

# COM 04 Network project

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## Context / Social problem

Climate change and adaptation to its effects are moving in fits and starts up the policy agendas of provincial and municipal councils and water boards. Despite this, it is not a popular topic among many organisations responsible for initiating and implementing policies (provinces, municipalities, water boards and the private sector). This can be attributed in part to the long-term nature of climate change compared with the shorter-term vision of many of these organisations. Because current policies, particularly on spatial planning, have long-term consequences, it is important that these bodies think now about the consequences of climate change, attempt to avoid problems in future and exploit the opportunities that climate change may present.

## What do we know/not know?

The provincial and municipal councils are the crucial players in physical planning in the Netherlands. Several provinces are already aware of the fact that the climate is changing and will have an impact on spatial development in the Netherlands. Some are now actively involved in research and reviewing plans against possible climate-related issues. Especially the municipalities still have little time for the topic. The corporate sector is busy with the implementation of the Kyoto commitments and does not yet recognise climate change as an issue requiring a response from companies, except for a few beneficial adjustments. The relatively low level of interest in the subject makes it difficult to bring science and practice together. The topic first has to be raised as an issue, and then research questions may arise from practical situations.

## What is being studied?

An important part of the programme is the dialogue between the scientific community and civil society parties that have a role to play in the spatial development of

the Netherlands. The goal of the dialogue is to combine timely dissemination of climate knowledge to stakeholders with promoting demand-driven research. This is done by issuing specials in professional magazines about climate change, by organising workshops and debates between scientists and stakeholders about research questions that are relevant for both groups, by conducting master classes and courses for stakeholders on results of the research and by bringing together science, governmental bodies and the business community to start projects around their demands. A special member of staff at the programme provides structural support for this dialogue (network manager).

The research projects must combine knowledge and expertise from both science and practice, which requires intense contacts between the parties concerned. Therefore, the project managers of the various BSIK CcSP projects have been instructed to seek contacts with civil society organisations for which they can ask support from the 'network manager'.

## What are the results?

The final goal of the project is that stakeholders use the results of the CcSP research in their practical work. Therefore the projects aim to involve regional governments, societal groups and the business community more closely in CcSP research through dialogue and in participative methods for defining research questions.

