

# Community dock: a new policy approach for altering institutions

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It has been pointed out that local communities should play a leading role in promoting regional development. But how they can do it independently of local governments is still an open question. When Community Currencies (CCs hereafter) are introduced in local communities, it is also vital to induce local residents to willingly and positively participate in administration and activities in CCs.

To such current issues, we propose a new policy approach and tool named “Community Dock” that can support spontaneous community development more effectively. Here community is conceived as an association of not only local residents, but also various organizations, companies and local government.

Community dock is a synthetic method of empowerment evaluation and continuous action for improvement by which research groups, in order to promote community development, periodically conduct comprehensive checkups over local socio-economy and subjective satisfactions of residents, and encourage communities, by presenting the outcomes of such checkups, to recognize, evaluate and solve the shared problems by themselves. So it is designed as a support tool for integrative and spontaneous development of social capital in local communities.

Community dock is composed of the following four phases:

- 1) Analysis and diagnosis of current performance of socio-economies of the community,
- 2) Self-estimation and reflection on the performance of the community and their own internal rules of participants in CCs,
- 3) Self-alternation of their frames of cognitions, motives, values and norms by participating agents of CCs,
- 4) Change of properties of CCs as platform institutions/ media.

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The loop of community dock is subsumed by media design of CCs shown as Fig. 1. This indicates that, after sufficient numbers of repetitions of community dock, external rules of CCs as platform media can be redesigned in order to adapt the altered internal rules of participants and more effectively attain the initial goals. Media design of CCs is thus situated on the upper level of community dock in the whole picture of evolutionist institutional design.

(Fig.1) The Nested Structure of Evolutionist Institutional Design and Community Dock

