

Abstract: Crises narratives and crises governance in the Anthropocene

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The anthropocene enters our world as a rupture and pervades well-known modes of governance. Entering permanent crisis mode while dealing with ‘wicked problems’ (Ostrom) means that the ‘business as usual’ ways of managing socio-ecological catastrophes might not produce the expected results, but may bear unintended consequences. Societal cleavages, transgenerational *angst*, inadequate governmental responses and a fundamental disembedding of nature-society relations in late-state capitalism are typical results.

Currently, several scenarios seem possible: (1) an exhaustion of public capacities, resulting in further privatization and securitisation of emergency services, as it has been visible for instance with regard to US hurricane or wildfire governance. (2) a rediscovery of communitarianism and volunteering, with the “summer of migration” and unforeseen volunteering activities in Germany, centuries of communal dyke protection in the Netherlands or South African water governance as examples. (3) Closely related, but informed by futurist temporalities, transition governance as a public/civic long-term strategy that calls for a ‘deep transformation’, visible for instance in “future-making” concepts (Horn et al. 2023), prospects for “deep-time organisations” (Hanusch & Biermann), but also proto-fascist “long-terminism”. These three scenarios give account of crisis thinking in the Anthropocene and shed light on the repercussions both for the democratic polity and for the fundamental understanding of nature as either a fearful space or a socio-ecological system.