



# Adaptation governance choices in NL, SW & UK

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# Six choices/dilemmas

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Under these choices and specifically related to policy creation they face six choices or dilemmas:

1. How to frame the problem at hand; how do they see the issue?
2. What administrative level to focus on; national, regional, local (all)?
3. When to act; now or wait and see?
4. Which policy instruments should they use; economic, regulatory?
5. What are the costs and benefits associated with policy action?
6. How should they implement the policy and what type (if any) enforcement should be applied?

# Adaptation framing, levels, modes & instruments

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**Framing**: What kind of problem is adaptation (tech, social)? Which sectors are addressed?

CC impacts will affect a range from transport to health. What have the countries done?

**Levels**: Which administrative levels do they focus on? Is adaptation authority centralized or divested?

We hear CC is global but impacts are local...but local impacts have significance at national level, economically and socially.

**Modes & Instruments**: How should adaptation be implemented? Are new instruments needed? Will “mainstreaming” be enough? Centralized authority or not?

# Framing

- In all adaptation is framed as technical or technocratic problem that can primarily be addressed through better science with a focus on addressing physical impacts and problems.
- Largely about managing risks
- In general little of no discussion on issues of fairness, justice, equity or social & ecological transformation as is seen with developing countries.

## Looking at the sector focus:

**NL** has largely reduced the problem of adaptation down to an issue of water management. Little attention to other sectors at national level





## Framing cont.

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- Key threat is from flooding (sea & inland)
- Extensive & historic expertise in dealing with hydrological issues

**UK:** Managing water is also main focus BUT

- Recognize range of sectors will be affected.
- Key to managing impacts on other sectors though comes from improved water management.
- Adaptation is layered issue w/ a central focus that serves wider adaptive actions



## Framing cont. and Levels

**SW:** At national level, a key sector to address adaptation is through the spatial planning and building sector however all sectors are considered.

- 2008 law stating CC impacts must be considered in any planning and building activities.
- However, the dominant view of adaptation is that, in fact, it should be framed at the regional and municipal level.
- Because of decentralized nature of country, geographical size of country, & diversity of impacts...
- As a result, regions and municipalities know better which sectors to prioritize and how to address impacts specific to them.

# Levels



- In the UK, conversely strong understanding adaptation should have national level coordination as impacts cover a range of sectors at all levels
- 2008 UK Climate Act which covers adaptation issues.
- National Adaptation Sub-committee
- Primary implementation responsibility though is at regional and local levels of which Nat. Govt. offers support and advice
- In NL, as with SW there is no national level programme, legislation or oversight specifically for adaptation. Adaptation= water = water management structure.
- Provinces & municipalities can (and some do) address issues of climate impacts as they see fit

# Modes & instruments

- In all countries interviewees said there were no new instruments for adaptation...(no new regs. etc.)
- Existing instruments per sector should be strengthened to include effects of future climate impacts
- The mode to achieve this was through mainstreaming

BUT

In UK: Climate Act mandates national impact assessments every 5 years

- DEFRA (Min Env.) has authority to demand risk assessments from local governments and public bodies





# Modes & instruments

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In SW despite lack of central authority,

- Each region required to have an adaptation coordinator
- Required to develop adaptation plans
- Required to review adaptation activities
- 2008 Law on spatial planning and climate impacts

We see that actually in UK & SW there are “new” regulatory requirements surrounding adaptation activities.



# Governance extremes

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**Problem framing**: In NL adaptation is basically a single issue whereas in UK it is broad and layered problem

**Potential flaw**: Lack of attention to other sectors (e.g. health, transport) may be a problem for NL.

**Levels**: In SW highly decentralized (also NL) where as UK there is robust authority

**Potential flaw**: Devolved nature might lead to policy mismatch or conflicting policies across regions in SW and NL.

**On the other hand** lack of centralization could allow for policy experimentation which might lead to ore robust and successful policies that could be shared across regions.

# Governance extremes

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**Modes & instruments**: In SW and UK some form of impact assessment and plan are required, in NL not.

**Potential flaw**: For NL potential impacts other than water may be overlooked, especially with lack of centralization

Lastly... for all countries, will the mainstreaming approach be enough?

**Thank you for your attention!**