



Governance capacity for multilevel water governance



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Background & main question



- Water governance & climate adaptation complex multi-level challenges
- Many actors on different levels have to act in the same direction; actions have to reinforce each other
- Synchronizing these actions therefore necessary
- Program management as a possible strategy to enhance governance capacity in multilevel systems
- Questions:
 - What are the elements of governance capacity for effective multilevel governance?
 - What is the possible contribution of *program management* to this governance capacity?



Governance capacity



- Many theoretical attempts to define the distinguishing elements of governance capacity (Healey, Innes & Booher) or collaborative capacity (Foster Fishman et al.)
- Four layers distinguished:
 1. Individual competences (skills, personal abilities, leadership)
 2. Relational qualities (trust, reciprocity, social capital)
 3. Organizational capabilities (arrangements, platforms)
 4. Programmatic characteristics (objectives, guidance)



Governance capacity in MLG



| | illustrative items |
|-----------------------|--|
| Individual | Connective leadership Boundary spanning Sense of interdependence |
| Relational | Trust Mutual understanding Constructive dialogue |
| Organizational | Cross-level coordination arrangements Presence of platforms for collaboration |
| Programmatic | Shared vision Clear and connecting goals |



Empirical object



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- Dutch Delta Program:
 - Five national decisions with regard to new norms for flood risk, fresh water provision, water robust planning etc.
 - Regional strategies: link between water & planning
- Evaluation Teisman/Van Buuren (2014)
 - In-depth interviews with 30 key players
 - Survey among visitors Delta Congress 2013



Some important outcomes



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- Substantial outcomes (very) positively evaluated, especially:
 - *Fundamental revision of flood safety and fresh water policy*
 - *Long-term orientation of Delta Program*
 - *National character emphasized: "DP is from everyone"*
 - *Regional strategies in combination with national decisions*
- Process outcomes (very) positively evaluated, especially:
 - *Joint exploration of strategies and solutions*
 - *Increased political attention for water and adaptation*
 - *Fostering deliberation and joint knowledge production*



Governance capacity



| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Individual capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of Delta Commissioner (and regional program directors) as boundary spanner between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Water and planning / regional development -National, regional and local authorities |
| Relational capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More mutual understanding - Inclusive dialogue with policy-makers and experts - Delta community |
| Organizational capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interorganizational auxiliary arrangement - Provisions for multilevel coordination |
| Programmatic capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint vision (long term) - Important role of structuring Delta Decisions - Clear, binding and connective goals |



Analysis: added value of program management



- Program management as an auxiliary arrangement to foster collaboration
- Institutional positioning of program: independent and connective
- Strong (formal) position of Delta Commissioner
- Integrative agenda of the program: combining national challenges, regional preferences; bridging water & planning & economic development
- Structuring function of Delta Decisions



Critical reflections



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- Institutional jalousie because of success DP
- Program management particularly successful in phase of strategic decision-making
- Programs normally temporal vehicles: both a success and a fail factor
- Less guarantees for success in next phase



Preliminary conclusion



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- Program management successful in fostering governance capacity *between* multiple levels
- This capacity is not easily consolidated
- Program management (maybe) less successful in fostering governance capacity *on* levels
- On these levels existing capabilities (rigidities?) remain largely unchanged



Interested in this research?



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