

HOW PEOPLE GREEN THE PORT



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Arguing that the role of port workers, as both representatives of transport interests and as members of local communities, position them as central intermediaries in port greening processes, this chapter broadly asks how localized actors and initiatives couple as micro-scale approaches that shape the social license and actual greening of ports.

APPROACH:

The case studies emphasize the role of dock workers in mediating terminal operations and development through the lens of greening practices. Rather than focusing on the purely environmental- and emissions-based implications of these interactions, this paper prioritizes the construction of local spatialities that lead to support for, and/or opposition to, greening practices on the part of dockworkers. Data was collected through interviews with port stakeholders in Vancouver, Canada.

MAIN FINDINGS:

- The authors argue that while macro-level shipping issues are not losing relevance, further attention ought to be paid to local actors and workers to understand the social, economic, and political process of port greening.
- There are indications that port greening goes deeper than surface level greening as port workers and stakeholders have genuine interest and pride in making their local communities more sustainable and eco-friendly.
 - While dock workers are generally less knowledgeable on green issues than port authority office staff, they maintain strong community ties and provide intimate stories of port operations for community members.
- The interconnection between dockworkers and unions plays a significant role in whether green initiatives will be adopted, rejected, or modified.
 - Unions can lend significant pressure towards rejection of unpopular initiatives, yet they also offer workers a voice to push for modification as well as an understanding of operational realities that may be overlooked by office workers.
 - Dock workers may also adopt popular green initiatives as 'theirs' and maintain pride in its success, ensuring proper implementation.