

Handbook of Sustainability Transitions and Innovation in Latin America

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Abstract

Purpose, aims and focus of the Handbook.

The Handbook advances the conceptual envelope and addresses deeply complex and challenging issues within transitions and innovations in the Latin American region.

While there is a growing body of literature fuelling the transitions' and innovations' literature, there has been a limited investigation into the character, depth and breadth of the inequality and sustainability transitions and innovations in Latin America.

This Handbook provides this platform and seeks to fill in this research gap by including an interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral lens.

This to explore the transitions and innovations dynamics that are disrupting and recreating, transforming processes of the way states/governments, industry, knowledge institutions, firms and the public sphere and global society and networks are dealing with these transcendental changes to shape innovations to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth.

- 1) to theorise the nature, character and operation of the transitions and innovations
- 2) to theorise its impact on the Latin American region and
- 3) to explore the perspectives of and relationships among traditional and non-traditional actors and other key actors within transitions and innovations systems to promote inclusive growth, social welfare and sustainability.

The Handbook will investigate and advance what these challenges mean for the future of transitions and innovations and the way that states/governments, industry and the public sphere can land and respond to societal and global challenges.

In general, the assumption is that transitions and innovations drive socioeconomic welfare according to the industrialised nations in Europe, Asia and the US. Yet, transitions and innovations must be solved differently to consider the different contexts providing a useful framework to comprehend the processes which occur in the interaction of researchers at universities, private companies, and institutions in the public sector.

Regarding Latin American countries, they might be caught in the middle-income trap concerning benefitting from innovation systems. Despite concepts like 'social innovation' and 'social

inclusiveness' have gained attention in the transitions and innovation scholarly literature it is still unclear how innovation contributes to socioeconomic development in countries with high income inequalities as seen in Latin America. Hence, enriching conceptualizations of transition and innovation are necessary aimed at orient research towards sustainability, equality and social justice. In spite of decades of favorable economic and political conditions in Latin America current strategies have not been effective and prosperous partly because when the heterodox governments substituted the neoliberal agenda their knowledge and innovation policies and -strategies were far from being heterodox demonstrating that progressive governments might not have socially progressive science and technology politics whereas the ideology might be stronger than in other public strategies.

The book offers a deeper understanding of the drivers and implications of disparities and unexplored determinants of transitions and innovations by bringing together a wide range of research on the region potentials and cutting-edge case studies. These explore aspects which can be a lever for transitions and innovations to more sustainability and less inequality. A main challenge is to calibrate in specific contexts the capabilities to innovate in scarcity conditions in which different geographies, social spaces and levels (multi-level) need consideration.