

URBAN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE: ARE WE MISSING THE POINT?

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Outline

- What is the point of urban climate governance?
- Telling governance tales
- Looking for governance in unlikely places
- Urban climate experiments
- Concluding comments

What is the point of urban climate governance?



Its the city, stupid....

- Cities as critical sites for mitigation and adaptation
- Urban efforts to address climate change have gathered pace over the past two decades

What is the point of urban climate governance?

- Evaluations of the direct effect on GHG emissions and climate resilience show progress but limited impacts
- Indirect benefits are being realised – but the co-benefits are uncertain (and potentially uneven)
- Persistent sense of a gap between rhetoric and reality



Solar water heaters have been installed in houses in Dicalino Cabral in Betim.

Source: ICLEI Case Study 112 July 2010

Governance Tales I: more of the good stuff

- Knowledge
- Institutional co-ordination
- Policy integration
- Resources
- Participation
- Partnership



Governance Tales II: Of political economy

A very old story...

- Conflict between climate change and development as usual
- Conflicts between different actors and interest groups in the city

... and a new version

- Making carbon economies – bringing together growth and climate change
- Growing involvement of the private sector in urban climate governance

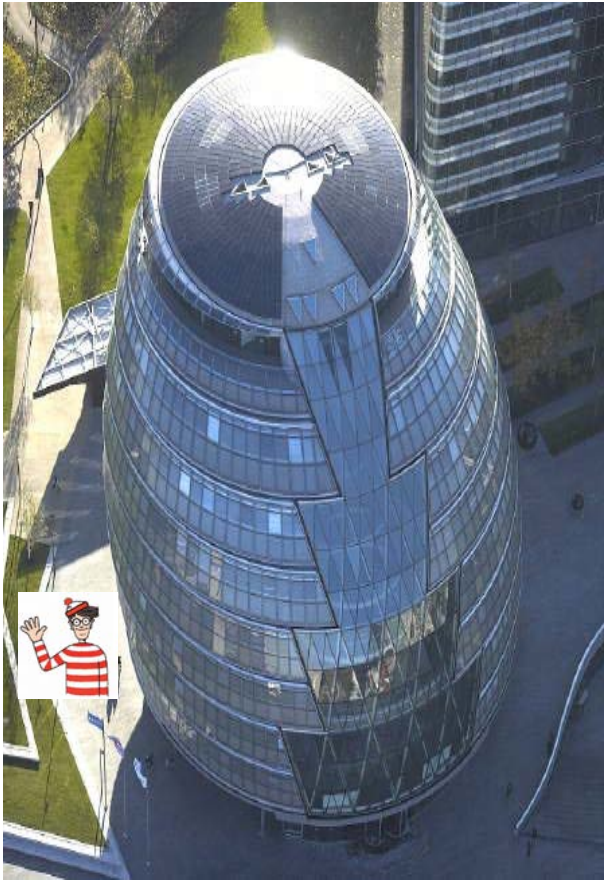
A new politics - carbon control?

“the coming era of carbon control will alter the strategic context for urban and regional management in ways that go beyond the largely voluntaristic carbon reduction strategies so far pursued by activist authorities”
(While et al. 2009pp. 86-87)

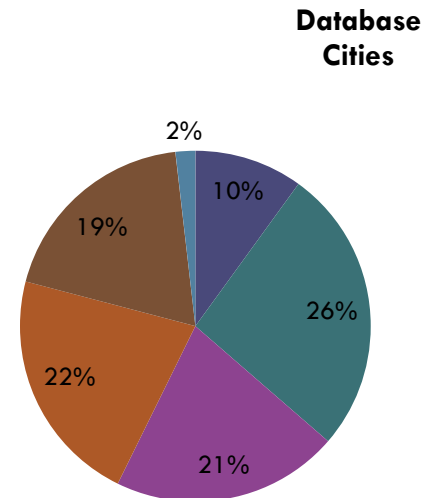
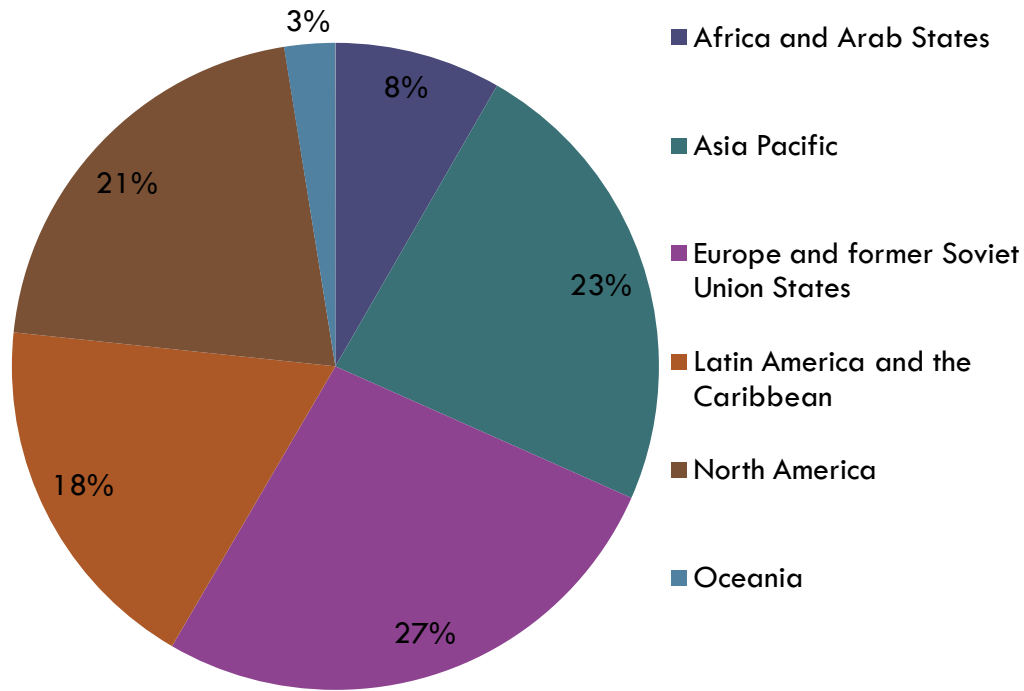
Governance Tales III: assembling the will to improve?

- Governance a process underpinned by “the will to improve: the attempt to direct conduct or intervene in social processes to produce desired outcomes and avert undesired ones” (Murray Li 2007: 264).
- Operates through ‘rationalities’ through which object of governing becomes known and ‘technologies’ techniques, tools, procedures which ‘both make rationalities “visible” and permit their extension through time and space’ (Murdoch 2000: 505).
- Achieved through aligning social and material elements into the ‘right disposition of things’ to achieve desired outcomes.

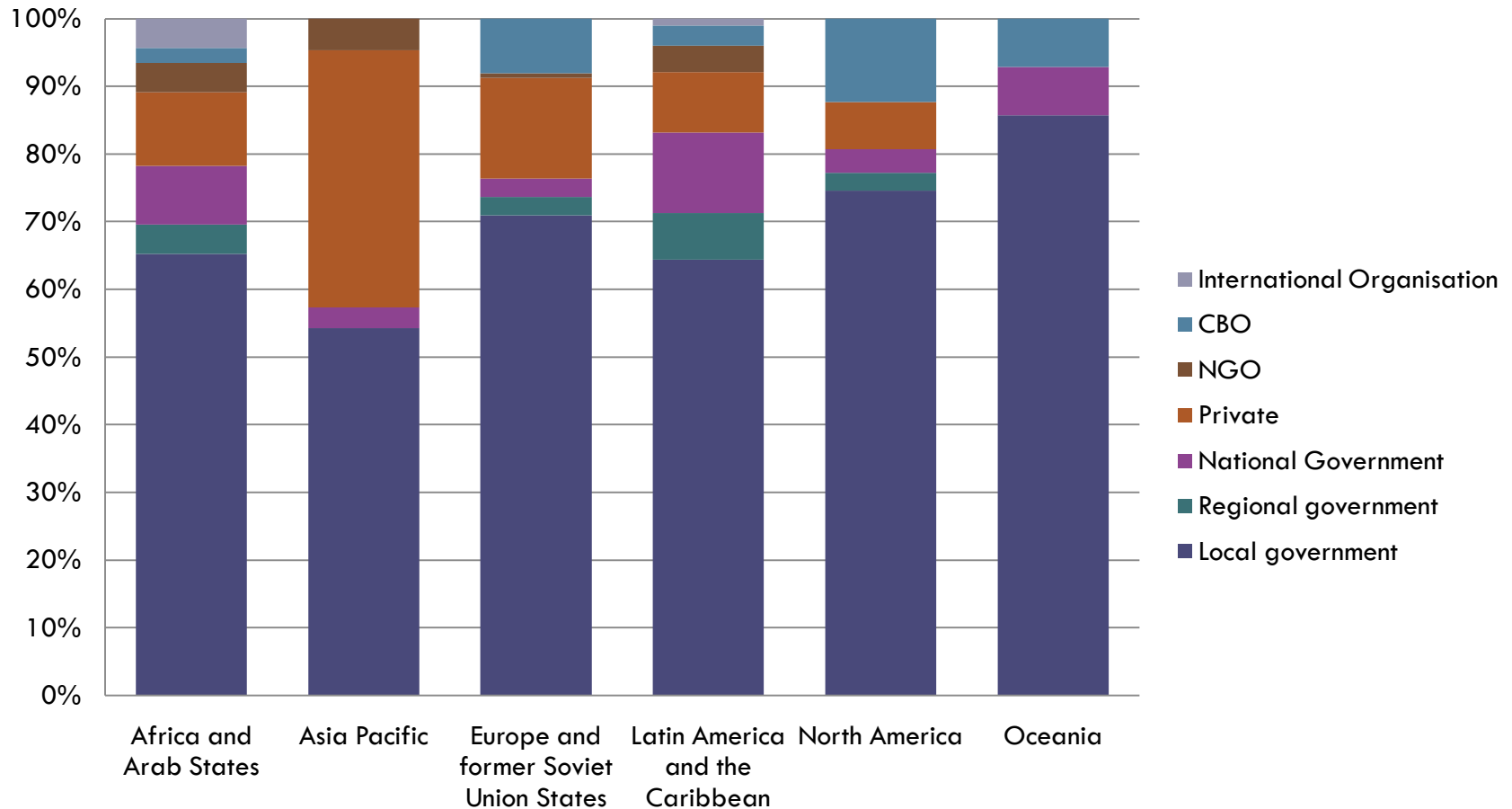
Where's Climate Governance?



A world of experiments?



Actors and experiments: making urban climate governance



Getting back to the point...

cities matter and the matter of cities

- Climate change as a pressing urban problem
- Seeking to govern climate change through good governance alone will not address this
- Need to attend to the politics – of who wins, who loses, and how we can make this more just
- Need to attend to the social-material networks through which climate change is mediated
- One way in which cities are already doing this is by making space for experiments – we could do well to adopt a more experimental approach to our own academic practice