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2023 RSA Annual Conference

Transforming Regions: Policies and Planning for People and Places

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Planning without the clock in a world out-of-sync: Temporal mismatches and regional planning deliberations

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Abstract

How do we (re-)imagine planning in a world increasingly marked by socio-ecological changes and disruptions? As a field of knowledge, policy, and practice that continues to regard time as absolute, linear, and tameable, planning has yet to engage with contemporary social science debates conceiving time as not only relative, diverse, and variegated but also transcending culture—nature dualities. Drawing on 'critical horology' and 'ecocritical time studies', this paper engages with nascent scholarship on time and temporalities in and of planning. Focusing on 'coordinations' and 'timings', it explores how socio-ecological interactions unfold in and shape regional planning deliberations, rendering temporal mismatches and adjustments—human and more-than-human—visible. On this basis, the paper assesses the degree of leverage of critical time approaches to theorising planning and reflects on the prospective role of planning and planners in a world 'out-of-sync'. In conclusion, the chapter calls for greater engagement with developing 'temporal' tools and methods to enable planners to become aware of—and critically cater to—socio-ecological mismatches in regional planning deliberations.