



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MES (University of Saskatchewan, 2010)

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**“Climate Change Action through Co-Productive Design in Science-Policy
Partnerships at Municipal, Provincial, and National Levels of Government”**

Interdisciplinary Studies

Thursday, December 10, 2015

9:00AM

David Turpin Building

Room A136

Supervisory Committee:

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Dr. Colin Bennett, Department of Political Science, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Evert Lindquist, School of Public Administration, UVic (Outside Member)

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Abstract

Why is it that the international scientific consensus on climate change has not been followed by a proportionate policy response in Canada? Perhaps the relationships between the country's science organizations and government agencies are not functioning properly. My research adopts an interdisciplinary approach (i.e. science studies and political science) to this issue, highlighting the relevant literature's underlying consensus on co-production, a norm of deliberative two-way engagement between scientists and policy-makers. I hypothesize that relationships embodying elements of co-productive design (e.g. informal communication, appointed liaisons) are more likely to facilitate climate action. To test this, I examine three cases of climate science-policy partnership in Canada by interviewing participants from both sides. The partnership between the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium and BC municipalities exhibits substantial influence on policy, tied to a considerable degree of co-productive design. The partnership between the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions and the Climate Action Secretariat of the BC provincial government also displays notable design characteristics, but primarily facilitates side benefits and soft influences rather than concrete policy changes. The attempted partnership between the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences and the federal government exhibits few elements of co-productive design and has been effectively terminated, demonstrating the prerequisite importance of political interest. The relevant literature is not sufficiently nuanced to fully predict or explain these situations, so I put forward a new theoretical model. My science-policy relationship hierarchy (SPRHi) suggests that each such case can be classified as incidental interaction, basic partnership, interactive dialogue, or true co-production. It specifies the conditions which must be met for any given relationship to improve, maximizing potential benefits and influences. Concrete policy changes seem to result only from true co-production, though, which generally requires exceptional external requirements and thus cannot be deliberately facilitated. As such, co-productive design ultimately does not offer a clear way to address Canada's climate inaction. I suggest that further research be conducted on international coordination mechanisms, public attitudes, and (especially) political leadership. However, the soft influences of science-policy partnerships may affect these broader factors in unpredictable ways, so the importance of co-productive design should not be underestimated.

Keywords: British Columbia, Canada, climate change, co-production, deliberative democracy, evidence-based policy, science-policy interfaces, institutional design, political leadership, public policy, research utilization