Session DD 7.4: Methods – scenarios

Chairs	Prof.dr. Piet Rietveld, VU University, the Netherlands
Speakers	Kelly Levin, World Resources Institute, USA
	Dr. Bert Enserink, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands
	Marjolijn Haasnoot, Deltares, the Netherlands
	Prof.dr. Jörg Knieling, HafenCity University, Hamburg, Germany
Rapporteur	MSc. Marit Heinen, Climate changes Spatial Planning, the Netherlands

The World resource report 2010, a joint publication of the UN Development Programme, UN Environment programme, the World Bank and World Resources Institute, will explore the topic of "decision making in a changing climate" in the course of 2010. It will shed light upon how decision making processes can be designed to both anticipate and respond to climate change impacts, and policymaking processes in developing countries.

Bert Enserink held a provoking presentation about the use and misuse of scenarios in the climate change debate. According to Bert, climate scientists tend to forget about other truths (and other disciplines). "A scenario is NOT a prediction of the future." "Scenarios and model outcomes are NOT the same." "Some uncertainties ARE uncertain". The Dutch Delta Commission based their advise on the worst case scenario but there is no evidence that this scenario is more likely to occur. Pieter Bloemen in the audience responded that this was the request from the Dutch government, they wanted to be prepared for the worst. Another member of the audience responded that if the worst case scenario happens, you get maximum benefits from your investments. "That is another way of looking at it." Climate change is probably not the biggest uncertainty, that is socio-economic development!

Exploring adaptation pathways into an uncertain future can support decision making to achieve sustainable water management in a changing environment. The objective of Marjolijn Haasnoot is to develop and test a method to identify such pathways for sustainable water management by including dynamics such as interaction between water and society. By including the dynamics of water system and society the influence of uncertainties in both systems becomes clearer.

There is a strong tendency to focus on decision support systems for the public sector. It would be nice to see some more focus on the private sector; or an optimal mix of both sectors.