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**Urban Futures:
the Challenge of
Sustainability**



Bügl, Robert, Kriese, U., Scholz, R.W., Lehmann Pollheimer, D., & Stauffacher, M.

ETH Zurich D-UWIS
robert.buegl@env.ethz.ch

Transforming a former railways freight yard into a modern and sustainable mixed urban district: The case of Erlenmatt in the Canton of Basel-Stadt

With 19.2 hectares, the Erlenmatt is a major development area in the Canton of Basel-Stadt. It is located on the former railway freight yard of the German railways company. Beginning in the middle of 2007 and for the next 15 years, a mixed urban district with about 700 apartments for up to 2,000 residents and 2,000 working places will be developed. The main scope of the development process is to create an urban district which is able to gentrify the lifestyles and social infrastructures of the adjacent city regions. Lifestyles are habits with self-identificatory potential with which individuals express social affiliation and distinction (cf. Bügl & Scholz, in prep.). Lifestyles depend on the dynamics of Human-Environment Systems (HES) and entail regulatory feedback mechanisms that, in turn, influence humans and environment (cf. Scholz & Binder, 2004). Formative Scenario Analysis (FSA) was used to develop urban planning variants for the Erlenmatt which were evaluated in an Exploration Parcours (cf. Scholz & Tietje, 2002). We used a two-step game plan design with six development variants until the years of 2015 and 2025 in order to elicit intuitive and criteria-based evaluations of desirable and probable pathways of decision. We sampled investors/project developers, sustainable architects, representatives of sustainable NGOs, representatives of the public hand in the Canton of Basel-Stadt, parents from well-earning young families in Kleinbasel, and well-earning employees from chemical industry and science (N = 80). Individual satisfaction on the Erlenmatt was evaluated to be most important among the offered set of sustainability criteria. A sustainable Erlenmatt is most desirable for all stakeholder groups, but the evaluations of which one of the variants are likely differ between groups. The commercial stakeholder groups and residential target groups are optimistic that the sustainable development variants of the Erlenmatt are likely, whereas sustainable NGOs are somewhat more pessimistic. Evidence from this study suggests that commercial stakeholder groups share a common peer group language when evaluating urban planning variants. This can be due to shared experiences and common market operations of these stakeholder groups. The fit of evaluations between commercial stakeholder groups and residential target groups could be due to similar lifestyle ideas (cf. Kriese & Scholz, submitted, for a historical study on lifestyle ideas of builders and investors). The sustainable transformation of city districts can learn from transdisciplinary case study research in urban settings (cf. Scholz et al., 1996, 1997, 2004, 2005) and a long-standing sustainability support of urban development projects in Switzerland (cf. Wiener, 2001).

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