

Session DP GV 3.5: Climate adaptation conclusions, recommendations and applications

Date and Time of Session: Thursday, 30 September 2010, 15.15–17.00

Short description of the session topic and the objective of the session

Topic: presenting the main outcomes of the following governance sessions:

- Dealing with the uncertainties in planning. From concepts to tools and the needs for capacity building.
- Adaptation strategies in delta cities.
- Governance capacity for climate adaptation.
- Transitions and the role of change management.

Objective: reach conclusions and together with the audience formulate key recommendations and actions for policy-makers, scientists and practitioners in delta cities around the world to build and strengthen the governance of climate adaptation.

Session Agenda and Main Speakers

Session chairs:

- Bert Satijn, Living with water / Water governance centre, the Netherlands.
- Rob Bonte, Royal Haskoning, Strategy and Management Consultants, the Netherlands.

The session draws on an adaptive, process oriented approach.

Main speakers:

- Michael van der Valk, CPWC, the Netherlands, presents the main outcomes of the session 'Dealing with the uncertainties in planning. From concepts to tools and the needs for capacity'.
- Lissy Nijhuis, City of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, presents the main outcomes of the session 'Adaptation strategies in delta cities'.
- Prof.dr. Geert Teisman, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands, presents the main outcomes of the session 'Governance capacity for climate adaptation'.
- Liesbeth Schipper, Royal Haskoning, the Netherlands, presents the main outcomes of the session 'Transitions and the role of change management'.
- Liang Xiong, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands, presents Delta city perspective of the Pearl River Delta: spatial pattern and transformation of urban landscape.

Most exciting insight, moment or outcome

- Moving to resilience does not change the level of hazard.
- The responsibility question opposes multifunctional solutions.
- Governance: details at low level matter and influence decisions at high level.
- Outcome: build up alliances. Working together on adaptation is much more productive than working alone.
- Time scale and sense of urgency are the most important challenges of adaptation.

Main conclusions, themes, insights or messages

The main conclusions of the session are:

- Regional adaptation strategies of delta cities differ from each other. The focus of adaptation strategies differ mainly on robustness and resiliation. Recommendation: find a dynamic balance between robustness and resiliation.
- Deal with uncertainties and risks in a robust and responsible manner. Open and transparent planning and decision-making processes, both top down and bottom up, are therefore needed. Good communication with the media is essential.
- Adaptation requires a sense of urgency and strong commitment.
- Climate adaptation requires a long term perspective (step by step) and co-operation among national, regional and local government, between the public and private sector and between science and practice. Manage co-creation and manage all the stakeholders.
- Deal with multi-level problem. Manage all multi-level and multi-scale processes in ways leading towards climate proof development. If you really want to make policy, you need general information at large scale and more detail information at small scale. Whereby high level decisions influences the lower level and local knowledge influences decisions at high level.
- Deal with the problem of multi-functionality. Combine different functionalities as much as possible and solve the problem of responsibility.
- Money plays an import role in the governance of adaptation. The lack of money contributes to the challenge of co-creation, co-operation and innovation.
- Find a balance between making people aware of the risks and not making them afraid.
- Cost benefit analyses of adaptation measures. Adaptation has no currency.
- Choose who you are going to protect. Why everybody?

Key phrases or quotes

- Uncertainties are there to stay. Take uncertainties into account;
- Stop fighting the water. Live with water.
- Be aware of the different levels of spatial scale: building, street/neighborhood, city, region.

Main recommendations, commitments, proposals, new initiatives or key follow-up actions agreed in the session

- Generate an adaptive governance system
- Deal with uncertainties and risks in a robust and responsible manner. Good communication with the media is essential.
- Deal with the problem of multi-functionality.
- Find a dynamic balance between robustness and resiliation of the adaptation strategies.
- Manage co-creation and manage all the stakeholders
- To make policy you need general information at large scale and more detail information at small scale.
- Choose who you are going to protect.