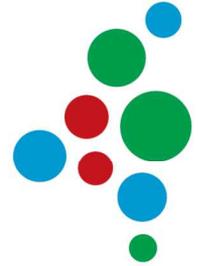


Kennis voor Klimaat

Knowledge for Climate



Project

4.1 The integration of climate adaptation in urban policy

Description of research

With cities facing climate change, climate adaptation is necessary to reduce risks such as heat stress and flooding and maintain the goals of sustainable urban development. In climate change literature, the focus has been on developing a new dedicated policy domain for climate adaptation. Yet, empirical evidence shows that in practice actors are searching for solutions that serve not only climate adaptation, but integrate the adaptation objective in existing policy domains (e.g. urban planning, water management, public health). The integration of climate adaptation in other policy domains, also called 'mainstreaming climate adaptation', can stimulate the effectiveness of policy making through combining objectives, increase efficient use of human and financial resources and ensure long-term sustainable investments. A better understanding of the process of mainstreaming is however lacking. The research introduces a conceptual model for mainstreaming climate adaptation to enhance our understanding of the concept as well as the barriers and opportunities that influence these integration processes and to explore strategies for overcoming barriers and creating opportunities.



Research question

- What can influence mainstreaming processes and how should mainstreaming be evaluated?

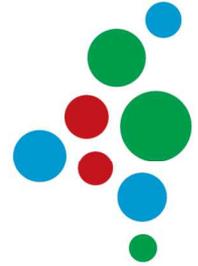


The most important conclusions

- The implementation of adaptation measures is not evident in mainstreaming processes.
- The extent of mainstreaming is constantly reconsidered as a result of barriers and opportunities that derive from other objectives in the policy process.
- As a result of this dynamic character of the mainstreaming process, obtaining a climate proof situation or conformance is hard to achieve.
- Therefore, it would make more sense to evaluate mainstreaming processes on their performance.
- Actors need to apply strategies that focus on establishing synergies and making deliberate decisions i.e. taking into consideration current and future impacts.
- More research on barriers to and opportunities for mainstreaming adaptation to increase the understanding of these processes is needed.

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Possible applications from the project

- Policy makers and project managers can learn from the study as it shows that the current perception indicates no priority for the matter due to other objectives. The communication of a stronger frame could be helpful.
- The research also includes case studies in which climate adaptation measures were mainstreamed in urban development. One of the projects shows how by linking water storage to the main infrastructure priority is given to the adaptation measure.

Opportunities for the project

- The economic crisis makes some people disregard climate adaptation, but others who believe it is an important matter to think out of the box.
- Thus far the research has mainly looked at government organizations and how they are mainstreaming climate adaptation. An opportunity for the project would be to extend the research also engaging private stakeholders (housing corporations, urban developers, etc). Tips on how to approach this are welcome.



Bottlenecks of the project

- In the beginning, governance was low on the agenda, which was a serious bottleneck for me and my colleagues of the governance work package. But after last CPC meeting, both researchers and hotspots started to understand 'governance' and see the relation with their own work.
- I learned that in some municipalities there is a clear distinction between mitigation and adaptation policies. Mitigation is more established in municipalities than adaptation. This is not necessarily an issue. The issue is that bringing the two together in policy today which is difficult.
- Climate adaptation has a vulnerable position in any policy process in which the main objective is not climate adaptation. Implementation of climate adaptation is therefore uncertain.
- The current economic situation makes it difficult to find urban projects that are currently being developed.

More information

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