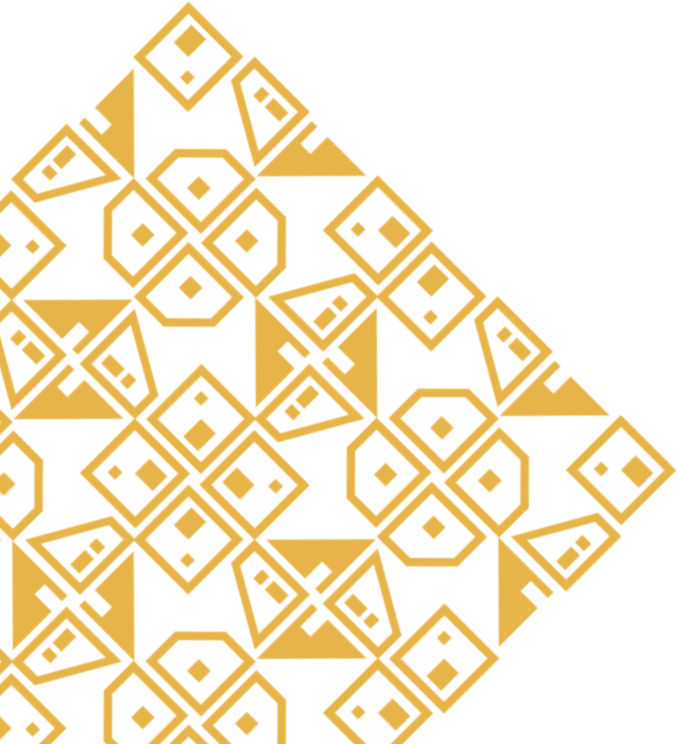


The problem of urgency



**Facing the need
for radical
transformation**

The deeply ambiguous logic of crisis politics



"Summoning the urgency of the climate crisis gives the left a new energy. But if the evocation of crisis is more than a rhetorical device, it must also impose constraints and choices. In a foxhole, survival is paramount, and radicalism fades."

Adam Tooze, 2020



The great urban transformation

I read the 2018 IPCC special report of global warming of 1.5 degrees and this is what I learnt about transformations...

WE NEED TRANSFORMATONS because “without societal transformation and rapid implementation of ambitious greenhouse gas reduction measures, pathways to limiting warming to 1.5°C and achieving sustainable development will be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible”

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES ADDRESSING INEQUALITY because “any strategies for sustainable development enable transformational adaptation for a 1.5°C warmer world, provided attention is paid to reducing poverty in all its forms and to promoting equity and participation in decision-making...”

TO FIND TRANSFORMATIONS LOOK INTO URBAN AREAS because “The concentration of economic activity, dense social networks, human resource capacity, investment in infrastructure and buildings, relatively nimble local governments, close connection to surrounding rural and natural environments, and a tradition of innovation provide urban areas with transformational potential...”



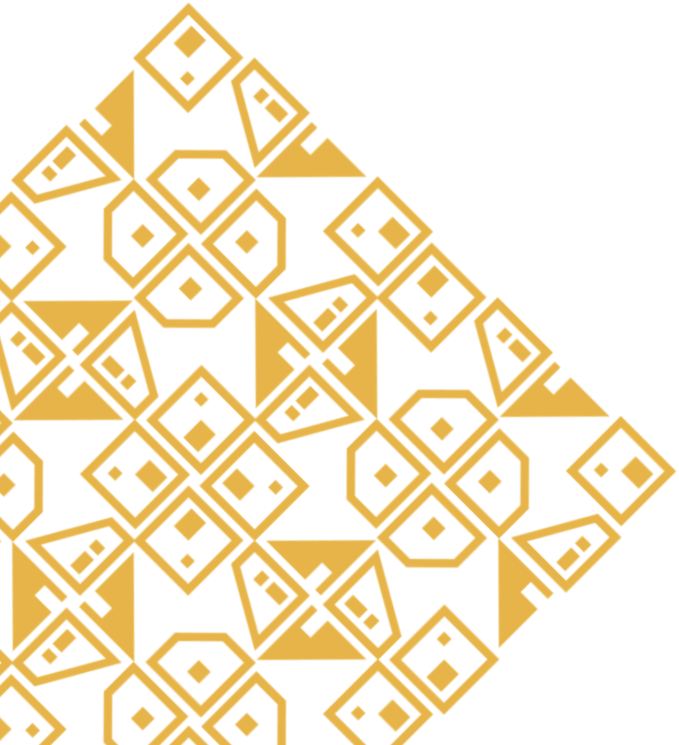
Defining transformation?

“Unlike a “transition”, which implies moving from one place or state to another, “transformation” is more about completely reinventing shape or form – like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar to a butterfly.”

Waddock et al, 2020- Future Earth

“The dirty and ugly industrial caterpillar transforms into an ecological butterfly”

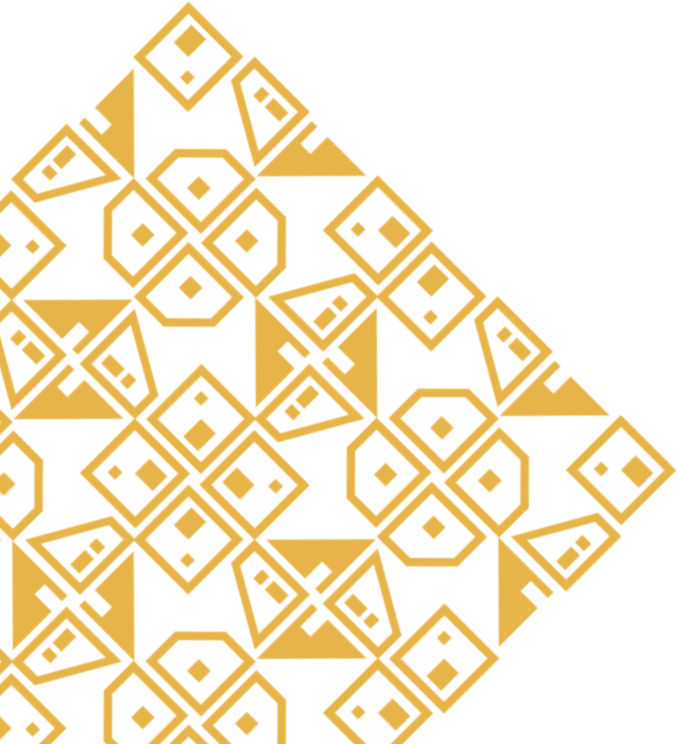
Huber, as cited by Mol and Spargaren on their classical work on EMT, 1992





Enabling conditions for change

Towards transformative adaptation:
consolidated evidence (review of 140
cases of CC adaptation)

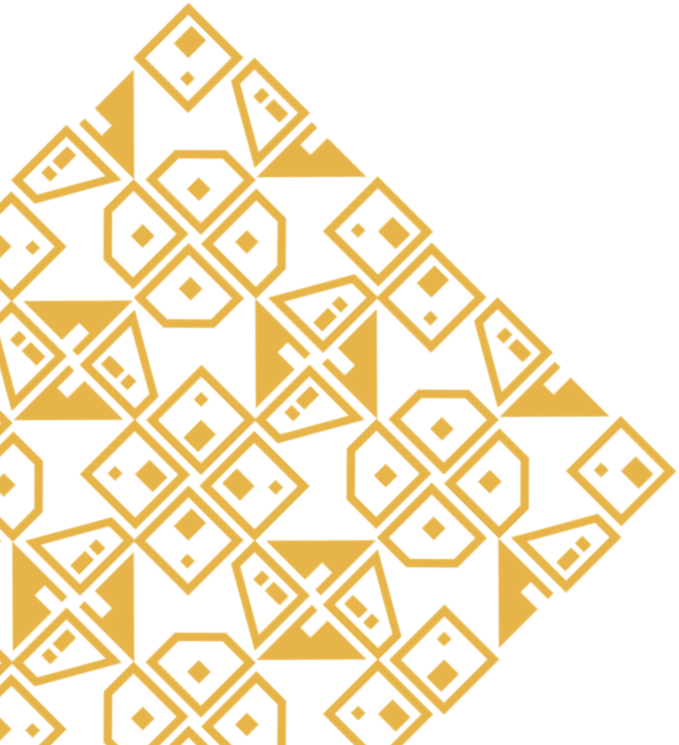


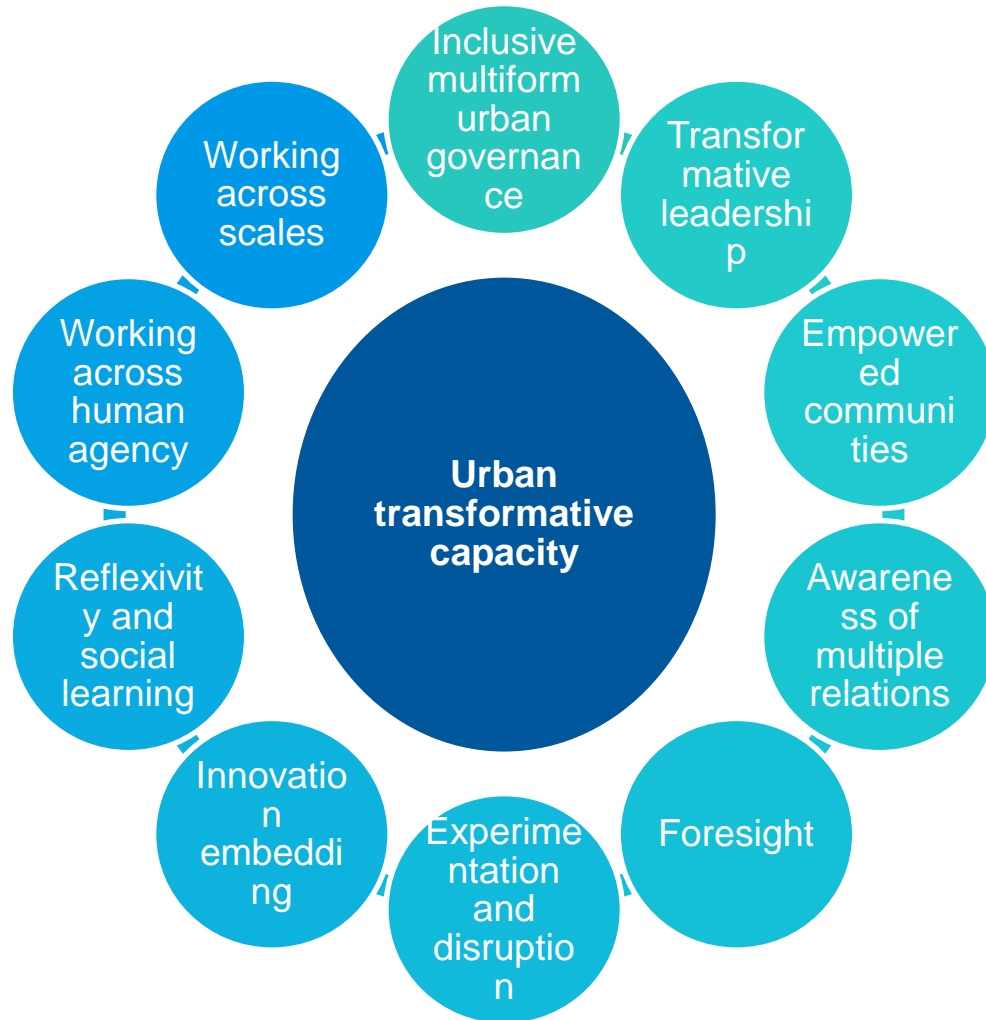
1. Institutional **reform** within institutions
2. Aligning action with **co-benefits**
(sustainable development, resource security)
3. Harnessing **resources** at the local level
4. **Alignment** and orchestration across levels of governance and institutions

Objectives	Type of instrument	Description	Examples
Policy	Information Instruments	A diverse range of activities such as training, research and development, awareness campaigns to produce and share information	Urban-LEDS II Capacity Building Workshop for cities in Lao, arranged for local government by ICLEI Southeast Asia Secretariat and UN-Habitat (UN-Habitat, 2019)
	Voluntary Instruments	Practices such as codes, labelling, management standards or audits, in a voluntary basis, that can provide incentives for adaptation	Singapore Environmental Council's Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) (Tortajada and Joshi, 2013)
	Economic Instruments	Taxes or subsidies can be used to promote adaptive activities	US Office for Coastal Management NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program (NOOA, 2019)
	Regulatory Instruments	These include a range of mandatory requirements through controls, bans, quotas, licensing, standards often applied when a specific outcome is required	Building codes to enhance structural stability for storm resilience in Moore, Oklahoma (US) (Ramseyer et al., 2016)
Process	Visioning	Events that bring together different stakeholders to produce a city vision	Rotterdam Resilient City participatory processes to create resilience strategies (Resilient Rotterdam, 2016)
	Baseline studies	Focus on understanding the current conditions in a neighbourhood or city from an interdisciplinary perspective	Flood Risks, Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Benefits in Mumbai, an OECD assessment study (Hallegatte et al., 2010)
	Development priorities	Specific methods to ensure an open definition of multiple priorities and contrasting values that will inform the planning process	Participatory housing upgrading through the Baan Mankong Program in Bangkok (Thailand) (Berquist et al., 2015)
Planning	Profiles	Develop a common understanding of how a city's sectors interact with adaptation and the governance capacity	New York City Panel on Climate Change 2019 Report (NYCPCC, 2019)
	Risk	This includes a range of instruments to evaluate	Climate risk assessment for Buenos Aires,

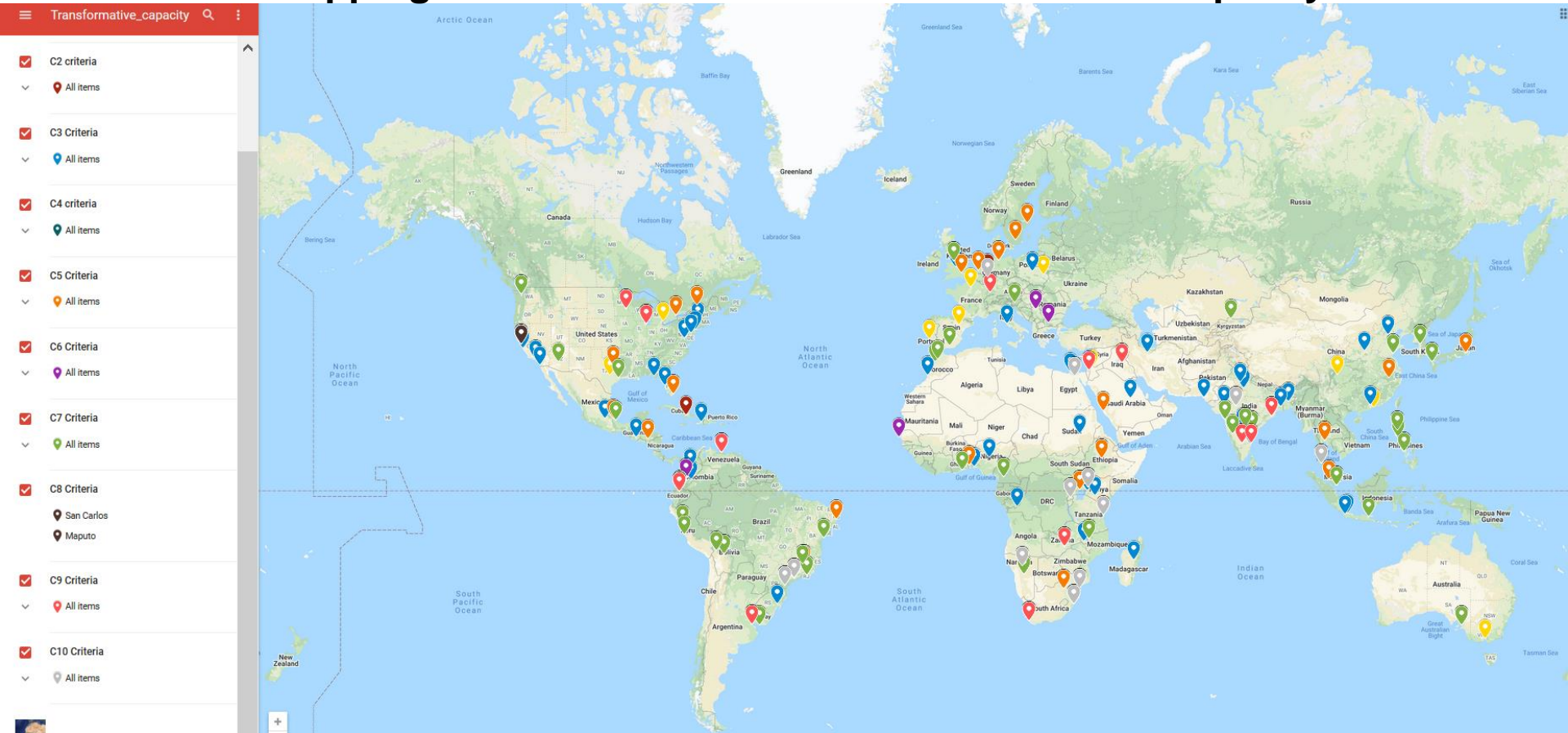
Transformative capacity

“Collective ability to develop processes and institutions to promote radical change processes for a sustainable urban future”



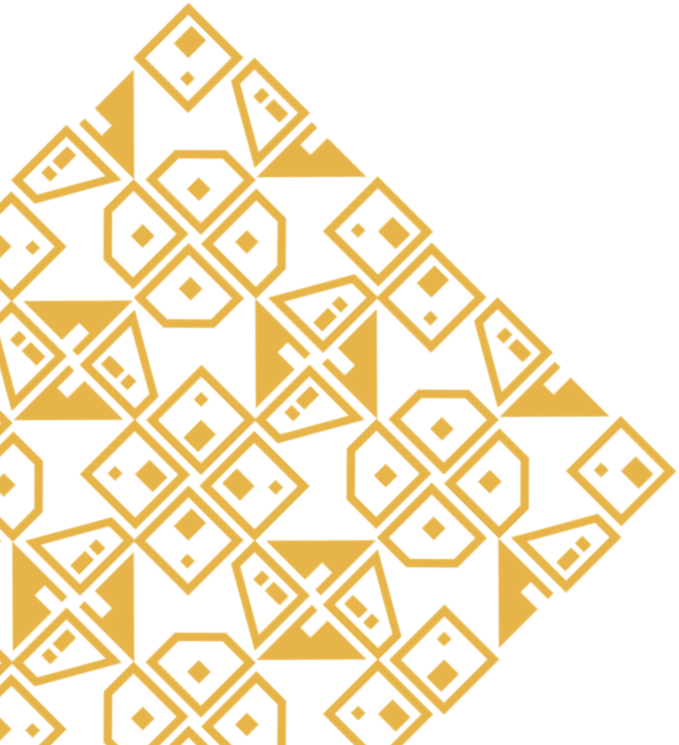


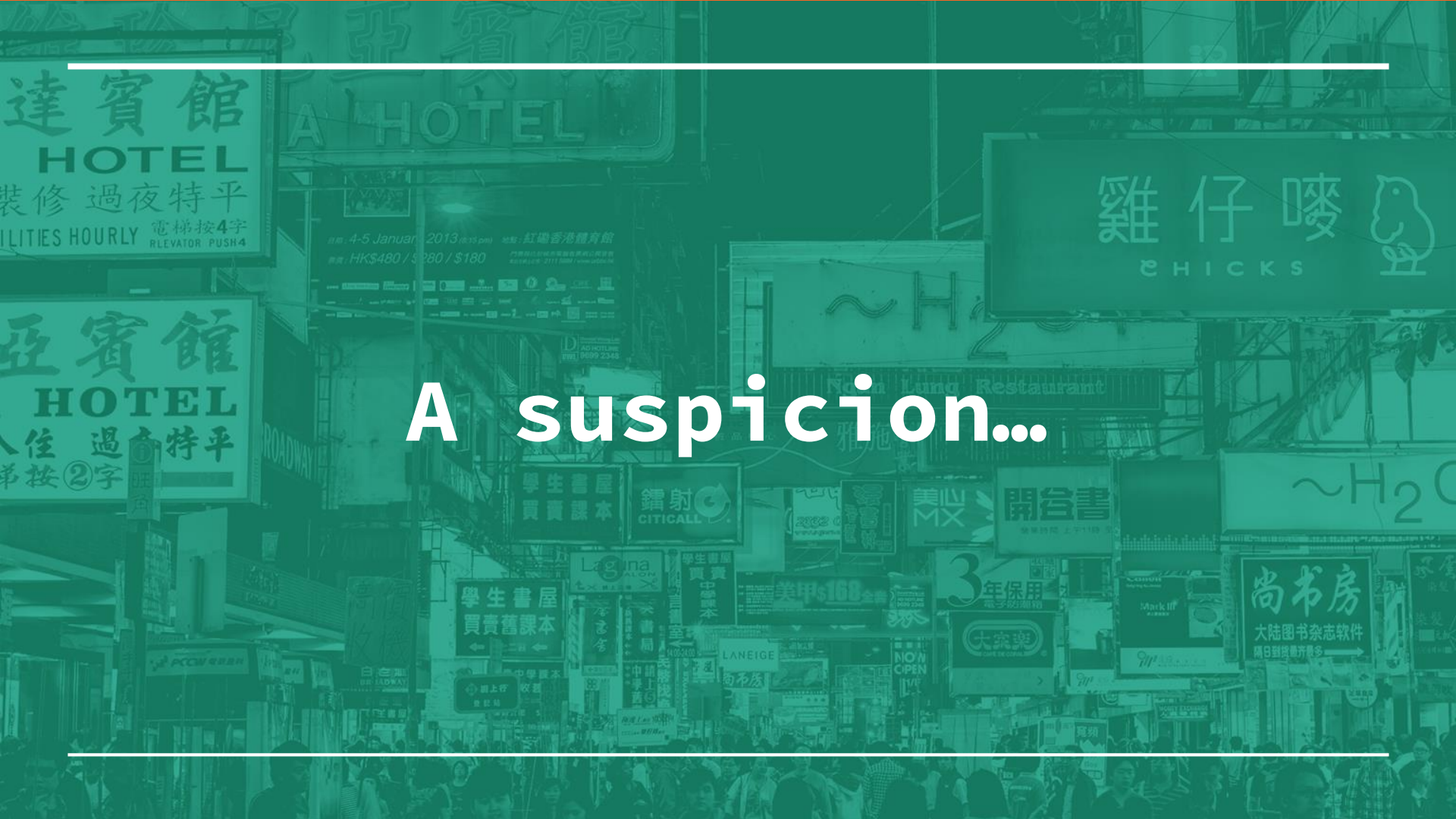
Mapping different dimensions of transformative capacity



Challenges to Transformative Capacity

- Is this an impossible menu of options?
 - Which local governments have capacity to develop transformative capacity?
- Conspicuous absence of social learning (only 3 examples)
 - Does it matter to local governments?
- To what extent is transformative capacity an enabler of social change rather than a means to reproduce existing paradigms anchored in western knowledge?
 - Is it a framework suited to a postcolonial context of climate action?





達賓館
HOTEL
裝修 過夜特平
ILITIES HOURLY 電梯按4字
ELEVATOR PUSH4

A HOTEL

雞仔嘜
CHICKS

亞賓館
HOTEL
入住 過夜特平
弟按②字

日期: 4-5 January, 2013 (共 15 個)
地點: 紅磡香港體育館
票價: HK\$480 / \$380 / \$180

A suspicion..

學生書屋
買賣課本
鐳射
CITICALL

美心
開合書

~H2O

學生書屋
買賣舊課本

學生書屋
買賣
中學書

3年保用
電子版雜誌

尚書房
大陸圖書雜誌軟件
隔日到貨量齊最多

LANEIGE

大家樂

NO OPEN

Mark III

高頻

DO NOT OBSTRUCT
FRANCE

Perspectives on settlements	Transition processes	Pathways	Strategies
As a system	Activation of specific elements enables the complete reconfiguration of the system	Alignment of different components and coordination of outcomes	Foster coordination, orchestration
As a process	Competing ideas of change involved in a political struggle for the definition of outcomes	Multiple trajectories interact with uncertain outcomes	Open up pathways, disruptive innovations



The politics of looking elsewhere...



[Home](#) [News](#) [About](#) [Futures](#)

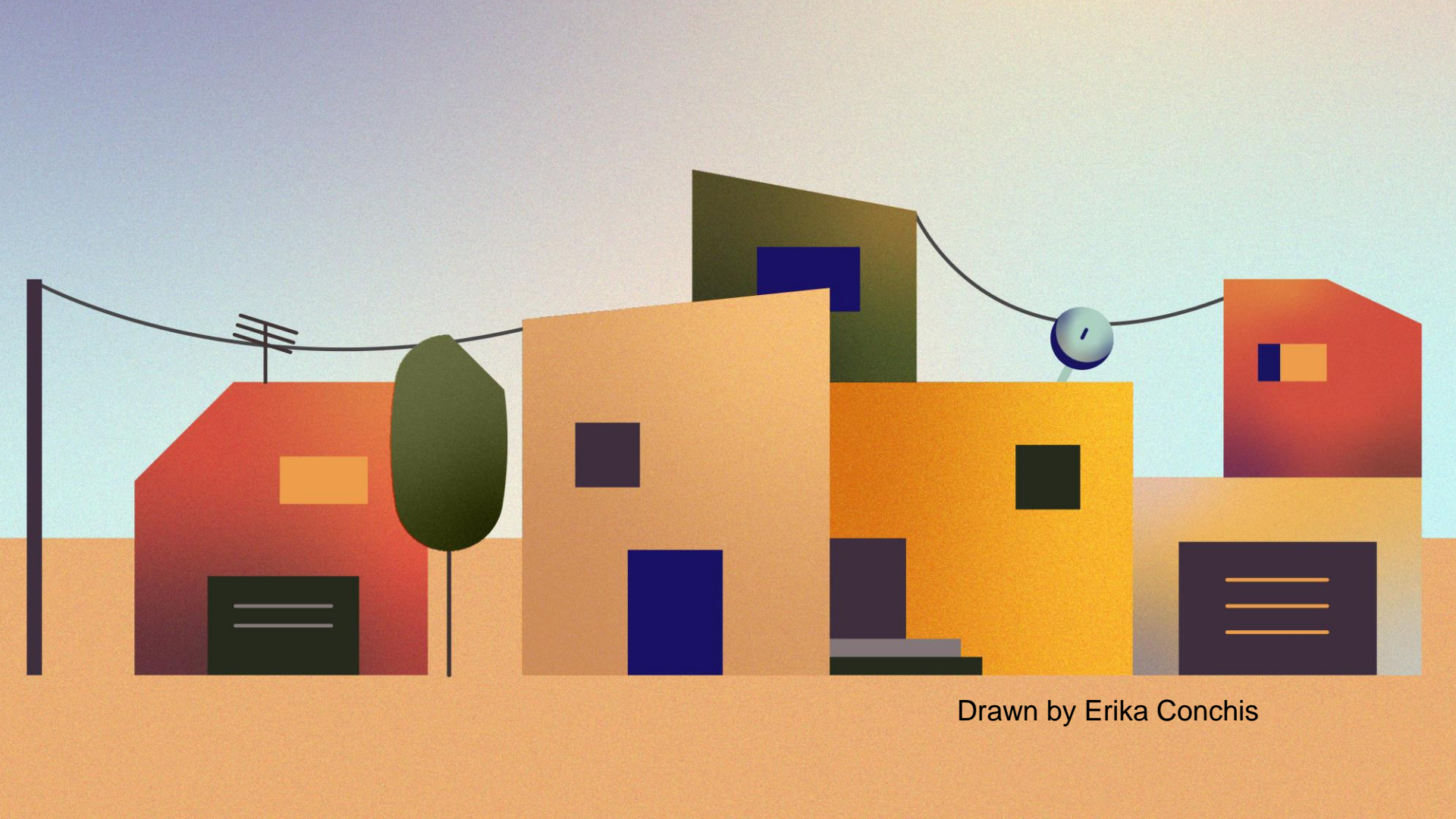


[Get In Touch!](#)



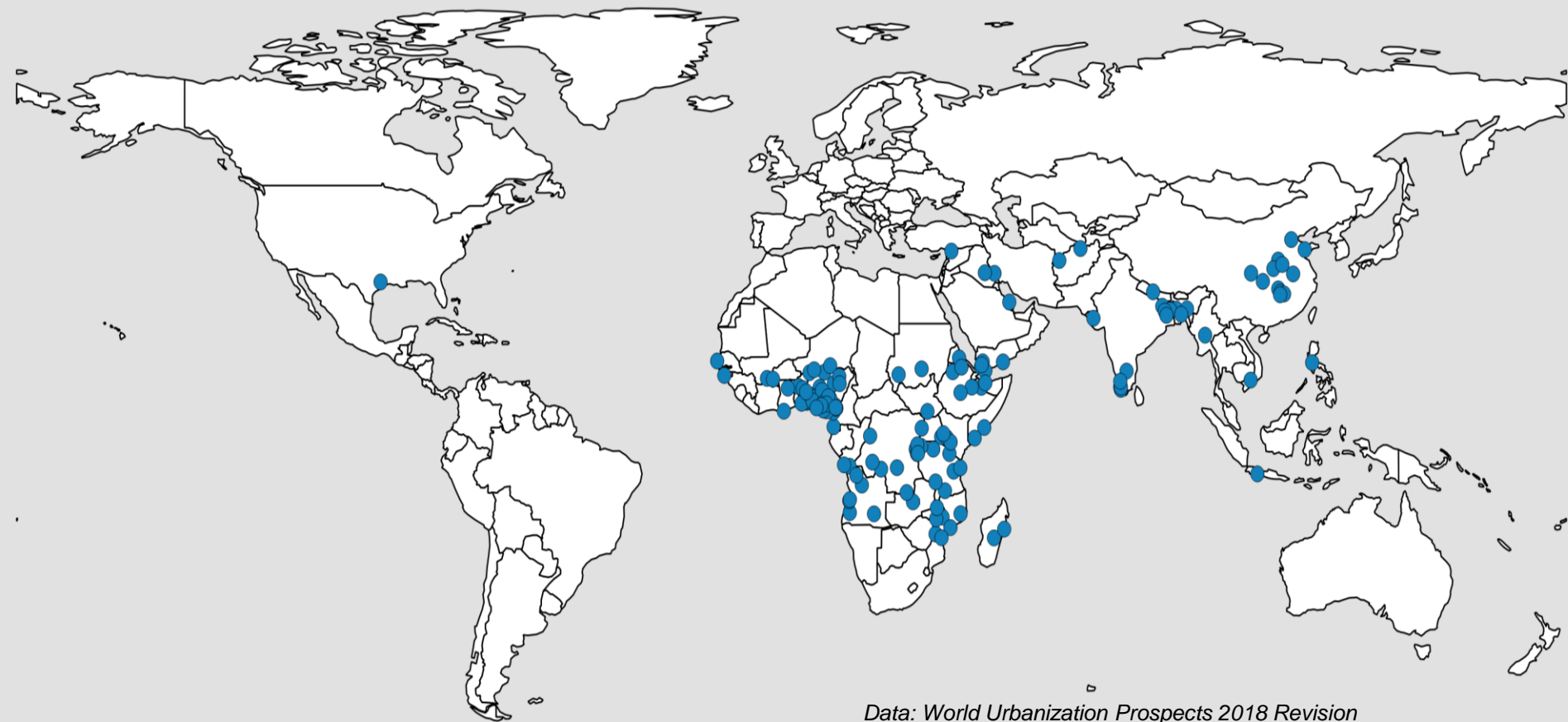
LO-ACT

Low Carbon Action
in Ordinary Cities



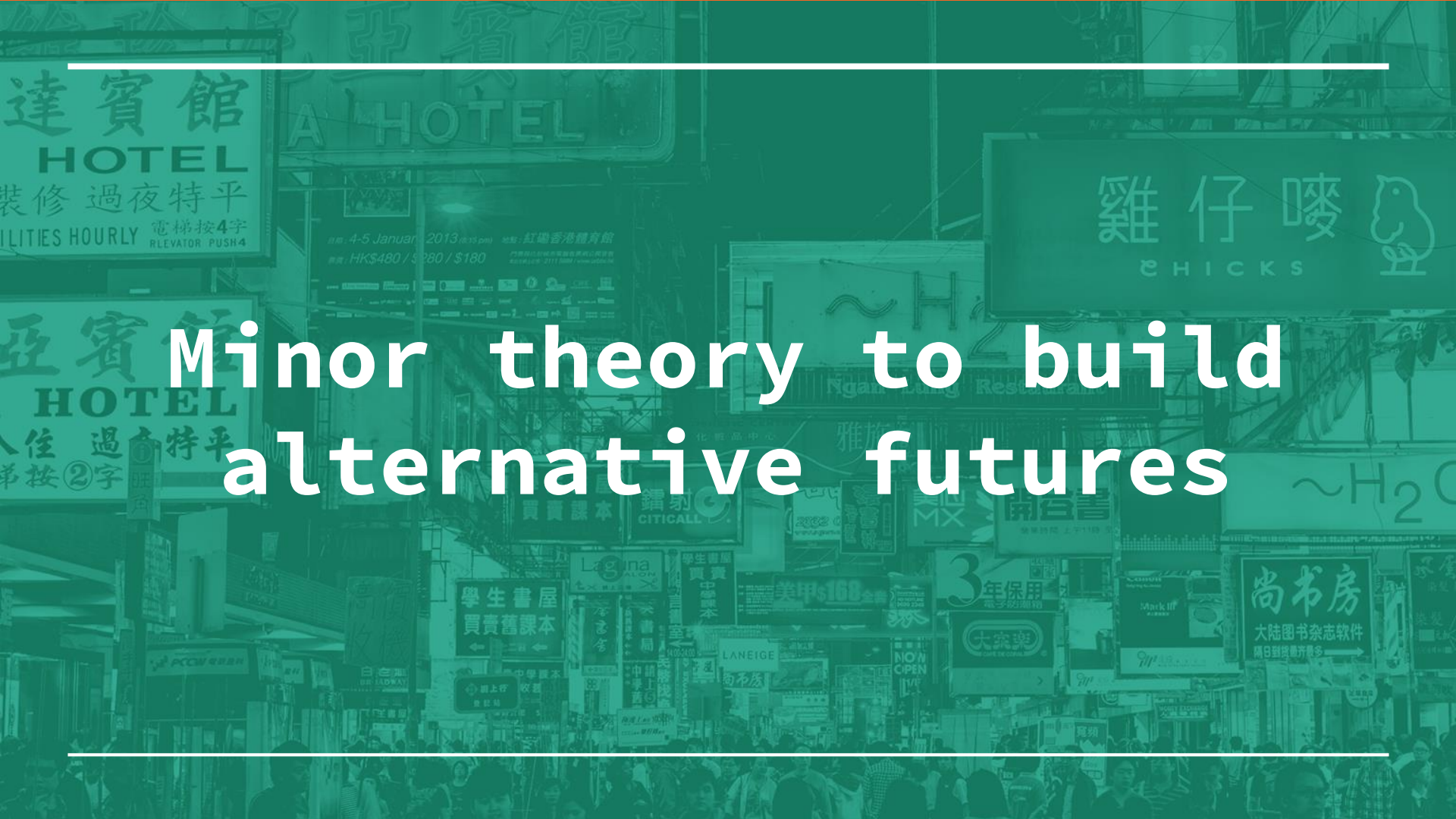
Drawn by Erika Conchis

Fastest growing cities under 1 million people





ENSHI PANORAMA By 图片上传者：吴显胜 (China) , CC BY 3.0,



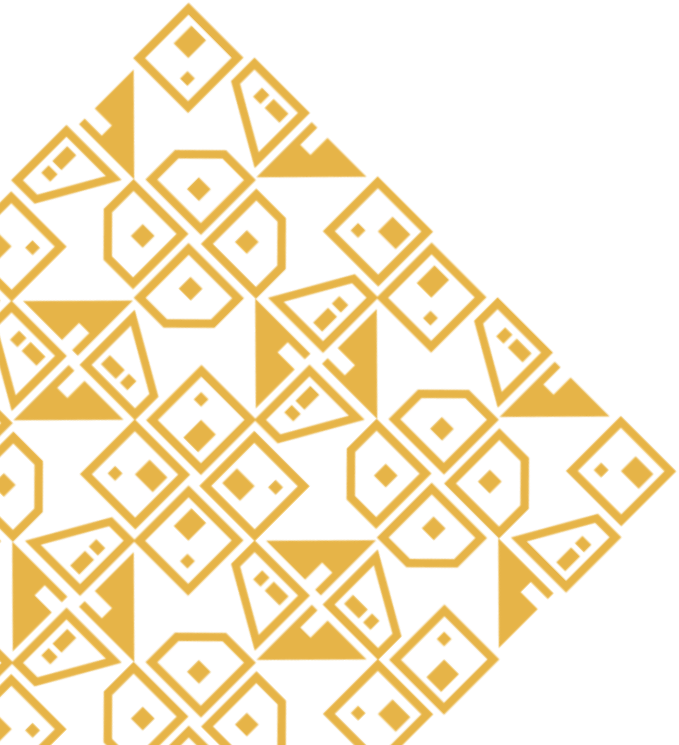
Minor theory to build alternative futures

A perennial search for minor theory

“Those working in new ways are caught in the middle—knowing, as Audre Lorde ... advised, that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house", but struggling to dismantle it anyway and to rebuild an alternative with a different set of tools. All the while, the 'master' barely notices.”

Then again, if we are so right, why do we care whether or not if the master notices? Is it not alright that he trudge on in his old ways while the world passes him by? I do not think so.

Cindi Katz, 1996



URBAN ENERGY LANDSCAPES







Thank you!

Urban Energy Landscapes

Vanesa Castán Broto



Just Sustainabilities



Urban Sustainability and Justice

Just Sustainabilities and Environmental Planning

Vanesa Castán Broto and Linda Westman