How food policies emerge: The pivotal role of policy entrepreneurs as brokers and bridges of people and ideas

Gloria Giambartolomei [a,*], Francesca Forno [b], Colin Sage [c]

[a] Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (CAWR), Coventry University, United Kingdom
[b] University of Trento, Italy
[c] Independent Scholar, Portugal

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Research has highlighted how new policy networks are transforming the food governance landscape, with pioneering urban governments addressing food security challenges through the adoption of what have been generically labelled urban food strategies (UFS). Yet within the literature on place-based food governance initiatives, the role and tactics of different stakeholder groups within these experiences remains insufficiently investigated. This paper seeks to fill the gap by shedding light on the complex dynamics entrenched in the establishment of inclusive UFS in two different but comparable civic initiatives: Cork (in the Republic of Ireland) and Bergamo (Northern Italy). The paper draws upon a unique multi-methods qualitative approach combining in-depth interviews and direct observations on the part of the lead author of the paper, with direct and embodied experience of the other two contributing authors. As the analysis reveals, policy entrepreneurship is best considered as a set of collective leadership practices that hold emancipatory potential, a key to accelerate the transition towards more just and sustainable food systems.

1. Introduction

For some time, research has been documenting the emergence of new flexible forms of producer–consumer relationships and activities within the food sector, revealing how new policy networks are transforming the food governance landscape, particularly in urban areas. Feeding cities from far-flung distant places is becoming increasingly fraught as recent experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic have illustrated (C40 Cities, 2020). Yet evidence shows how municipalities can be central actors to foster sustainable food security through holistic and place-based strategies, with pioneering local governments addressing food security challenges through the adoption of what we might generically label urban food strategies (UFS).

Moragues-Faus et al. (2013, p. 6) define UFS as "a process consisting of how a city envisions change in its food system, and how it strives towards this change". The goal is the development of a 'roadmap' helping the city to integrate a full spectrum of issues related to urban food systems within a single policy framework that includes all the phases from food production to waste management (Mansfield and Mendes, 2013). Meanwhile, an ongoing process of convergence is bringing together a range of public actors, including local government,

with civil society organisations connected to new forms of food production and consumption leading to the "rise of an integrated and territorial mode of food governance" (Wiskerke, 2009, p. 377). While there is no single pattern these various governance arrangements share a common element which is designed to be inclusive of stakeholder engagement and the creation of new "spaces of deliberation" (Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2015, p. 1159).

Within this emerging field the role of actors as "strategic brokers to address food system issues" (Mendes, 2007, p. 103) has been identified. Their actions in the context of UFS creation range from broad-based outreach activities and network building, to facilitation of social learning processes. These initiatives generally comprise "networks of activists and organisations, generating novel bottom-up solutions for sustainable development; solutions that respond to the local situation and the interests and values of the communities involved" (Seyfang and Smith, 2007, p. 585). As Moragues-Faus and Morgan (2015, p. 1561) highlight, such networks are often created by "food champions" or "policy entrepreneurs", key enabling agents of a new form of food planning and policy making.

Policy entrepreneurs might be regarded as skilled actors, who invest their own resources, such as their time, expertise and reputation, and

---

perform important functions in the policy process, including defining problems, mobilizing public opinion, and formulating policy solutions (Kingdon, 2003; Roberts and King, 1991). Given the strongly collaborative and participatory approach generally adopted in the development of UFS, these actors appear to be indispensable in finding ways to reach a broad cross-section of stakeholders, and to help devise a UFS. Yet, as suggested by Meijerink and Huitema (2010) given the often collective nature of the actions performed, it is useful to adopt a wider definition of policy entrepreneurs, to encompass both individual policy entrepreneurs and collective policy entrepreneurship. We believe the collective agency of food champions, as well as the tactics and strategies implemented by various stakeholder groups, have been insufficiently investigated to date. This paper aims to fill the gap, providing insights into particular local experiences, and thereby contribute a critical analysis of the key role that collective forms of policy entrepreneurship and leadership can play in the initiation of just and inclusive processes of UFS development.

This paper is organised as follows: first, we review the theoretical framework drawing upon the policy entrepreneurship and collective leadership literature. From this we identify and explain seven key tactics deployed by policy entrepreneurs. Next, we introduce our methodological approach, and describe the strategy utilized to analyse two cases of small-medium sized cities, which have recently started to develop their own UFS: Cork (Republic of Ireland) and Bergamo (Italy). Finally, after summarizing the main characteristics of these two cases, we draw some preliminary conclusions from the comparison and suggest some policy implications arising from the analysis.

2. Policy entrepreneurship and collaborative leadership: Unfolding conceptual overlaps

In order to build the theoretical framework underpinning this research, the paper draws from a wide range of scholarship from political science to complex adaptive systems and this conceptual pluralism provides for an enriching, and complementary approach (Meijerink and Huitema, 2010). Yet we begin with the most straightforward definition: that policy entrepreneurs (PE) are "those who make things happen" (Crona et al., 2011). It is reasonable to extend this label to include a variety of other terms that have been applied to similar actions: policy champions, policy brokers, change agents, social innovators and institutional entrepreneurs (Crona et al., 2011). PE have also been conceived as power brokers, manipulators of problematic preferences and unclear technology; and coalition enablers, willing to change current ways of doing things in their area of interest (Mintrom and Norman, 2009; Zahariadis, 2014). In order to introduce innovations, PE "invest their resources - time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money - in the hope of a future return" (Kingdon, 2003, p. 179). Generally, they are on the alert for opportunities to link policy proposals - potential solutions - to problems and participants, in an attempt to exploit political momentum, accepting related risks and failures (Brouwer, 2015; Brouwer and Biermann, 2011). PE can come from both outside or inside government, and often have been identified among academics, NGO representatives or civil society (Meijerink and Huitema, 2010) and naturally the social background of such individuals may influence their access to various resources through which to promote their policy agenda.

There are, of course, conceptual divergences and overlaps across theories of leadership and policy entrepreneurship (Meijerink and Stiller, 2013). In socio-ecological systems thinking, leaders provide key functions such as: building trust, making sense, managing conflict, linking actors, initiating partnerships, generating knowledge as well as recognising and seizing windows of opportunity (Folke et al., 2005; Westley et al., 2013). Moreover, leaders communicate and engage with key individuals in different sectors, combine different networks, experiences and social memories, as well as generating a variety of ideas, viewpoints and solutions (Meijerink and Stiller, 2013; Olsson et al., 2006).

Yet Westley et al. (2013), suggest that we should question the appropriateness of the term "leaders" when it comes to the activity of change agents in such a complex domain of networks, sectors and scales. They conclude that stewardship in complex and uncertain systems is made up of many actors, who work collectively with a variety of skills and roles: from sense makers, networkers, facilitators, innovators, interpreters, to visionaries and inspirers. This perspective has been further developed by scholarship dealing with collaborative, distributed, participative, shared and collective perspectives on leadership (e.g. Ansell and Gash, 2012; Ardoin et al., 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016; Gronn, 2002; Imperial et al., 2016; Onyx and Leonard, 2011; Ospina and Foldy, 2010; Scholten et al., 2015). These authors favour a group-centred perspective, shifting the focus of analysis to leadership practices, rather than behaviours or personal traits, in an attempt to understand "what leaders do to engage people, rather than who leaders are" (Ardoin et al., 2014, p. 362).

These traditions (e.g. collective, relational, distributed, shared) depict leadership mainly in terms of decisions, practices, and processes that emerge from complex interactions of "the collective" (Ospina 2016, p. 281) - the *loci* of leadership - rather than occurring within the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers (e.g. Fletcher, 2004; Friedrich et al., 2016; Ospina, 2016; Ospina and Foldy, 2010; Raelin, 2018; Rosile et al., 2018; Uhl-bien et al., 2007). This so-called 'post-heroic' leadership is portrayed as a dynamic, multidirectional, collective activity - an emergent process more than an achieved state (Fletcher, 2004, p. 649). Collective interpretations of leadership and policy entrepreneurship thus shed light on leadership as a plural phenomenon, constituted by co-created practices and collective agency (Raelin, 2018; Rosile et al., 2018), where practices are "social sites in which temporary clusters of events, people, and meaning compose one another" (Raelin, 2011, p. 197). Indeed, social interactions at the core of leadership processes are deemed to constitute - rather than influence - the actual practice of leadership (Raelin, 2011).

The collective leadership literature and the diverse theoretical strands within it, therefore, share a "view of leadership as an emergent, interactive process intended to cultivate group members' capacity and adaptability to navigate complexity" (Ospina, 2016, p. 281). These promote a shift of focus from the self (skills and personal characteristics), towards a more nuanced understanding of the learning environment co-produced by and resonating throughout the collective agency characterised by policy entrepreneurship. The idea that a "social exchange" constitutes such shared and collective leadership practices (Rosile et al., 2018, p. 320) reinforces this relational/collective 'turn' in the literature, that conceives leadership as "the ability to create conditions under which relational outcomes such as coordinated action, collective achievement and shared accountability can be achieved" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 8).

Leadership practices are consequently the outcome of a process of collective meaning-making, a crucial space for the creation of both a physical and cultural intersection, as a basis for developing a macro-level set of shared aspirations (Stephenson, 2011; Westley et al., 2013). The work of leadership focuses on "reframing discourse, bridging difference, and unleashing human energies (…) to develop capacity and leverage power in community-based organizations'' (Ospina, 2016, p. 282). These practices of post-heroic leadership require enacting a model of power *within* the collective – in our case grassroots movements and a wide range of stakeholder groups promoting social and ecologically just food systems - as opposed to the more common association of leadership with power *over* (Fletcher, 2004). This type of leadership and policy entrepreneurship can work towards enhancing self-awareness and efficacy – agency - of the grassroots organisations according to the idea of "consciousness raising," or *conscientização* (Freire, 1970). Here, researchers facilitating these iterative and collective processes of social and political *consciousness raising*, can critically contribute to the co-production and sharing of knowledge, to foster a wider political, social and economic just transition towards greater socio-ecological well-

being. In fact, dialogue and reflection (as part of collective leadership work) lie at the heart of empowerment and people-centred discourses in agroecology and sustainable food systems (Anderson et al., 2015) and beyond (e.g. Cornwall, 2016; Freire, 1970; Wittmayer et al., 2015).

Therefore, by skilfully facilitating interaction, dialogue and reflexivity researchers can contribute to the foundations of policy entrepreneurship as a reflexive process done *with* people, rather than *for* people. As noted by Raelin (2011, p. 206–207):

"In bringing leadership to the group, leadership-as-practice privileges the process of engagement as a basis for learning. But it is not only engagement that creates leadership; it is just as critical that there be both private and collective reflection on the experience (…) An invitation for participants to a practice to co-create their sociopolitical consciousness."

Nevertheless, as argued by Fletcher (2004) the post-heroic leadership approach is

"in danger of being incorporated into the discourse in a way that coopts and silences its most radical challenges: the challenge to organizational systems of power, to the privileging of managerial and hierarchical knowledge and to the distribution of rewards based in beliefs about meritocracy and individual achievement" (2004, p. 656).

This perspective helps us to gain new insight into the notion of food citizenship, which we understand as the power of citizens to create a new terrain for social agency and political action in relation to the food system (De Tavernier, 2012; Sage, 2014). Notions of food citizenship clearly advocate for individual and community Rights to Food (De Shutter, 2011) but arguably extend beyond rights to eat (the right to be fed) and into the terrain of food sovereignty and the collective right to produce one's own food (Sage, 2019). Building a genuine food democracy in which the active participation of citizens who wish to ensure environmental sustainability and economic viability of healthy, fair and culturally appropriate food procurement is, after all, the key strategic goal of food policy entrepreneurs.

Consequently, drawing from a wide range of literature we identify seven key tactics deployed by policy entrepreneurs: defining problems and linking issues; leading by example; building trust, motivation and legitimacy; linking actors and building networks; generating and disseminating knowledge; facilitating social innovations; and recognizing or creating windows of opportunity. These are outlined in Table 1 and then illustrated in the context of the case studies.

3. Methodology

The study of the role of policy entrepreneurship in the development of UFS was undertaken in two small-medium sized European cities: Cork in the Republic of Ireland, and Bergamo, in Italy. The decision to adopt a comparative case-study approach was grounded in three reasons. First, the need for more in-depth empirical research that highlights good UFS practices worldwide – though without suggesting a template for those, as every community needs to adopt practices that best suit their place-based capacities (Blay-Palmer et al., 2016). Second, much of the UFS literature to date reports to a greater extent on achievements in major European, North American and Australian cities (e.g. London, Toronto, New York City, Melbourne) with fewer studies of developments in second-tier cities, especially the circumstances surrounding the establishment of new food initiatives. Third, the two case-study cities are places where two of the co-authors were active in contributing to the development of UFS (explained further below) and thus provide opportunities for detailed insights of specific civic initiatives.

The study used a multi-methods qualitative approach comprising in-depth, semi-structured interviews (n = 21 for both cities). Interviews were collected during intensive field research over 20 days, during

Table 1
Policy entrepreneurship's tactics.

PE tactics	References
1. Defining Problems and Linking Issues refers to the construction of shared and common visions and framings around issues. This entails encompassing different "ways of knowing" about an issue as well as connecting it to related topics and thereby the PE helps to reach a broader range of stakeholders enabling them to act collaboratively.	Horlings and Padt (2013), Loorbach (2010), Sotarauta and Beer (2016), Crona et al. (2011), Westley et al. (2013), Meijerink and Huitema (2010), Brouwer and Biermann (2011), Westley et al. (2013)
2. Leading by Example refers to the capacity of the PE to overcome a sense of risk associated with the introduction of a (policy) change. Here, PE "take the ideas and turn it into action themselves", demonstrating a commitment to show to other stakeholders the workability of their proposals (Mintrom and Norman, 2009, p. 653).	Mintrom and Norman (2009), Mintrom and Vergari (1998)
3. Building Trust, Motivation and Legitimacy: PE can crucially contribute to activate and nurture social capital, which is a great incubator of trust within communities and social groups, and a fundamental driver to enable collective action. Often PE hold the 'know-how' to interact and dialogue with the bureaucracy and the institutional level. This contributes to establishing legitimacy (as well as coordination) to the ideas and initiatives of stakeholders not directly involved at the institutional level.	Ardoin et al. (2014), Stephenson (2011), Westley et al. (2013), Dale (2014), Dale and Sparkes (2011), Putnam (1993)
4. Linking actors and Building networks refers to PE usually valuing the importance of being team players, since their strength as change makers lies in their capacity to work with others, in coalitions formed by different knowledge and skills. PE are considered being "at the edge of social groups" (Crona et al., 2011, p. 57), in such a way that their boundary-spanning contacts allow them to obtain a brokering position to harness the information and the trends of various groups, acting as a hub between them.	Crona et al. (2011), Mintrom and Vergari (1998), Dale (2014), Horlings and Padt (2013), Westley et al. (2013)
5. Generating and Disseminating Knowledge recognizes that PE need to engage in activities of capacity building and awareness raising, to enhance the social understanding of environmental and sustainability issues. This represents a pivotal step to stimulate the concerns and the engagement of the community and, consequently, trigger support towards PE's solutions.	Ardoin et al. (2014), Crona et al. (2011), Heritage and Dooris (2009), Pomeroy and Douvere (2008), Bodin and Prell (2011), Brouwer and Biermann (2011), Meijerink and Huitema (2010), Mintrom and Norman (2009), Olsson et al. (2006)
6. Facilitating Social Innovations: "In communities across the world, individuals daily come up with new ideas, large and small, for improving their lot and the lot of those around them, in response to locally perceived problems or social needs" (Westley and Antadze, 2010). PE are generally alert to these new ideas, practices and proposals and may seek to represent them to institutional leaders.	Bodin and Crona (2008), Carey (2013), Westley and Antadze (2010), Loorbach (2010), Scholten et al. (2015), Westley et al. (2013), Olsson et al. (2006)
7. Recognizing or Creating Windows of Opportunity It is paramount that PE recognize when it is possible to change the ideas of other actors, and "frame them in a certain way so that their preferred policies become the logical solution" (Huitema et al.,	Huitema et al. (2011), Huitema and Meijerink (2010), Kingdon (2003), Westley et al. (2013), Olsson et al. (2006), Folke et al. (2005)

Table 1 (*continued*)

PE tactics	References
2011, p. 729). The identification of 'windows of opportunity' is not, however, an easy task and the meaning attributed by the PE can always be contested. Engagement in open dialogue and discussion is paramount, in order to influence the interpretation, through framing strategies. Therefore, "a policy entrepreneur is a person who connects political momentum to problem perception and a policy proposal" (Folke et al., 2005, p. 456).	

[Various sources cited: Elaboration of the authors].

which the first author of this paper had the opportunity to benefit from direct observations and participation in meetings and events organised within the context of the two initiatives, including a full day workshop in Cork organised by an EU-funded research project investigating the Cork Food Policy Council (CFPC). There were also more informal visits to locations where both initiatives had initiated different activities, such as farmers markets and growing sites. Fieldwork was initiated, first in Cork then in Bergamo, by the first author formally interviewing the two co-authors who provided key names and facilitated initial contacts. Thereafter the first author used a snowballing sample to independently select subsequent interviewees representing a range of stakeholder interests and backgrounds and demonstrated her independent engagement in both contexts within her time and resource constraints[1]. This has ensured a broader overview of the structure, function, and identities of the key actors involved in the establishment of both initiatives and where an 'outsider' perspective allowed for a better grasp of potential policy entrepreneurship.

Fundamental to our novel methodological approach is the fact that two co-authors of this paper were directly involved in the initiatives under study[2]. The reflections and experiences coming from their 'community-engaged research' approach adds unique insights for the analysis of the processes, limitations and dynamics occurring within both cities. Yet, the independent research[3] role of the first author provides for an external and more objective perspective that enriches the inside knowledge of the other two. Consequently, we believe the paper presents a synthesis of three very different perspectives, building on a strong conceptual foundation to explore two comparable case studies. Drawing upon a deep understanding of locally specific practices and processes the paper is an exercise in contextualised – or situated – knowledge surrounding the formation and early development of two different but comparable civic initiatives. In this respect we believe any sense of methodological hazard presented by the proximity of two co-authors to their particular places is overshadowed by the experiential insights offered.

4. Cork: Food as a driver to foster the creation of a healthy city

Cork is the Republic of Ireland's second city and its recent boundary extensions now enclose a population of around 200,000 people. The city displays a sharp spatial component of social disadvantage and, in line with other parts of the country, there are rising levels of diet-related ill-health and where up to one in eight households experiences food poverty (Kenny and Sage, 2019). Paradoxically, Cork regards itself as 'the food capital of Ireland': in part historical legacy given its role as a provisioning port for the British Empire; but also its more recent profile at the forefront of the contemporary artisan food movement. Consequently, there seemed a strong foundation on which to build some innovative food systems thinking in the city, working at both community and policy levels.

The Cork Food Policy Council (CFPC) emerged out of a three-year community food project led by the Northside Community Health Initiative (NICHE), that, in an area of marked social disadvantage, had generated a high level of local engagement. Seeking to build on the energy and good will of this project led by NICHE, during the summer of 2013 a public meeting to gauge interest in a city-wide 'sustainable food project' was convened by the three key players at this stage: the coordinator of Cork Healthy Cities, the Director of NICHE who had managed the community food initiative project, and one of the co-authors, who was asked to become Chair of the CFPC, given his knowledge of the food policy field. Given that the public response was so positive, a steering committee was assembled by invitation, principally on the grounds of trying to ensure representation from across all sectors of the food system. The sectors represented by the initial participants of the Steering Committee are shown in Table 2.

The first task of this group was to agree on the formation of the CFPC, and then to create a 'food charter' elaborating five core values[4] that would represent its aspirations. While these may be regarded as 'motherhood and apple pie' issues to which no-one could possibly object, it was ultimately revealing that for many, including staff and elected members of Cork City Council (CCC), there was novelty in their aggregation and relation to food. With some limited financial support from Environment and Recreation Services at CCC, work then proceeded to design a logo, a leaflet and establish a social network presence as a way of breathing life into existence.

One of the cornerstones of the CFPC was – and remains - close collaboration with the Cork Healthy Cities (CHC) initiative, a designation acquired by CCC in 2012 under the WHO programme. This designation is not a badge of achievement but a requirement for the local authority to commit to a process and structure of working towards good health outcomes. The Healthy Cities approach can be regarded as holistic requiring 'One Health' joined-up thinking that places importance on inter-agency collaboration and dialogue across sectors. Recognising the role of food consumption practices in shaping health outcomes as well as the socio-economic inequalities that prevent some households

Table 2

Sectors represented in the cork food policy council steering committee (year one).

Academic: Research & education:	Cork City Council: (CCC)
● University College Cork	● Environment and Recreation Department
● Cork Institute of Technology	● Planning Department
Public Health: Health Service Executive	Small Food Businesses:
● Cork Healthy Cities	● Café and Restaurant owner
● Community health	● Representative of municipal market stallholders
	● Food Tourism: Walking tour company
● Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Northside Community Health Initiative	● Social enterprise: Bia food bank and social volunteering
● CSO (Environmental Advocacy): Cork Environmental Forum (LA21)	● Community Gardening
● Established organic farmer	● Horticulture projects
	● Large Food Retailing – Musgraves

---

[1] A full list of interviewees is provided in the Appendix

[2] At the time of the study, Colin Sage was the co-founder and Chair of the CFPC, and Francesca Forno, co-founder of the CORES research group at Bergamo University, was involved in the Bergamo Agriculture Roundtable.

[3] Gloria Giambartolomei was a student of Environmental Governance at Utrecht University, and conducted the fieldwork in Bergamo and Cork in May and June 2016.

[4] These are: Health and wellbeing for all; A thriving local economy; Resilient, food-friendly communities; Lifelong learning & skills; A reduced environmental footprint. (see www.corkfoodpolicy.com).

and communities from accessing healthier dietary options, there was natural synergy to the Healthy Cities initiative working alongside the emergent CFPC.

The CFPC was publicly launched on St Patrick's weekend, 2014, as a 'Feed the City' event. The centrepiece was the distribution of 5,000 bowls of curry cooked from one tonne of vegetables that were destined for landfill as surplus to retail requirements. However, besides the distribution of a free lunch – involving other items of perfectly good 'surplus' food donated by wholesalers – there was music performance, live cooking demonstrations and a variety of stalls providing seeds and composting information. Creating 'spectacle' is an important part of capturing the public imagination and offering ideas for alternative practices was one of the very first tactics played by policy entrepreneurship in Cork, and has remained a vital part of the CFPC's programme.[5] The event proved a huge success, which opened a fundamental window of opportunity for policy entrepreneurship. Some of the interviewees (2,7,9) stressed how significant was the fact that the Chair was interviewed on national television and radio and by national and local newspapers on the event and on the reasons for creating the CFPC. While the issue of food waste – and how we can play our part in reducing it – was a non-controversial topic, raising the location of fast food outlets close to school gates made a bigger – if briefer – impact in the political realm. For example, a few days after the event, the Chair conducted an interview with the Cork evening newspaper and in response to a 'So What Now?' question, outlined a 'shopping list' of possible local policy interventions around food, amongst which the proximity of unhealthy eating options to schools was mentioned. The Echo newspaper chose to run a front page headline on the topic, and this was picked up two days later by the national Irish Independent newspaper which sought - and secured - a response from the then Minister of Children who assured the paper her Department was closely studying all policy options in the interests of children's health! Unfortunately, the CFPC lacked the resources to follow through on the matter and, predictably, the Department uttered not another word on the subject. Nevertheless, it highlighted the potential of a window of opportunity for policy entrepreneurship to raise an issue of wider public interest.

Food growing became a key focus of attention for policy entrepreneurship aimed particularly at facilitating social innovation, especially following the incorporation into the Cork Development Plan 2015–21 of the CFPC recommendation that CCC increase the area of food growing space across the city. Making food growing a strategic focus of CFPC activities has provided an important and generally non-divisive way of bringing people together. It has pushed the CCC to take action, while simultaneously upholding the political meaning and emancipatory potential of food growing, which, in its many forms, can be conceived "as forms of political agency that contest, transform and re-signify 'the urban'" (Certomà and Tornaghi, 2015, p. 1123).

This is best illustrated by a public meeting held in March 2015 conceived as a way to publicise the existence of the CFPC. Around 80 people attended and in an unanticipated way it quickly turned into a strategic planning event to identify and design planting activities in different parts of the city. Over the following six or seven weeks a central axis crossing the historic core of the city witnessed the appearance of a large number of planter boxes filled with salad plants and the invitation to 'help yourself' – the Incredible Edible Todmorden model. There was no engagement with CCC about this activity on the basis that it is never useful to ask for permission where it is likely to be refused. But later that same year, a planner from CCC made contact and, noting the efforts of the CFPC in coordinating this *guerrilla planting*, agreed to the request to take over an abandoned open-air basketball court long shuttered as a

consequence of anti-social behaviour. This site now hosts the Sustainable Food Lab, a growing space managed by a cooperative of around 25 people and which has served as something of a hub for a series of edible greening initiatives across the South Parish of the city. One interviewee (#2) highlighted the questions that can arise when a degree of collective mobilisation and self-actualisation emerges from such actions:

"Do I need to ask for permission to grow? How far have we come from that this is my land, my space, my city, and I have a shared ownership of this – shall I ask permission for everything that I do? Aren't these things that I should be naturally able to do? Who owns this street?"

The problem framing that brought together a variety of issues (and perspectives) related to the sustainability of the urban food system produced a series of place-based narratives. For example, the promotion of wellbeing through healthier diets was (and remains) recognised as a public issue in Cork and one around which to potentially build a persuasive narrative. The connection of food to health and well-being through the Charter rendered it less divisive (a 'motherhood and apple-pie' issue) and overtly political. Yet because of the successful experience of the initial community food initiative on the north-side of the city, there was legitimacy and credibility of such work in the eyes of individuals and grassroots organisations. For the Cork Healthy Cities coordinator, food is regarded as an "ideal tool to bring people together" (interviewee 9). A particular success has been to achieve 'buy-in', not just from local political representatives, but from key personnel in other sectors and agencies who would not normally regard health as part of their brief but who have championed the Healthy Cities agenda.

To create a narrative attuned to the social and political milieu of the time and place, different types of knowledges have been interwoven and disseminated by the agency of many actors. Pivotal in the enactment of this tactic was the role of the Chair, an academic with an appreciation for the multifaceted role of food, and a clear vision around the need to create institutions to push for a systemic change towards sustainability, starting indeed with food systems. As highlighted by interviewee 8 (and confirmed by interviews 3 and 9):

"the proposal came from Dr Colin Sage (…) who came forward with the idea, and had mentioned the report Who Feeds Bristol?[6] as Bristol has a Food Policy Council, and that there are Food Policy Councils in many cities around the world. Essentially Colin has led the project and he got these actors together and the various representatives of the body".

Nevertheless, as is also the case of Bergamo discussed below, the Cork experience underscores the importance of looking at policy entrepreneurship as a collective agency, one that builds on earlier as well as concurrent initiatives.

The linkage of issues and concerns occurred together with the building of networks and connections of various actors. The first activities of bonding and bridging across groups and individuals from different backgrounds stemmed from the collective effort of the three initiators (noted earlier) who reached out to individuals within their own very different networks and effectively allocated the initial seating at the table of the CFPC (Interviewees 1 and 9). However, it is important to recognise the influential role played by other stakeholders once seated: representatives of the Cork Environmental Forum, the Local Agenda 21 organisation established in the mid-1990s, and the food redistribution charity, 'Bia Food Initiative', among others, brought considerable experience and an extensive network of contacts with people from across the city and with whom they had already built relations of trust (Interviewees 2 and 3). People who "wear many different hats" and who have an "approved track record" (Interviewee 3) within the community are clearly most likely to play the role of policy entrepreneurs.

---

[5] This has included an annual Harvest Festival, engagement with street feasts and, more recently, working with the Chilean theatre group Cocina Publica as part of the Cork Midsummer Festival that delivered a week-long performance celebrating local food traditions.

[6] See Carey (2011).

In the early stages of establishing the CFPC steering committee invitations to join were extended to two key staff at CCC: the Director of Environment and Recreation Services and to a member of the Planning Department. However, their involvement was not directly related to their institutional mandate with both wanting to participate given their personal interests and identification with the goals of the CFPC (Interviewees 7 and 8). Indeed, in interviews both stressed the difficulties of introducing the idea of a FPC to their colleagues, with its multidisciplinary and cross-sectorial aims rather clashing with the norms of a bureaucratic municipal organisation which retains a very short-term and silo approach to local government (Interviewees 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9). Indeed, cross-departmental and cross-sectorial collaboration still appears as an inappropriate way of proceeding in local policy-making (Interviewee 4).

One of the key challenges faced by the CFPC, and noted by outside observers, has been the difficulty of including greater representation from the agricultural sector. Although a locally well-known organic grower participated in the Steering Committee for the first year, she was unable to sustain her involvement given the demands of the farm. Finding someone to replace her has proven extremely difficult given the nature of agricultural production in the Cork region which relies heavily on dairy and beef. Indeed, with 81 percent of farmed land in Ireland given over to intensive grass (silage, hay, and pasture) for cattle rearing and only one percent growing vegetables - the lowest level in Europe – the mindset of productivism for export has cast a long shadow over Irish food for a long period (Sage and Kenny, 2017) and, arguably, this has served to impede the development of short food supply chains in the city-region.

Leading by example, thus, is about being personally and directly involved with the promoted activities and represents a critical premise to build the necessary "reputation" and "consistency" within the community (Interviewees 2 and 7). These claims shed light on the critical importance of "inspiring and motivating people" (Interviewee 1) through being present among them and showing the feasibility and tangibility of the proposals and ideas put forward. As well as the importance of recognising that *"it's not all about being in your head, but it's about being in your heart and doing things"* (Interviewee 3). Having "approved track records" (Interviewee 9) and motivating people through education and especially teaching and learning by doing – with pilot projects, for instance - is one way that collective policy entrepreneurship builds trust, motivation and legitimacy. However,

> *"you don't change things just by talking about things, you're gotta go out there, and demonstrate, and engage, and ask question and push people a little. It is about getting out there! The 'Feeding the City' event was a big thing to say to people: look, we are here, we are doing this, this is who we are, and this is what we want to achieve. Are you interested in joining us? Are you interested in growing your own vegetables? In greening the city? In understanding where your food comes from?"* (Interviewee 3).

The Cork case has shown the value of building support for local food policy upon suitable foundations that may have been established in adjacent fields, but where like-minded and generous actors are willing to engage in bridging their own policy concerns with those of others. This is clearly an evolving process, one shaped by relationships with local authorities as well as community groups. However, policy entrepreneurs seek to navigate a path by drawing together many if not all of the factors outlined above: from defining problems and linking issues to recognising and creating windows of opportunity.

5. Bergamo: Rebooting the local economy, rethinking food consumption and production

With a population of approximately 122,000, Bergamo is the fourth-largest city in Lombardy, northern Italy. The city is located in the southern foothills of the Alps in an area (the province of Bergamo)

characterized by an advanced economy, high-quality of life, and relatively low unemployment rates with a traditional manufacturing sector comprising industrial districts of SMEs. Despite being lower than the national average, the unemployment rate began to rise after the 2008–2009 economic crisis, yet this was offset by the re-emergence of agriculture that revealed a more resilient dimension creating new job opportunities through a combination of food production, tourism and other service activities. Thanks to a rich and diverse landscape, the agro-food sector of the area is characterised by the presence of several typical speciality products.

The Bergamo "Agriculture Roundtable" (*Tavolo Agricoltura*, hereafter AR) was established in 2015 as an informal food policy council. Convened monthly by Bergamo City Council (BCC), from the very beginning the AR involved representatives and stakeholders from many sectors of the food system such as: agriculture trade unions (*Coldiretti* and *Confagricultura*), the local association for the safeguard of the local natural parks (*Parco dei Colli*), the Botanical Garden of Bergamo, the CORES research Group[7] of the University of Bergamo and several actors belonging to Sustainable Citizenship (SC), the local solidarity economy network (see Table 3). The AR was part of a wider strategy that the Municipality of Bergamo developed within a project called "*Nutrire Bergamo*" (literally: "Feeding Bergamo") which aimed at building a collaboration among local food actors in order to provide the city with higher quality food, as well as to valorise the urban and peri-urban agricultural areas. The AR did not emerge as a formal policy programme, but rather as a way to embrace the many initiatives around food and agriculture that were already in place but lacked public support and institutional recognition.

Within the food policy process in Bergamo the Mayor (and, to a lesser extent, a few members of the City Council) represented key actors. In several interviews there was a widespread recognition of the genuine and consistent interest of the Mayor and his administration for the topic of food sustainability and inter-connected issues (Interviewees 10, 16, 17 and 20). Moreover, the high economic value to the local economy derived from the promotion of food and wine of the territory (the city and surrounding areas) was regarded by the Mayor as a great incentive to gather all the stakeholders at the same table and initiate a dialogue around food (Interviewee 15).

It is important to note, however, that the local University had already started to work on urban food strategies some years before the establishment of the AR, with its project *Bergamo 2.035 - a New Urban Concept*. The research included seven key areas of intervention (knowledge, health, local food system, mobility, logistics, corporate social responsibility, urban factories) and produced, among a number of different outputs, a comprehensive map of the various actors and initiatives in the local food system. The project organized several workshops designed to listen to local stakeholders and better understand their

Table 3
Overview of the sectors represented in the Bergamo agriculture roundtable.

● Academia – CORES group, University of Bergamo	● Food cooperative (Sustainable Citizenship network, SC)
● City Council of Bergamo - Mayor	● Alternative Food Networks - Buyers Co-ops (SC)
● Environment Department of Bergamo City Council	● Sustainable Agriculture (SC)
● Slow Food (SC)	● Food Citizens (SC)
● Farmers Trade Unions	● Social and Economic Justice (SC)
● Fair Trade (SC)	● Social Inclusion (SC)
● InfoSostenibile - Local Newspaper (SC)	● Environmental Education and Conservation – Botanic Garden

---

[7] Research group focusing on Consumption, Networks and Practices of Sustainable Economies.

main problems and expectations[8]. This revealed a lack of cooperation and a high fragmentation of initiatives, but also valuable opportunities for promotion and economic development especially linked to some alternative food practices such as farmers' markets, solidarity purchase groups and other local and direct sales (e.g. farm shops). Consequently, once BCC decided to establish the AR, it realised the benefit to be derived from the work completed by the CORES group of the University and especially the connections made by researchers with local food stakeholders.

Within the Bergamo AR, the role of the grassroots Sustainable Citizenship coalition was particularly important. SC's aims are to promote sustainable economic practices, building networks of solidarity, and supporting socio-economic experimentation. Over the years, SC has been able to coalesce several civil society actors, such as environmental associations, consumer cooperatives and new consumer groups, helping the food issue to gain centrality in local public and political debates. A central role in SC is played by the so-called solidarity purchase groups (*Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale – GAS*), individuals and families committed to directly buying their food from local farmers (Forno et al., 2015, 2013).

The first initiative organized within the activities of the AR was a conference jointly planned by the Municipality of Bergamo and the CORES research group entitled "Food, Sustainability and Territory: from alternative food networks to new forms of governance ", which was held in October 2015 at the University of Bergamo. The conference convened a mix of academics and local administrators working on food policy initiatives in various Italian cities, including Milan and Turin, and was specially designed to foster a common discussion between researchers, administrators and civil society actors in order to reflect on several issues at the centre of the work of the AR.

From this event, it was clear that the generation of knowledge and its diffusion about food system sustainability is a tactic to which various actors have contributed. Because of their extensive network of contacts with local producers, CORES researchers were able to ensure the participation in the conference – and in the AR – of a wide range of food actors, including some of the most marginalised. This was a way to enhance civic engagement, utilising the knowledge gained through research while facilitating the involvement of local activists in the food policy process sharing their own knowledge and practices (Interviewee 10). Indeed, since 2007, the CORES group has nurtured a virtuous cycle of scientific and local knowledge integration through a number of different initiatives[9] that eventually helped with the formation of the local solidarity economy network, SC.

Through sharing their knowledge within the community, actors belonging to both the SC Network and AR as well as the CORES team have supported the diffusion of a "culture of sustainability and citizenship", and raised awareness about being responsible about our daily choices (Interviewee 17). Nonetheless, the different movements and associations within the AR as well as within the SC network, mostly have knowledge associated with their specific area of interest and activity. The CORES researchers have played a crucial role in reconciling these different types of 'place-based narratives' and thereby demonstrate the tactic of defining problems and linking issues. This process is not simply one of harmonizing different local understandings and experiences, but also to find ways to connect them to a broader vision, including examples of international 'best practices' that might inspire efforts to improve

system sustainability. Moreover, the combination of broader environmental and social concerns together with more locally embedded political and food activism, fostered the development of a common vision to build a macro level set of shared aspirations (Stephenson, 2011; Westley et al., 2013).

The construction of shared aspirations and a common narrative require linking actors and building networks to further encourage collective action. The bonds between the various stakeholders have been reinforced during the monthly meetings of the SC Network since November 2007, and maintained through the sharing of information and knowledge facilitated by the CORES group which has proven pivotal in bridging the different worlds of Bergamo civil society's activism alongside external actors. This, as explained by the researchers themselves when interviewed, can be considered a crucial function entailed in their action-oriented research: being "translators/interpreters" of the different narratives of institutions, grassroots movements, private and third sectors. As highlighted by one of the interviewees (17):

"*the great difficulty in bringing these actors together is overcoming 'particularisms' – both individual and sector-based – around perspectives and interests that bring conflict*".

The opportunity to successfully couple narratives and actors is intimately related to the capacity of building trust, motivation and legitimacy among stakeholders. Strong social capital and personal relations are key features of Bergamo and there is a long history of collaborations between different members, especially within the SC Network. Yet, policy entrepreneurship was still paramount for motivation and legitimacy building as many interviewees highlighted, noting how the CORES team facilitated the involvement of the grassroots movements into an institutional dialogue with the local administration, enabling them to fully participate in a process of rethinking and reshaping the urban food system (Interviewees 12, 13 and 17). It is worth reminding ourselves that while grassroots initiatives might be very active at the micro-level, they do not necessarily see the bigger picture or know what is going on elsewhere. So academic researchers with their international contacts and experiences, offer a vital resource to locally based initiatives and, indeed, help to legitimise these local actions building space for reflexivity and deliberation within the everyday practices of grassroots movements. In this regard, one interviewee (13) stressed:

"*we always try to create space for reflection, but it is really hard, because the 'doing' aspect takes over the rest. This is what the CORES team helps us with*".

This facilitation role provided by the CORES team was key in triggering the interest of the Mayor, who especially values their work in establishing the relevance of these new practices, which he himself considers a solid base upon which to start building a local food strategy (Interviewee 15).

Moreover, beyond these interdependent activities, there is the ability of policy entrepreneurship to exploit windows of opportunity. The Universal Exposition (EXPO) of 2015, hosted by Milan, under the theme "Feeding the world, Energy for life" incisively pushed the topic of food into the spotlight, at the national and international levels. Simultaneously, the ceremonial signing of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact on the 15th of October 2015 contributed to turning attention to the increasingly important role played by cities (across the globe) in the creation of more sustainable food systems through territorial governance. Together, these events represented a suitable window of opportunity to start that fundamental conversation between researchers, administrators, and civil society actors around UFS. The aforementioned conference, "Food, Sustainability and Territory", organised by CORES in the same period, was a key "focussing event" (Faling et al., 2019, p. 18) to initiate this dialogue, through the experiences and stories of people involved in the development of UFS in other cities. This triggered further interest from BCC and the Mayor, who were already engaged with food-

---

[8] The Bergamo 2.035 project involved a group of several researchers among which one of the co-authors of this paper (see www.bergamo2035.it)

[9] Back in 2007 CORES researchers organised a conference entitled "Shopping for Human Rights" inviting the participation of many actors involved in the promotion of alternative forms of consumption and production. The resulting dialogue has encouraged a variety of local initiatives dealing with food and other related issues to join together establishing a solidarity economy network (Interviewees 10, 12 and 13).

related issues. However, the growing interest in the promotion of food and wine tourism, while protecting and valorising the landscape's biodiversity, has, because of its more immediate economic benefits, attracted more external support such as the European Region of Gastronomy Award (in 2017) and, more recently, the Cheese Valleys, Bergamo UNESCO Creative City Award (2019).

A pivotal part of the role of CORES as policy entrepreneurs was recognising and encouraging the social innovation represented by the creation of the SC Network. Specifically, the entrepreneurial role consisted of supporting the grassroots movements in engaging in a dialogue with public institutions. It can be claimed that CORES enabled the grassroots movements' actors to develop greater self-awareness of who they are and what they do: effectively, to acknowledge and encourage their efforts as social innovators working for a sustainable urban food system (Interviewees 12 and 17). In this way, it is argued that policy entrepreneurship supported a process of emergence of grassroots movements, from operating in a quite circumscribed arena – mostly made of personal relationships and informal networks – to a more structured group of actors, capable of dealing with more powerful stakeholders, such as the Municipality.

To conclude this case-study, we suggest that if the lack of participation by grassroots organisations is a commonly reported experience in the process of creating an UFS, this seems less evident in the Bergamo case. On the contrary, what emerges from analysis here is that grassroots organisations play a vitally important role in shaping the policy debate around food and sustainability within the territory. Clearly, the presence of an already established coalition of civil society groups represented a crucial factor to favour an inclusive food policy initiative (the AR) and to push further the process of creating an UFS.

6. Discussion, policy implications and conclusions

In this article, we have analysed the tactics put in place by collective forms of policy entrepreneurship and leadership to initiate the development of UFS in the city of Cork and Bergamo. This has been done adopting a 'three-pronged' perspective that combines insights resulting from the embodied and lived experiences of two co-authors (directly involved in the case studies), with the more 'objective' view gained by the lead author, who conducted a qualitative study in the two cities. Through this analysis we aimed to provide a number of theoretically rigorous and empirically grounded reflections around the initial phase of emergence of UFS. Specifically, we focused on two aspects related to the role of policy entrepreneurship, largely disregarded by the literature: the collective and relational nature of policy entrepreneurship as a form of 'leadership practices' (Ospina et al., 2012, p. 258); as well as the way these collective practices and strategies create favourable and necessary conditions to initiate a place-based process of development of UFS.

The analysis of the two cases reveals a few interesting differences and points of discussion. To begin with, the place-based food narratives are developed and nurtured by the collective policy entrepreneurship in the two cities around different socio-economic issues, which are specific to the territory. In Cork, food became closely entangled with health, in relation to dietary practice and where food growing could be promoted as part of a healthy lifestyle. In Bergamo, considerable advances were made in participation of grassroots organisations in the formulation of a UFS, yet in a context of economic crisis attention turned to speciality food and wine products and tourism as offering a more immediate solution to maintaining prosperity. Both cases demonstrate that the capacity to create fitting narratives and shared visions relies on the composition and influence of policy entrepreneur networks in their local context.

In this regard, the type of collective policy entrepreneurship here presented aligns with the concept of "place leadership" discussed by Horlings et al. (2018) which contributes to the (re-)framing of issues, the communication of a so-called 'sticky' story and to have different actors aligned around a joint agenda (2018, p. 251). A focus on place-sensitive

narratives and framings confirms the importance of recognising "embedded places as key and active meso-level mediators" (Sonnino et al., 2016, p. 484), where 'place' seems the adequate level to converge and integrate the different actors, interests, knowledges and values attached to food and food system sustainability narratives.

The processes of shared meaning-making occurring in different ways and through different tactics in both cities, provide insights into how leadership is "intrinsically relational and social in nature, the result of shared meaning-making and rooted in context" (Parés et al., 2017a, p. 15). These emergent and non-linear processes aim towards re-embedding food in the social and political fabric of communities. Policy entrepreneurs may promote place-based "alternative imaginaries" (Parés et al., 2017b, p. 4) of what a community that values social and environmental justice through food could look like: neighbourhoods and individuals who take back their streets to enjoy being together, embracing conviviality; reducing food waste; citizens that do not ask for permission to grow their own food, because they feel empowered and capable to do so.

In stimulating and creating the conditions for more inclusive urban foodscapes, we agree with Horlings et al. (2018) that collective policy entrepreneurship, as a form of 'place leadership', "can build collective agency as a result of processes of joint 'learning-by-doing' and support institutional innovations to create a more favourable institutional setting for a place-based approach to development" (2018, p. 251). More than a focus on place development, our cases show that collective policy entrepreneurship can contribute to create a *more favourable institutional setting* for the development of UFS, as a place-based, governance approach, to address the structural and systemic imbalances entrenched in the current neoliberal and globalised food system.

However, the creation of 'alternatives imaginaries' and cohesive narratives around which to convene actors from a range of sectors and backgrounds, almost inevitably raises the question of "who is left out" from such processes? The two cases show that the partial depoliticization of the multifaceted role of food at times failed to thoroughly address issues of unequal power relations, and marginalisation of certain groups. In this regard, it is important to note that the most prominent and active individuals and groups engaged in policy entrepreneurship activities do in fact belong to middle class, educated and privileged backgrounds. Meanwhile and even before the arrival of the pandemic, growing numbers of people have been presenting at food banks in Cork as a consequence of increased economic precarity and the actions of corporate retailers to dispose of surpluses (ie waste) through charitable donations (Kenny and Sage, 2019). Sadly, while both the CFPC and the AR have done much to raise the profile of local food in their two cities, in neither case have the local authorities extended a commitment to provide even modest ongoing financial support that would fund, for example, a coordinator. Instead, both rely heavily on people's individual motivation and passion but thereby creating the conditions for disillusionment and exhaustion, jeopardising the opportunity to involve more marginalised groups in such practices and governance processes, to develop just and inclusive UFS.

In conclusion, then, we have argued that policy entrepreneurship is a multi-dimensional process undertaken collectively and that, amongst its many other virtues, critically leverages passion and commitment but, more importantly, supports a process of 'conscientização'(Freire, 1970) inspiring others to reclaim their agency and take responsibility, "a setting in which collaborative agency can flourish" (Horlings et al., 2018, p. 263). In such a setting, researchers, "taking on their social responsibility" too (Wittmayer et al., 2015, p. 14) can be of great support to foster more reflexive forms of territorial food governance, that merge relatively inclusive and emancipatory practices with more formalised structures and mechanisms of UFS (Moragues-Faus, 2020; Sonnino et al., 2016).

Practiced wisely and collectively, policy entrepreneurship can nourish human relationships and trust which are indispensable features of effective transformation of our food system. Our initiatives served as a

bridge to build a civic and institutional conversation around the sustainability of our food systems. However, this conversation represents only a first step in the arduous journey towards more equitable and inclusive urban foodscapes and governance mechanisms, that do not leave anyone out, but rather bring together eaters and primary producers of food in a way that works to the benefit of everyone (humans and non-humans).

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Gloria Giambartolomei: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Francesca Forno:** Methodology, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Colin Sage:** Methodology, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing.

Appendix A

In depth interviews

Cork

1) Chair of the CFPC - Professor, University College Cork (UCC), 20/05/2016, Cork

2) Cork Environmental Forum (CEF) – Member, 20/05/2016, Cork

3) BIA Foodbank – Member, 19/05/2016, Cork

4) Coordinator of the CFPC, 16/05/2016, Cork

5) Public Health Department UCC - Representative, 21/05/2016, Cork

6) Food business (Tourism) – Representative, 21/05/2016, Cork

7) Cork City Council – Representative of the Environment and Recreation Department, 20/05/2016, Cork

8) Cork City Council – Representative of the Planning Department, 18/05/2016, Cork

9) Public Health - Healthy City Initiative – Member, 16/05/2016, Cork

Bergamo

10) Bergamo AR - Professor of University of Bergamo/CORES lab, 01/06/2016, Bergamo

11) Municipality of Bergamo – Councillor, Department of Environment, 03/06/2016, Bergamo

12) CORES lab – Researcher, 31/05/2016, Bergamo

13) Sustainable Citizenship – Member, 30/05/2016, Bergamo

14) Sustainable Citizenship – Member, 03/06/2016, Bergamo

15) Municipality of Bergamo – Mayor of Bergamo, 03/06/2016, Bergamo

16) Slow Food Bergamo – Member, 30/05/2016, Bergamo

17) Fair Trade Cooperatives - Member, 02/06/2016, Bergamo

18) Market &Citizenship – Member, 26/05/2016, Bergamo

19) Farmers' Trade Union/ Coldiretti – Member, 28/05/2016, Bergamo

20) Farmers' Trade Union/ Confagricoltura – Member, 29/05/2016, Bergamo

21) Solidarity Purchase Groups (GAS) – Member, 29/05/2016, Bergamo

References

Anderson, C., Pimbert, M., Kiss, C., 2015. Building, Defending and Strengthening Agroecology A Global Struggle for Food Sovereignty.

Ansell, C., Gash, A., 2012. Stewards, mediators, and catalysts: Toward a model of collaborative leadership. Innov. J. 17.

Ardoin, N.M., Gould, R.K., Kelsey, E., Fielding-Singh, P., 2014. Collaborative and transformational leadership in the environmental realm. J. Environ. Policy Plan. 17, 360–380. https://doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2014.954075.

Blay-Palmer, A., Sonnino, R., Custot, J., 2016. A food politics of the possible? Growing sustainable food systems through networks of knowledge. Agric. Human Values 33, 27–43. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-015-9592-0.

Bodin, Ö., Crona, B.I., 2008. Management of natural resources at the community level: exploring the role of social capital and leadership in a rural fishing community. World Dev. 36, 2763–2779. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.12.002.

Bodin, Ö., Prell, C., 2011. Social networks and natural resource management: uncovering the social fabric of environmental governance. Cambridge University Press.

Brouwer, S., 2015. Policy entrepreneurs in water governance: Strategies for change, Policy Entrepreneurs in Water Governance. Strategies for Change. Springer, Netherlands.

Brouwer, S., Biermann, F., 2011. Towards adaptive management: Examining the strategies of policy entrepreneurs in Dutch water management. Ecol. Soc. 16.

C40 Cities, 2020. Food and COVID-19: How cities are feeding residents today and building a better tomorrow [WWW Document]. URL https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/Food-and-COVID-19-How-cities-are-feeding-residents-today-and-building-a-better-tomorrow?language=en_US (accessed 5.28.20).

Carey, J., 2013. Urban and community food strategies. The case of Bristol. Int. Plan. Stud. 18, 111–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563475.2013.750938.

Carey, J., 2011. Who feeds Bristol? Towards a resilient food plan. https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32619/Who-feeds-Bristol-report.pdf/6c305e1f-67f4-46bb-be4b-80192e8d64ea.

Certomà, C., Tornaghi, C., 2015. Political gardening. Transforming cities and political agency. Local Environ. 20, 1123–1131. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2015.1053724.

Cornwall, A., 2016. Women's empowerment: what works? J. Int. Dev. 28, 342–359. https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.

Crona, B., Ernstson, H., Reed, M., Prell, C., Hubacek, K., 2011. Combining social network approaches with social theories to improve understanding of natural resource governance. In: Bodin, Ö., Prell, C. (Eds.), Social Networks and Natural Resource Management: Uncovering the Social Fabric of Environmental Governance. Cambridge University Press.

Cullen-Lester, K.L., Yammarino, F.J., 2016. Collective and network approaches to leadership: Special issue introduction. Leadersh. Q. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.02.001.

Dale, A., 2014. Agency: Individual "Fit" and sustainable community development. Community Dev. J. 49, 426–440. https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bst055.

Dale, A., Sparkes, J., 2011. The "agency" of sustainable community development. Community Dev. J. 46, 476–492. https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsq013.

De Shutter, O., 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing: three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland. J. Peasant Stud. 38, 249–279.

De Tavernier, J., 2012. Food citizenship: is there a duty for responsible consumption? J. Agric. Environ. Ethics 25, 895–907. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-011-9366-7.

Faling, M., Biesbroek, R., Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, S., Termeer, K., 2019. Policy entrepreneurship across boundaries: A systematic literature review. J. Public Policy 39, 393–422. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X18000053.

Fletcher, J.K., 2004. The paradox of postheroic leadership: An essay on gender, power, and transformational change. Leadersh. Q. 15, 647–661. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.07.004.

Folke, C., Hahn, T., Olsson, P., Norberg, J., 2005. Adaptive Governance of Socio-Ecological Systems. Annu. Rev. Environ. Resour. 30, 441–473. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.energy.30.050504.144511.

Forno, F., Grasseni, C., Signori, S., 2015. Italy's Solidarity Purchase Groups as 'citizenship labs,' in: Putting Sustainability into Practice: Applications and Advances in Research on Sustainable Consumption. Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 67.

Forno, F., Grasseni, C., Signori, S., 2013. I GAS nella provincia di Bergamo. Bergamo.

Freire, P., 1970. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Peguin Cla. ed. Penguin Random House.

Friedrich, T.L., Griffith, J.A., Mumford, M.D., 2016. Collective leadership behaviors: Evaluating the leader, team network, and problem situation characteristics that influence their use. Leadersh. Q. 27, 312–333. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.02.004.

Gronn, P., 2002. Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. Leadersh. Q. 13, 423–451. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00120-0.

Heritage, Z., Dooris, M., 2009. Community participation and empowerment in Healthy Cities. Health Promot. Int. 24 (Suppl 1), i45–i55. https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dap054.

Horlings, L.G., Padt, F., 2013. Leadership for sustainable regional development in rural areas: Bridging personal and institutional aspects. Sustain. Dev. 21, 413–424. https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.526.

Horlings, L.G., Roep, D., Wellbrock, W., 2018. The role of leadership in place-based development and building institutional arrangements. Local Econ. 33, 245–268. https://doi.org/10.1177/0269094218763050.

Huitema, D., Lebel, L., Meijerink, S., 2011. The strategies of policy entrepreneurs in water transitions around the world. Water Policy 13, 717–733. https://doi.org/10.2166/wp.2011.107.

Huitema, D., Meijerink, S., 2010. Transitions in water management - the role of policy entrepreneurs. Ecol. Soc. 15, 26.

Imperial, M.T., Ospina, S., Johnston, E., O'Leary, R., Thomsen, J., Williams, P., Johnson, S., 2016. Understanding leadership in a world of shared problems: Advancing network governance in large landscape conservation. Front. Ecol. Environ. 14, 126–134. https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1248.

Kenny, T., Sage, C., 2019. Food surplus as charitable provision: Obstacles to re-introducing food as a commons. In: Vivero-Pol, J., Ferrando, T., de Schutter, O., Mattei, U. (Eds.), The Routledge Handbook of Food as a Commons. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon, UK, pp. 281–295.

Kingdon, J.W., 2003. Agendas, alternatives, and public policies. Longman Pub Group.

Loorbach, D.A., 2010. Transition management for sustainable development: a prescriptive, complexity-based governance framework. Governance, An Int. J. Policy, Adm. Institutions 23, 161–183. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0491.2009.01471.x.

Mansfield, B., Mendes, W., 2013. Municipal food strategies and integrated approaches to urban agriculture: exploring three cases from the global north. Int. Plan. Stud. 18, 37–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563475.2013.750942.

Meijerink, S., Huitema, D., 2010. Policy entrepreneurs and change strategies: lessons from sixteen case studies of water transitions around the globe. Ecol. Soc. 15.

Meijerink, S., Stiller, S., 2013. What kind of leadership do we need for climate adaptation? A framework for analyzing leadership objectives, functions, and tasks in climate change adaptation. Environ. Plan. C Gov. Policy 31, 240–256. https://doi.org/10.1068/c11129.

Mendes, W., 2007. Negotiating a place for 'sustainability' policies in municipal planning and governance: the role of scalar discourses and practices. Sp. Polity 11, 95–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562570701406683.

Mintrom, M., Norman, P., 2009. Policy entrepreneurship and policy change. Policy Stud. J. 37, 649–667. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2009.00329.x.

Mintrom, M., Vergari, S., 1998. Policy networks and innovation diffusion: the case of state education reforms. J. Polit. 60 (1), 126–148. https://doi.org/10.2307/2648004.

Moragues-Faus, A., 2020. Towards a critical governance framework: Unveiling the political and justice dimensions of urban food partnerships. Geogr. J. 186, 73–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12325.

Moragues-Faus, A., Morgan, K., 2015. Reframing the foodscape: the emergent world of urban food policy. Environ. Plan. A 47, 1558–1573. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X15595754.

Moragues-Faus, A., Morgan, K., Moschitz, H., Neimane, I., Nilsson, H., Pinto, M.., Rohracher, H., Ruiz, R., Thuswald, M., Tisenkopfs, T., Halliday, J., 2013. Urban Food Strategies - The Rough Guide to Sustainable Food Systems.

Olsson, P., Gunderson, L.H., Carpenter, S.R., Ryan, P., Lebel, L., Folke, C., Holling, C.S., 2006. Shooting the rapids: navigating transitions to adaptive governance of social-ecological systems. Ecol. Soc. 11, 18.

Onyx, J., Leonard, R.J., 2011. Complex systems leadership in emergent community projects. Community Dev. J. 46, 493–510. https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsq041.

Ospina, S., 2016. Collective leadership and context in public administration: bridging public leadership research and leadership studies. Public Adm. Rev. 77, 275–287. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12706.

Ospina, S., Foldy, E., 2010. Building bridges from the margins: The work of leadership in social change organizations. Leadersh. Q. 21, 292–307. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.01.008.

Ospina, S.M., Foldy, E.G., Hadidy, W. El, Dodge, J., Hofmann-Pinilla, A., Su, C., 2012. Social change leadership as relational leadership. In: Uhl-Bien, M., Ospina, S.M. (Eds.), Leadership Research: A Dialogue among Perspectives. Information Age Publishing, pp. 255–302.

Parés, M., Ospina, S., Subirats, J., 2017a. Introduction and overview, in: Social Innovation and Democratic Leadership. Communities and Social Change from Below. Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. xii–xxii.

Parés, M., Ospina, S., Subirats, J., 2017b. Social innovation and relational leadership: opening up new perspectives on social change, in: Social Innovation and Democratic Leadership. Communities and Social Change from Below. Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 3–20. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781785367885.00010.

Pomeroy, R., Douvere, F., 2008. The engagement of stakeholders in the marine spatial planning process. Mar. Policy 32, 816–822. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2008.03.017.

Putnam, R., 1993. Making Democracy Work. Princeton University Press.

Raelin, J.A., 2011. From leadership-as-practice to leaderful practice. Leadership 7 (2), 195–211. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715010394808.

Raelin, J.A., 2018. What are you afraid of: Collective leadership and its learning implications. Manag. Learn. 49, 59–66. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507617729974.

Roberts, N.C., King, P.J., 1991. Policy entrepreneurs: Their activity structure and function in the policy process. J. Public Adm. Res. Theory 1, 147–175.

Rosile, G.A.M., Boje, D., Claw, C.M., 2018. Ensemble leadership theory: Collectivist, relational, and heterarchical roots from indigenous contexts. Leadership 14, 307–328. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715016652933.

Sage, C., 2019. Food security. In: Richardson, D., Castree, N., Goodchild, M., Kobayashi, A., Liu, W., Marston, R. (Eds.), The International Encyclopaedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment, and Technology. John Wiley & Sons Ltd, New York.

Sage, C., 2014. The transition movement and food sovereignty: From local resilience to global engagement in food system transformation. J. Consum. Cult. 14, 254–275. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540514526281.

Sage, C., Kenny, T., 2017. Connecting agri-export productivism, sustainability and domestic food security via the metabolic rift: The case of the Republic of Ireland. In: Barling, D. (Ed.), Advances in Food Security and Sustainability, Vol. 2. Elsevier, Oxford, pp. 41–67.

Scholten, P., Keskitalo, E.C.H., Meijerink, S., 2015. Bottom-up initiatives toward climate change adaptation in cases in the Netherlands and the UK: a complexity leadership perspective. Environ. Plan. C Gov. Policy 33, 1024–1038. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263774X15605929.

Seyfang, G., Smith, A., 2007. Grassroots innovations for sustainable development: Towards a new research and policy agenda. Env. Polit. 16, 584–603. https://doi.org/10.1080/09644010701419121.

Sonnino, R., Marsden, T., Moragues-Faus, A., 2016. Relationalities and convergences in food security narratives: towards a place-based approach. Trans. Inst. Br. Geogr. 41, 477–489. https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12137.

Sotarauta, M., Beer, A., 2016. Governance, Agency and Place Leadership: Lessons from a Cross-National Analysis. Reg. Stud. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2015.1119265.

Stephenson, M.O., 2011. Considering the relationships among social conflict, social imaginaries, resilience, and community-based organization leadership. Ecol. Soc. 16.

Uhl-bien, M., Marion, R., Mckelvey, B., 2007. Complexity Leadership Theory : Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era ☆ 18, 298–318. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.04.002.

Westley, F., Antadze, N., 2010. Making a difference strategies for scaling social innovation for greater impact. Innov. J. Public Sect. Innov. J. 15.

Westley, F., Tj, O., Schultz, L., Olsson, P., Folke, C., Bodin, Ö., Crona, B., 2013. A theory of transformative agency in linked social-ecological systems. Ecol. Soc. 18 https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-05072-180327.

Wiskerke, J.S.C., 2009. On places lost and places regained: reflections on the alternative food geography and sustainable regional development. Int. Plan. Stud. 14, 369–387. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563471003642803.

Wittmayer, J.M., van Steenbergen, F., Rok, A., Roorda, C., 2015. Governing sustainability: a dialogue between Local Agenda 21 and transition management. Local Environ. 10, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2015.1050658.

Zahariadis, N., 2014. Ambiguity and multiple streams. Theor. Policy Process 25–58.