

Monitoring and Preventing

‘Socio-scientific imaginaries’ in transdisciplinary
sustainability research in Austria

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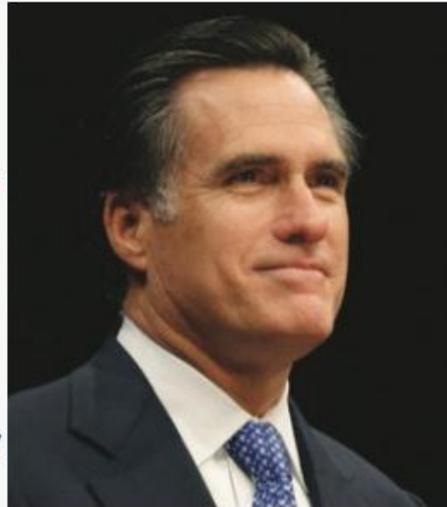
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About

One candidate has the experience to defeat Barack Obama, stop the reckless spending, and bring down our national debt. That candidate is Mitt Romney. Mitt Romney has an unquestionable record of cutting spending, reducing debt, and creating jobs.

He's the Republican candidate that can put our country back on the right path and the only one who can defeat Barack Obama. Mitt Romney has a strong record of fighting runaway spending:

- As Governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney **used his veto power more than 800 times** to stop the liberal Democratic-held state legislature.
- As Governor, Romney **eliminated a \$3 billion deficit** without borrowing money or raising taxes.
- By the end of his term as Governor, Romney created a **\$2 billion** rainy day fund.



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Structure of the talk

- Related debates
 - Theoretical frame
- Empirical observations
- Preliminary conclusions

- Studies concerned with innovation processes focus mainly on techno-scientific issues
- Additionally also processes of producing knowledge should be regarded as subject to innovation governance

‘Socio-scientific imaginaries’

“collectively imagined forms of social life and social order reflected in the design and fulfilment of nation-specific scientific and/or technological projects” (Jasanoff and Kim 2009: 120)

1. Imaginations of the future of society that shall be achieved
2. The role of science respectively the relation of science and society in achieving this attainable future

Research Questions

- How are attainable future forms of social life and social order imagined in the research funding program proVISION?
- How is the role of science in reaching this attainable future imagined?
- What are the possibilities, benefits but also the risks that are associated with policy-making in this area? What is at stake?

Material & Method

- Austrian funding scheme proVISION
 - Transdisciplinary sustainability research
- Program documents & related documents
 - 1st call 2004, 2nd call 2007, Research Principles, Website
 - Austrian Strategy for Sustainability Research (FORNE)
- ‘Transdisciplinarity as Culture and Practice’ at the Department of Social Studies of Science, University of Vienna



Knowledge for solving the most urgent problems

- Urgent environmental problems
- Environmental issues as threats on a
 - Temporal dimension
 - Spatial dimension
- 'Zukunftsfähigkeit' – Future-ability



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A new relation of science and society to meet the grand challenges

- Science and society as clearly separated spheres
- Science is supposed to leave its “ancestral place”

- Knowledge for ‘precautionary’ outlooks
- Knowledge to “influence (...) responsibly” current developments

Monitoring and preventing

- Knowledge for preventing
- Constant monitoring of possible effects of current actions

(Some preliminary) conclusions

- Imaginaries in science policy
- Complex interplay of positive visions and dystopian imaginations
 - Merging of scientific and political orderings in transdisciplinary sustainability research (in Austria?)

Thanks for your attention!