

# ID 1648 | WHAT ARE THE NEW MEGA PROJECTS? AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DIMENSIONS OF NEW LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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## 1 THE NEW MEGAPROJECTS

The spread of neo-liberal political and economic ideology and the proliferation of global capital have created new opportunities and challenges for cities everywhere (Sassen 2012). Within the urban planning discourse, it is generally assumed that globalization leads to the same type of transformations and urban development trends everywhere in the world. However, it cannot create a certain prototype for spatial development or a new spatial order for cities. Rather, it gives a variety of spatial patterns, also called "global urban forms". Recently, these forms have identified themselves spatially within a series of "mega-projects", their intensity being felt in today's global cities, north-American and west-European, but with a domino effect, especially in the cities situated at the periphery of these capitalist economies.

In the last two decades, we witness a renaissance and reinterpretation of "mega projects" within the global cities as an exclusive model for urban development (Swyngedow et al. 2004). In the European and American context, after a hiatus during the 1980s, many of these cities have responded to the economic pressure and the process of globalization through major projects and mixed-use developments to attain investment opportunities, building new CBDs for multi-national companies and new sites for living<sup>1</sup>. Total global megaproject spending is assessed at USD 6-9 trillion annually, or 8 percent of total global GDP, which denotes the biggest investment boom in human history. Never has systematic and valid knowledge about megaprojects therefore been more important to inform policy, practice, and public debate in this highly costly area of business and government. It is argued that the conventional way of managing megaprojects has reached a "tension point," where tradition is challenged and reform is emerging (Flyvbjerg, 2011).

As a response to the crisis of the comprehensive plan as the classic policy instrument of the Fordist age, the large, emblematic project has emerged as a viable alternative, allegedly combining the advantages of flexibility and targeted actions with a tremendous symbolic capacity. Essentially fragmented, this form of intervention goes hand in hand with an eclectic planning style where attention to design, detail, morphology, and aesthetics is paramount. The emblematic project captures a segment of the city and turns it into the symbol of the new restructured/ revitalized metropolis cast with a powerful image of innovation, creativity, and success. And yet, despite the rhetoric, the replacement of the plan by the project has not displaced planning from the urban arena. In fact, the literature reveals that in most examples there is a strong strategic component and a significant role for planning. However, in the process, there has been a drastic reorganization of the planning and urban policy-making structures and a rise of new modes of intervention, planning goals, tools, and institutions.

### 1.1 GENESIS AND DEFINITION OF MEGA PROJECTS

After WWII, the Fordist state engaged in a series of "mega projects" for the restructuring of urban tissue, the efforts to create a modern society with express ways and high rise buildings. Jane Jacobs (1961 pg. 25), ironically named those efforts and the city: "radiant garden city beautiful". Surpassing these critics on the left, critics on the right argue that these developments are an unnecessary intrusion of the forces of the government and have led to unjustified expropriations of private property. (Anderson 1964) Overcoming the social movements of 1960-70s, the restrictions of the government and the decentralization associated with neoliberalism, these types of developments unwind, but they do not totally disappear (Altshuler si Luberoff 2003).

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<sup>1</sup> Definition here of "mega projects" is a comprehensive one; it includes essentially extensive costs and procedures, reconstruction, regeneration, rehabilitation. The implementation expands within a long period, involving a multitude of actors from different milieus- public/ private. Still, a fundamental condition is the change of functions of the existing territory.

Megaprojects are large-scale, complex ventures that typically cost a billion dollars or more, take many years to develop and build, involve multiple public and private stakeholders, are transformational, and impact millions of people. Therefore, these developments are not just magnified versions of smaller projects; rather they are a completely different breed of projects in terms of their level of aspiration, lead times, complexity, and stakeholder involvement (Flyvbjerg, 2011).

Large-scale projects have a calamitous history of cost overrun: since the past 70 years, one out of nine projects have cost overrun. Flyvbjerg calls this phenomenon as the "iron law of mega projects", representing over budget and overtime. The "break-fix model" of megaproject management it is introduces as an explanation, therefore, these kind of developments are "easy to begin and difficult and expensive to stop" (White, 2012; also Cantarelli et al., 2010; Ross and Staw, 1993, Drummond, 1998).

One may argue, of course, as famously done by Hirschman (1967a: 12-13) with his theory of Hiding Hand, that if people knew in advance the real costs and challenges involved in delivering a large project, "they probably would never have touched it" and nothing would ever get built. Sawyer (1952: 199, 203) – in a study of early industrial infrastructure projects that he called a work "in praise of folly" – similarly identified what he called "creative error" in project development as, first, "miscalculation or sheer ignorance" of the true costs and benefits of projects and, second, such miscalculation being "crucial to getting an enterprise launched at all."--- "creative error" was key to building a number of large and historically important projects like the Welland Canal between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, the Panama Canal, the Middlesex Canal, the Troy and Greenfield Railroad, and early Ohio roads

However, these theories are in fact corrupting for megaproject thinking, both academically and at policy level. An optimistic cost estimate is low and leads to cost overrun, whereas an optimistic benefit estimate is high and results in benefit shortfalls. Thus errors of estimation do not cancel each other out, as Hirschman would have it; the exact opposite happens, errors generally reinforce each other. Flyvbjerg (2009: 352) call this "inverted Darwinism", i.e., the "survival of the unfittest".

The concept- mega project- assumes two main typologies: major constructions with symbolic value for the city (Hamnett si Shoval 2003); huge development sites, complex in result (mixed-uses, smart technologies etc.) (Orueta si Fainstein 2009)

The existing new wave of mega projects does not represent a disappearance of old types of large-scale urban interventions, the major infrastructure (dams and reservoirs, river diversions, power plants, etc.), which are closely related to urban development. These, together with the construction of highways, tunnels, high speed trains are connecting the urban areas (Naredo 2006) and are part of the contemporary development model.

Depending on the type of the intervention, the new mega projects can be included in one or more of the following categories: urban waterfront regeneration; re-use and transformation of industrial sites<sup>1</sup>; construction of new transportation infrastructure or extensions of the existing ones; renewal of old city centers and close neighborhoods; usually for attracting the middle-upper class (Zukin 1998; Loures 2001);

But what drives the megaproject boom described above? Why are megaprojects so attractive to decision makers? The answer may be found in the so-called "four sublimes" of megaproject management: political (megaprojects are manifest, garner attention, and lend an air of proactiveness to their prooters); technological ( is a term variously attributed to Miller (1965) and Marx (1967) to describe the positive historical reception of technology in American culture during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but Frick (2008) introduced the term to the study of megaprojects and here describes the technological sublime as the rapture engineers and technologists get from building large and innovative projects with their rich opportunities for pushing the boundaries for what technology can do); economic (given the enormous budgets for megaprojects there are ample funds to go around for all, including contractors, engineers, architects, consultants, construction and transportation workers, bankers, investors, landowners, lawyers, and developers. jobs etc); aesthetic (is the pleasure designers and people who appreciate good design get from building, using, and looking at something very large that is also iconically beautiful, like SanFrancisco's Golden Gate bridge or Sydney's Opera House)

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<sup>1</sup> Generally, these include residential areas with a more or less office space, hotels, malls, conventions center, museums etc.

There is a striking physical similarity of the development of space- involvement of innovative design forms and international architects; and of the strategies and schemes of involving the private sector- the orientation towards real estate trends. These aspects are stated to be passive towards the geographic and political context. However, mega projects differentiate themselves by the way they combine social and environmental goals with the economical ones, the planning process and impact, reflecting in the same time the level of commitment that the host city has towards the concept of social equity (Fainstein 2009).

Hirschman (1995: vii, xi) calls such projects "privileged particles of the development process" and points out that often they are "trait making," that is, they are designed to ambitiously change the structure of society, as opposed to smaller and more conventional projects that are "trait taking," i.e., they fit into pre-existing structures and do not attempt to modify these. The framework of "exceptionality" associated with these initiatives favors a more autonomous, if not autocratic, dynamic marked by special plans and projects that relegate statutory norms and procedures to a secondary and subordinated place. "Exceptionality" is a fundamental feature of the new urban policy, based on the primacy of project-based initiatives over regulatory plans and procedures. These changes involve, as stated before, among other things, the emergence of new policy tools, actors, and institutions, and they have important consequences for urban policy-making in general and for local democracy in particular, considering the increasing inequality in access to decision-making.

These kind of projects often take place within fragmented and entrepreneurial forms of governance ( Harvey 1989; Healey 1997; Gordon 1997a, 1997b; Feldman 1999; Feinstein 2001; Granath 2005; Butler 2007) represented by public-private partnerships, in a societal environment of increased capital mobility and inter-urban competition (Malone 1996). Hence, it is argued, that mega projects have been examples of new governance styles and policy targets, but also object of intensive local planning debates and conflicts based on different actors (authorities, planners, residents, environmental groups, developers, etc.) holding an equal number of views (Hoyle, 2002) which are often difficult to reconcile. Brenner and Theodore (2004) argue that an important analysis aspect to identify the impact is the role of the state in these kinds of interventions (provision of subsidies, land or special treatment in the tax, etc.) and the level of involvement and its loyalty towards the goals for the public.

## **2 URBAN WATERFRONT REGENERATION IN ISTANBUL: HALIC/ THE GOLDEN HORN**

### **2.1 CONTEXT: PLANNING IN GLOBAL ISTANBUL AND DYNAMICS OF URBAN REGENERATION**

Since the 1980s in Turkey's milieu, national policy intended to make Istanbul the focal point of a neo-liberal strategy approach to integrate the Turkish economy with global markets. This was visible also in the accelerating transformation of urban space, making it the showcase of the country's new era of internationalism (Enlil 2011; Uzun 2010, Çınar, C et al, 2006; İnalÇekiç and Gezici, 2005; Keyder, 2005; Karadag, 2010). Under this context, during the last thirty five years, investments have been located within the city in order to change the local landscape pushing it towards the global city image. Therefore, the city has been expanding with multiple mega-projects and naturally, a strong representative symbol of the global, emerged: waterfront regenerations in the valuable "soft" space of inner city usually modifying natural coast profiles.

In order to understand the planning processes of the regeneration of Halic's waterfront, a reflection is done upon the peculiarities of Istanbul's urban regeneration policies and the institutional framework at city and national level that have facilitated it. Urban regeneration is steered as a tool for development within a special legal framework (Law of Conservation- Law No. 2863) and while the purpose of the projects seem to be in the name of upgrading the built environment and improving the living conditions of the poor, the top-down approach, reduce the projects to just transformation of physical space and neglecting the social, economic and environmental dimensions, which along with the unwillingness of government to allow grassroots participation in the planning process become the focus of discontent and protest.

## 2.2 DECISION MAKING PROCESS: LATEST URBAN WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT ALONG HALIC/ THE GOLDEN HORN

The first attempt to officially create a plan to regenerate the area of Halic, Camialti and Taskizak shipyards is in 2011, when all three shipyards come under the authority of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM). The final goal is to create a comprehensive urban regeneration project and reconnect Beyoglu district with its waterfront along the Halic.

Being declared as a Conservation Area, the development is managed by the Department of Historic Environment Protection (DHEP, in Turkish Tarihi Cevre Koruma Mudurlugu is the representative body of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in the areas declared for conservation. It is empowered by the Decision No. 313 in 04/06/1999 and has a management role within the project, making sure that the project it is accomplished in line with the requirements of the Law of Conservation), which focuses on the restoration of the historical buildings on the site and change of the current functions in new ones according to the needs of the citizens. DHEP designates through a bid the task of making and designing the plans to Istanbul Metropolitan Planning (IMP- Bimtas S.A., is a semi-private company and also a research center for Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. It has long lasting collaborations with academia, neighborhood associations and wide experience in planning in Istanbul, being also it is the company that made the last Master plan of Istanbul 2009 and many other important development projects).

In line with the requirements of the Law of Conservation, the Conservation Board No. II is added to the decision-making process. This Board is linked directly and represents the interest of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, has great power on the project's outcomes, evaluating the plans and being able to cancel them.

The plans done for a preliminary project ( in Turkish "avan proje") start on January 2011 and finish in June 2011, but without any request for participation from the citizens side and no reflection on the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed functions for the area are: cultural, recreational, social services and commerce functions and are approved by the Conservation Board No. II in July 2012. The next step in planning process after the preliminary project, according to Main Law of Construction (Law No.3194), is the implementation project (in Turkish: "uygulama projesi") which did not continue with all three shipyards. Here a shift in the governance forms of the project changes the planning process along with rising concern on the project's future outcomes: just one of the shipyards went further to the implementation phase under the name of Halic Shipyard Conservation Project, when the area of the other two shipyards is being privatized. Holding the ownership of the land of Camialti and Taskizak shipyards, the Ministry of Transport Maritime Affairs and Communications (MTMAC) decides to withdraw the project from the authority of IMM.

In 2013, a new urban waterfront regeneration project is declared for privatization and classified by the Prime-minister Tayyip Erdoğan as: "miraculous project" ("muhteşem proje") which appears with the name: Halic Port Project. The urban waterfront regeneration project is initiated by the MTMAC, under the Law of Privatization, known as Built Operate and Transfer (Yap Islet Devret- Law. No. 3996) and is approved by Higher Council of Privatization (HCP); this also being possible because, according to the Law of Privatization, since 1994, the authority to make and approve plans concerning estates included in the privatization program was transferred from local authorities to the HCP.

The area is given to auction and is announced in the Official Paper (Resmi Gazete, page 28646) on 13 May 2013. The tender is taken on 2 July 2013 by "Sembol International Investment", "Ekopark Tourism" and "Fine Otelcilik Girişim Group"(Sembol Uluslararası Yatırım-Ekopark Turizm-Fine Otelcilik Girişim Grubu) for 49 years: 4 years for building and 45 years for usage. The requirements of the project are given beforehand to the investors, being decided by the MTMAC and approved by the HPC. These are: "two yacht ports, two five stars hotels, small shops, offices, museums, culture and a congress center". Taking into account these foreseen outcomes of the project, it can be argued that this development is not designed for the interest of all citizens of Istanbul or the neighboring community, but rather for tourists and high-middle income class. The promised outcomes of the project are presented in the media through the political discourse as the only information channel for citizens and therefore raised a big wave of criticism from academia and other expert's side, questioning the way decision is being taken.

Therefore, the planning process is lacking transparency and the Privatization Law gives central government power to privatize public land without any consideration of the civil society. Also local municipality has been taken out from the planning process and also the 1/1.000 plans that should be done

for the Camialti and Taskizak shipyards are developed by the private investor, this raising questions concerning the conservation of the shipyards.: The only actor from the government side having decision power over the outcomes of this project remains the Conservation Board No.II.

In contrast, the area of Halic shipyard is developed further by IMM within the Halic Shipyard Conservation Project. Major actors in the planning process here are: IMM, the initiator of the project, owner of the land and also the provider of the finance in realizing it; the DHEP managing the project, having mainly the responsibility to assure the conservation and restoration of the historical monuments in the area; the Conservation Board No. II, representative of Ministry of Culture and Tourism, having also the main responsibility to assure the conservation and restoration of the monuments; IMP in charge of the plans and design of the project and also IDO (Sehir Hatlari) - a private company of public transport on water, having currently the tender over the area of Halic shipyard.

In the interviews with representatives from the planning department of IMP, the team planning Halic Shipyard Conservation Project, it is revealed that the outcomes of the project will take into consideration the previous suggestions and that the project will respect the 1/1000 Plans of Beyoglu in terms of conservation of the shipyards, along with the recommendations of implementing cultural and recreational activities. Moreover creation of green spaces is emphasized, the vision being to open the waterfront for the broad public, the citizens of Istanbul. Proposed strategies concerning the development are: "conservation of the buildings, enhancing the transportation in the area, introduction of recreational and exposition areas, bringing the city to the waterfront, protection of green spaces and ensure the participation of the local people of the area."

However, the project contains no analysis of impact assessment such as: environmental, economic or social, this showing the physical focus of urban waterfront regeneration in planning, putting in doubt the success and purpose of this project. There is also no information provided for the broader public about the project or the request for any collaboration from the citizen's side. The chance to challenge decision making is possible at the end of the project. As all projects made by municipality, also this one is presented to the community at the end of the planning process, plans are hanged in the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality building and within 30 days the interested parties have the right to contest the project through court. This leads to questioning the outcomes of the project because of this type of non-transparent planning process that leaves no input from the citizen's perspective.

Therefore, as seen and criticized in other examples of projects along the Halic, the project could also potentially enhance existing socio-economic problems, a matter that will be presented in the following part of the article, by analyzing the neighboring community in rapport to the project.

Looking at the current state of the transformation of the three shipyards, there are two urban waterfront regeneration projects with different governance forms. The area of Camialti and Taskizak shipyards is under the authority of a private investor and it can be argued if the project will benefit the broader public of Istanbul. The area of Halic shipyard remained under the authority of the government, but the planning process is un-transparent and the project is not shared or questioned within the interested public. In an attempt to compare the projects from the perspective of the information available, paradoxically, the Halic Port Project is much more known by the public than the project made by the municipality because of the exposure in the media. However there is a major gap of good quality information for citizens regarding both projects.

This was reflected in the questioners conducted with the neighboring community, academia, planners from Istanbul Metropolitan Planning and citizens participating to forums organized by the representatives of the resistance to the regeneration of the shipyards. An urban social movement appeared on 23 August 2013 under the name of Halic Resistance (Halic Dayansimasi). Other opposing parties are:

Bedrettin Neighborhood Association, Chamber of Architects, Chamber of Urban Planners, Assembly of Architects and Engineers, Chamber of Shipbuilding Engineers, Academia and other urban social movements.

### **2.3 THE STRUGGLE OF THE NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY: BEDRETTIN NEIGHBORHOOD**

Bedrettin Neighborhood is a low income neighborhood (according to median monthly household income 2010) at the shores of Halic, in Beyoglu District. It was strongly connected to Halic, Camialti and Taskizak shipyards, being occupied by blue collar workers. Therefore, the neighborhood was much affected by the clearance process done by mayor Dalan in 1983, the first regeneration along Halic, its current problematic economic condition being outcome of the forced deindustrialization process of that time. Today, approximately 1500 people live in Bedrettin Neighborhood and are mostly divided as retired workers from the shipyards, people coming from Anatolian side of Turkey during the industrialization period and a considerable group of roma minorities.

Bedrettin Neighborhood was declared as Renewal Area in 2005 and, according to Law of Renewal, the neighborhood will go under a process of regeneration which will put in danger of displacement the poor citizens. Although 80% of the citizens living there, own their land, the houses built are not in good condition, being classified as "gecekondu", squatter housing, and have to be renewed and improved for their safety, this being a hard task for the majority of the community which is poor.

The reason for opposition, from the citizen's perspective was not only the fear of displacement, but also the difference between the new proposed plans and their actual needs. In the questioners conducted during the meetings of Halic Resistance, besides the fear of displacement answers also as: "to learn the truth", "because this project is being used strategically against us" were given.

Although, the citizens of Bedrettin Neighborhood are against the Halic Shipyard Conservation Project, outcomes of the questioners regarding what they would need in the future development were: green spaces, culture and education facilities, keeping the working shipyards, health facilities. In the discussions with the community, especially with the group of mothers, mostly staying home and taking care of their children, the need of closer public space and green areas was emphasized. It was found that families go to other parks along the Halic and make barbeques or just bring their children to play, this being the only recreational activity for these families. An intriguing vision of the children is the one of the "fisherman", a symbol of the waterfront of Istanbul which should not be blurred in the landscape of waterfront development for global economic gain given by projects in name of tourism and consumption.

Taking into account the vulnerable position of the neighborhood in terms of economic situation, the ongoing gentrification process at Halic's waterfront and the renewal project in the agenda of the government, it can be argued that Halic Shipyard Conservation Project will contribute to this picture considerably, creating social and economic impacts on the community. The community of Bedrettin Neighborhood is an important actor being the most affected by the project, but also by its potential to give inputs to the project. Due to the lack of consideration of this neighborhood in the planning process the true benefiting outcomes of the project will not be achieved.

### **2.4 GOVERNANCE DYNAMICS AND RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITIONS OF THE ACTORS**

Relationships of the actors are "crucial in understanding the direction of the planning processes." (Nuissl and Heinrichs 2010). The relationships were established as outcome of the interviews conducted by the researcher and through participatory observation. When mapping the relationships, there are two clusters of actors that do not come together, this situations are reflected on the clash of interests and gap between civil society representatives and the government. One group represents the actors involved directly in the planning process and the other represents the strong opposition. The first ones has hierarchical vertical relationships by territorial responsibility of different governmental bodies and market based relationships by contractual agreements. The other group in opposition to the project is represented by collaborative and horizontal relationships of the non-governmental organizations, social movements and other civil society representatives.

Analyzing the actors in opposition and the horizontal network-like relations, overlapping interconnections among them can be observed. The boundaries between these actors are hard to be defined as they cooperate and interconnect with each other rapidly, using innovative means of communication in exchanging of opinions and in deciding common action. When the main actors from opposition, and ones involved in the planning process are considered for their relationship, there is a long lasting conflict between them which resulted from the interviews conducted with representatives of both sides, this



making also harder for the two groups to come together. It can be argued that even though the resistance is engaging with the community into a fight against the urban regeneration agenda of the government, undertaking an advocacy planning role, it is also creating a barrier between state and citizens.

## 2.6 CONCLUSIONS

At the first glance, urban waterfront regeneration in the context of Istanbul reveals the same features of the popular contested cases of North and Western examples. The privileged governance structures identified in the literature review of urban waterfront regeneration projects aiming economical gain over the conception of a new city image and planning focusing on mostly physical transformation, ignoring the social problems of the neighboring sites and not taking the opportunity to resolve them can be seen also in the case study.

However, the form in which these outcomes reveal themselves, are different. Much of the literature on urban waterfront regeneration warns about the entrepreneurial governance forms, the private-public partnerships and the active role of private sector in the development of the projects, which lead to displacement of the communities, gentrification and other negative impacts. In the context of Istanbul, the leading factors are an entrepreneurial government and also a national policy on urban regeneration designated by the central government. In contrast with other urban waterfront regeneration projects around the world, which reveal citizens struggle with displacement, job opportunities, social housing opportunities and public space at waterfront as reasons for opposition, the case study presents also other encompassing motivations. The strong and constantly growing opposition is also part of a leading strategy of the citizens of Istanbul to get back the rights to the city. This is owed to long term accumulation of tensions facing the current urban planning practices in Istanbul, Turkey. The resistance, therefore, is not outcome of the particular regeneration of Halic shipyard or the privatization of the other two shipyards, Camialti and Taskizak shipyards (part of Halic Shipyards- Tersane-i Amire Arsenal), but rather of a bigger picture of urban regeneration projects done in Istanbul.

Hence, there is a waterfront regeneration project made for public interest, but the rights of the future users of the space, of the neighboring community and mostly of the citizens of Istanbul are in this way lost behind a neo-liberal agenda of the central and local government, un-transparent planning processes and the fight of the strong opposition parties gaining ground of governance landscape.

## 3 PICTURES

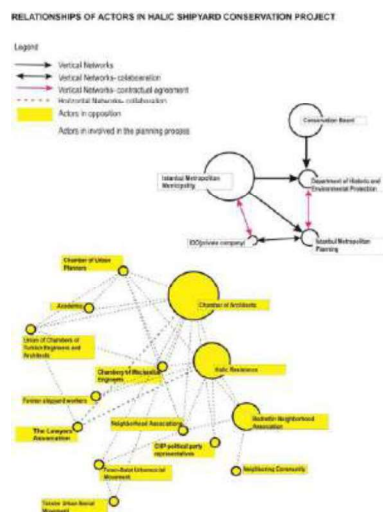


Figure 2: Relations among actors in Halic Shipyard Conservation Project; Source: author (adapted after computer mapping with graphcommons: <http://graphcommons.com/graphs/1417>)

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## **ID 1664 | GREEN GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION TO SUSTAINABILITY: SUPPLEMENTATION OR CONTRADICTION?**

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### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The decisive impact of mankind on ecology from global to local scales has resulted in describing the current epoch as 'Anthropocene' (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000: 17). In this sense mankind is considered 'a major geological force' (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000: 18) which will continue to shape natural processes in the millennia to come. Thus, developing sustainable and inclusionary systems (Sachs 2015: 9) becomes 'one of the great future tasks of mankind' (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000: 18).

Global development and environmental issues such as famine, illiteracy, the lack of access to clean water as well as global climate change, soil degradation and deforestation are two sides of the same coin (WCED,1987: 12-16): They are the result of spatially and temporally short-sighted actions and decisions (Nelson, 2010: 497) which have led to resource intensive practices, processes and systems that in sum exceed natural regeneration rates and result in megatrends that threaten human lives, biodiversity and ecosystems (WBGU, 2011: 33-45). Current trends of energy production and consumption and 'the enormous and continually growing use of natural resources' (Haberl et al., 2011: 5) represent an unsustainable societal trajectory which will further increase the speed and magnitude of climate change (Haberl et al., 2011: 5-8).

It becomes evident that sustainable development cannot be a question of iterative changes and technical adaptation to a changing natural environment. Rather, it requires the transformation of major societal systems and processes such as production and consumption, mobility and land-use patterns as result of an approach shared and promoted by the majority of current society. In other words, a transformation to sustainability is required. In order to realize this demand for fundamental societal change, the transformation has to occur in the three pillars our society is based on: energy systems, urban areas as main emitters of greenhouse gasses and global land-use systems (WBGU, 2011: 48) which can also be identified as the main fields of intervention to pursue broad societal change (WBGU, 2011: 265).

The spatial patterns of cities and city regions are urban systems which consume vast amounts of land and resources that exceed natural regeneration rates while degrading the environment. Furthermore, the vulnerability of cities and regions to climate change impacts and other biophysical and societal stressors such as the degradation of ecosystems and poverty (IPCC, 2014: 182) are consequences of long existing unsustainable societal structures and processes.

The concept of Green Growth intends to promote sustainable development through a more efficient use of natural resources and the application of green economies and technologies. It is considered to be a suitable approach to practically promote and implement sustainable development. This is reflected in