

Session DP RE 5.1: Guidance on water related adaptation

Date and Time of Session: Thursday, 30 September 2010, 15:15 - 17:00

Topic: The OECD adopted the policy guidance OECD policy guidance document 'Integrated Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation'. The OECD has called for specific sectoral Guidance. The first OECD sectoral Guidance that is being considered is a Guidance on Water.

Objective: The session aims at drawing perspectives and views on the main elements of this Guidance that have not been addressed in other Guidance.

Session Agenda and Main Speakers

Session chair: Aart van der Horst, Directorate General for International Cooperation, The Netherlands.

Main speakers:

- Maria Witmer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands.
- Fulco Ludwig, Alterra, Wageningen UR, The Netherlands.
- Maarten Hofstra, UNESCO-IHE, The Netherlands.
- Peter Droogers, Futurewater, The Netherlands.

Most exciting insight, moment or outcome

"Climate change adaptation is about doing things different instead of doing different things".

Main conclusions, themes, insights or messages

- Development cooperation and climate change adaptation may have conflicting goals.
- Instead of focusing on a top-down adaptation approach, find entries in the regular planning process and add a climate lens.
- Some sectors are more vulnerable to climate change than others. Water is the most important sector.
- Theory is not the same as practice. We are dealing with complex multi-actor systems, where planning doesn't go the way you want.
- Due to uncertainties in climate change:
 - Actions need to be postponed where possible.
 - Adaptation is hard to 'sell' to the people.
 - Knowledge has a short lifespan and can suddenly be out of date.
- The language in the water sector is different from the language in development cooperation. We need a common language.
- An inventory of adaptation methods/tools is presented, categorized into:
 - Downscaling CC, impact models and vulnerability assessment
 - Design and selection of adaptation options
 - Evaluation of adaptation options

Most methods/tools only fit into on one of the three above categories.

- A distinction is made between top-down and bottom-up adaptation approaches. Most methods/tools focus on a top-down approach. There is a need for more integrated tools, guidance on using the tools and guidance on mainstreaming adaptation. Different tools will

always be needed, there is no 'one size fits all' option. But because decisions need to be made in little time with little knowledge, there is a need for guidance on which tools to use in which context.

- To prevent a sectoral approach, integrality needs to be taken into account. Good governance is needed as institutional solid soil in which foundations rest.
- To prevent a lock-in situation, a step-by-step policy approach is needed.
- With a certain future, big policy steps are possible. With an uncertain future, either take no action at all or set the direction and follow a step-by-step approach.
- The cost of adaptation is estimated at an annual USD 7-25 per capita globally. In developed countries, it averages USD 6-30 per capita per year, while in developing countries the annual per capita average is USD 8-19. With a family of five, this translates to USD 100 per year, which is a lot for developing countries.
- People in developing countries are aware of climate change risks, but are more concerned with having something to eat than to spend money on adaptation. Most policies and strategies are climate-driven. An alternative road to climate change adaptation is to mainstream adaptation. For example: take a USD 50 million water basin project, put a climate change lens on and spend USD 2 million to make the project climate proof. This approach reduces the financial dimension of the adaptation problem.
- "Doing things different instead of doing different things".

Key phrases or quotes

"Climate change adaptation is about doing things different instead of doing different things".

"There is no need to convince people in developing countries about the need for climate change adaptation, they already have the willingness to survive".