FREE WEBINAR

IS THE INTERNET AN ECO-INNOVATION?

Thursday, January 29, 1pm CET

About this webinar

"An eco-innovation is the production, assimilation or exploitation of a product, production process, service or management or business methods that is novel to the organisation and which results, throughout its life cycle, in a reduction of environmental risk, pollution and other negative impacts of resources use (including energy use) compared to relevant alternatives" (Kemp and Foxon 2007). Against this background, does the ICT/Internet system qualify as an eco-innovation? This is a highly policy relevant question that the EMInInn project addressed also for other sectors (Energy, Transport, Construction, and Waste).

Constantly decreasing ICT hardware prices by exponentially increasing capabilities translate into increasing levels of consumption of electronic products. This is highly relevant for policies that may address any of the stages in the life cycle of such products. Widely popular mobile ICT devices (e.g. smartphones) are becoming more energy efficient by design. This does not result from regulation but is mainly motivated by consumer satisfaction (batteries last longer). However, the energy use of such a device over its lifetime is surpassed by the energy used for producing it and—becoming more and more relevant—for providing network capabilities (wireless network access, cloud computing and storage). In the case of backend (e.g. data centres) and network operations, the energy price signal strongly fosters innovation towards higher energy efficiency. But any gain in this regard is probably dwarfed by the growth of those sectors. Hardware developments also enable fast-paced innovations at the application level, which has led to tremendous efficiency increases in all industries and for end-consumers. For the latter, one major efficiency gain is the reduction of transaction costs (e.g. via e-commerce), thus potentially allowing for higher consumption levels of traditional or digital products.

The project included case studies on innovation in the broader Internet system of innovation. Testing bottom-up and top-down methodological approaches, whether looking at the physical Internet (frontend, backend, networks) or Internet-based applications, we faced data availability issues, and above all modelling issues when considering secondary and tertiary effects. During this webinar we discuss the lessons learnt from the project, which should benefit people in policy, research, industry, or simple Internet users with an interest in eco-innovation and impact assessment.

Speakers

_ [Mathieu Saurat](#) from the Wuppertal Institute will represent the EMInInn team and discuss methods and results from the work package that dealt with the question "Is the Internet an eco-innovation?", or, in other words, is there any way to tell whether we are better off with or without the macro-environmental impacts of Internet-related innovations?

_ [Arjen Kamphuis](#) is our guest speaker. He will discuss and challenge some of the assumptions, findings and counterfactuals from the project and make some suggestions for linking to various policy-goals.

Arjen is co-founder and Chief Technology Officer of Gendo. He studied Science & Policy at Utrecht University and worked for IBM and Twynstra Gudde as IT architect, trainer and IT strategy advisor. Since 2005 Arjen is CTO of Gendo, advising clients on the strategic impact of new technological developments. He is a certified EDP auditor and information security specialist. As a much sought-after international speaker on technology policy issues he gives over 100 keynote talks every year all over EurAsia.

Since 2002 he has been involved in formulating public IT policy in the areas of open standards, open source and information security. Arjen advises senior functionaries of companies and public institutions about the opportunities offered by open standards and open source software for the European knowledge economy and society as a whole.

In addition to information technology, Arjen also works on scenario planning and strategic assessments of emerging technologies such as bio- and nanotechnology. With clients he investigates the social, economic and geo-political impact of science and technology.

Kind regards,
Mathieu Saurat (organizer) & Vera Freyling (daily management)

For more information on the webinar, please contact [Mathieu Saurat at the Wuppertal Institute](#).

EMInInn is a 3.5-year European project funded through the European Union's Seventh Program for research, technological development and demonstration under Grant agreement No 283002. EMInInn analyses macro-environmental impacts of innovations in several sectors of economy: Energy, Transport, Construction, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Waste. It aims at developing an analytical framework for assessing environmental impacts of established as well as emerging technologies and will generate contributions for improving EU-policies for a transition towards a more sustainable Europe and thus contributes to the flagship initiatives for Resource Efficient Europe and the Innovation Union.

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