

COM 26 Scoping study comparative assessment

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Context / Social problem

The Netherlands are a densely populated country where 16 million inhabitants share scarce room and face climate change. The responsible authorities are confronted with decision making under uncertainty on physical planning for a long time horizon with great consequences for present investments. The present study deals with the comparative assessment of decisions for physical planning at different institutional levels. What competences to act exist and how may they interact for optimal solutions?

What are the results, and who are they for?

The results of the present study are relevant for decision makers. It describes the scope of the comparative assessment and the terms of reference for assessment methods for climate proofing. Not only the physical issues are considered such as sea level rise but also the economic, institutional and behavioural aspects are taken into account. The focus is on adaptation but mitigation aspects are considered as well.

What do we know/not know?

There exists relatively little experience with the implementation of policy instruments to make a specific area climate proof or to consider in this respect a sector of economy or the living environment. In the Netherlands there is only little experience with legal aspects related to climate proofing. This study presents a reconnaissance of relevant issues with respect to that issue. Particular notice has been taken of other sectors where decision making with uncertainty plays an important role.

What is being studied?

The study defines the goals and scope of the comparative assessment. This encompasses the justification, legislative environment and assessment methods for similar decision making processes. Terms of reference for assessment instruments at different policy levels are formulated taken notice of landscape types, consequences of climate change and institutional setting. The national government, provinces, communities and water boards are actively involved in the study and frequently consulted. The relevant legal framework and institutional organization with their foreseeable or expected developments are presented.

