

Delta Session DS 1: Regional Elbe/Hamburg

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In the Elbe estuary large changes have taken place in the past, are presently going on and are to be expected in the futures – changes related to societal use and management, natural causes and climate change. Issues are the tidal regime, sediment regime, ecosystem functioning and storm surge risk.

The city and the population of Hamburg are broadly aware of these changes. A well cooperating network of basic and applied science institutions, of decision- and policymaker has been established, dealing with climate change and scenarios, estuary and port management, landscape and urban planning, engineering as well as social and cultural sciences. Regional climate services, including the assessment of available scientifically legitimate knowledge (Hamburg climate report), are supporting these policy-science interactions.

Efforts for developing better governance tools and processes are needed, e.g. with respect to planning, timing and implementing coastal defense measures or adaptive estuarine management (such as dyke relocations). For doing so, knowledge about beliefs, perceptions and preferences hold by the population as well as among key social actors is needed as an important component of the challenge of future development is beginning to emerge in Hamburg.