Could baseline establishment be counterproductive for emissions reduction? Insights from Vietnam’s building sector - DTU Orbit (14/07/2017)

This article provides insights into the role of institutions involved in climate governance working towards a future low-carbon society at the national level, within the global climate change governance architecture. Specifically, it contributes to understanding the fragmented governance of energy efficiency policy in developing countries by focussing on Vietnam’s building sector, identifying key institutions related to underlying discourses, national and international power relations, resource distribution and coalitions. It uses the case of baseline setting in developing Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) to illustrate institutional dynamics, nationally and transnationally, as well as to question whether demands for baseline setting achieve the ideal trade-off between actual GHG emissions reduction and institutionalized demands for accountability. The analysis reveals that, in addition to domestic efforts and challenges, the international agenda greatly influences the energy efficiency policy arena. The article presents lessons to be learnt about policy processes from the specific Vietnamese case, reflecting on the role of international actors and discourses in it. Finally, it argues for the abolition of baselines in favour of adequate monitoring and evaluation, from the perspective that requirement for deviation from fictitious baselines is unproductive and only serves an international techno-managerial discourse.
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