

**Considerations Concerning the Transfer of Urban Environmental and
Planning Policies From Germany to the United States**

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Abstract

This paper addresses an apparent knowledge vacuum in the U.S. in the area of international urban environmental planning and the transfer of urban environmental planning practices. This gap is characterized by a dearth of understanding about the process of transfer and adaptation of environmental and urban planning policies into the U.S. from overseas in general, and from Germany in particular. Little is available or has been articulated about the conditions that support or inhibit the voluntary transfer of urban environmental policies into the U.S. and the outcomes. Improving understanding of cross-national transfer of urban environmental policies from countries such as Germany may strengthen the testing and application of appropriate and beneficial programs to heal urban environments in the U.S.

This dissertation concerns itself with governmental urban environmental policies, ideas and lessons which have evolved in Germany and are candidates for potential voluntary transfer into the U.S. The intention of this dissertation is to shed light on the process of voluntary policy transfer of urban environmental and planning policies from Germany to the United States. The specific research questions addressed in this dissertation include: 1) In the context of the voluntary transfer, is the acquisition and use of imported information a more rational or more an anarchic process?; 2) What factors enhance or limit the voluntary transfer of urban environmental planning policies from Germany to the United States?; 3) Are there identifiable effects of

voluntary transfer of urban environmental planning policies from Germany to the United States?

This dissertation concludes that voluntary transfer of German urban environmental and planning policies is a relatively anarchic process. The search and testing of policies from Germany to the U.S. is not often conducted in purpose-driven or goal-oriented contexts. This dissertation also posits that voluntary transfer of German urban environmental and planning policies relies on determined policy entrepreneurs with cosmopolite qualities who bridge environmental and planning communities in both countries. It also suggests that the predominant outcomes of harvesting urban environmental and planning policies are soft transfers of ideas and concepts rather than hard transfers of laws and regulations. Finally, it is suggested that cross-national policy transfer is a “knowledge trail” comprised of unstructured acquisition of information and intuitive learning characteristics, followed by almost parallel implementation, confirmation and decision processes.

Dedication

To my wife, Amy, and my three daughters, Eliza, Mia and Victoria.

I know that this dissertation could never ever have been written without your patience and love.

I love all of you more than I will ever be able to express through words!

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“I do not seek, I find.”

Pablo Picasso

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