

RESEARCH SEMINAR

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Which Chinese Cities Are Overbuilt? Insights from Urban Complexity Science

14 November 2024 (Thu)
4:30 – 6:00 pm (UTC+8)
Rm 221, Chen Kou Bun
Building, CUHK

China's housing market bubble and the staggering debt of local governments pose significant risks to the nation's economic stability. Cities with excessive housing and infrastructure development are particularly vulnerable, impacting both households and local governments. This talk examines whether overbuilt cities can be identified by simply comparing their housing and infrastructure per capita against national averages. My analyses using urban complexity science reveal that this approach is insufficient. Instead, I will introduce the "City Mass Index" – analogous to the Body Mass Index for individuals – as a novel metric to analyze and identify overbuilt cities in China. This innovative tool aims to provide a clearer understanding of the scale and implications of overbuilding, shedding light on urban development patterns and their environmental impacts across the country.



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Prof. Kangning Huang is an assistant professor of environmental studies at NYU Shanghai. He received his Ph.D. from Yale School of the Environment, and his MS and BS degrees in geography from Sun Yat-Sen University. His research focuses on the question of how does urbanization affect climate change at different scales. His research employs various techniques including spatial analysis, satellite imagery, machine learning, and numerical weather modeling. His works have been sponsored by NASA, NCAR, Shanghai Municipal Government, Google, Yale Hixon Center, and NYU Climate Change Initiative.



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