



Socio-Economic And Cultural Contingencies In The Planning, Implementation And Transfer Of Climate Adaptation Action

Grit Martinez, Fanny Frick & Kira Gee, Ecologic Institute, Germany

ABSTRACT

Culture and tradition are an undervalued part of climate adaptation action research. Research tends to either focus on the actual extent of climate change (modelling impacts), or the technical feasibility of adaptation measures. Comparatively little effort is spent on understanding perceptions of climate change, or the cultural prerequisites for developing successful strategies for adaptation.

Through such cultural dynamics motivations in society for climate action e.g. acceptance of adaptation measures and cooperation in a given context can be uncovered. This can provide new perspectives on branding, categories and the wider cultural environment. And in doing so, it offers access to otherwise hidden knowledge and helps building socio-ecological networks and systems for climate adaptation action.

The presentation deals with the perception of climate risks and different resulting measures for adaptation to climate change developed in selected coastal municipalities. We attempt to trace the reasons behind these differences based on empirical work such as interviews with political decision-makers and residents as well as document analysis. The contribution examines the respective cultural traditions in selected communities. This particularly focuses on images of nature, people's relationships to the sea, economic development and past approaches and attitudes to coastal defense. It sets out the specific constellation of social-cultural, ecologic and economic driving forces that led communities to adopt a different approach, with particular focus on different factors of success. It is argued that cultural traditions and historical development are undervalued but significant determinant in the selection of local adaptation strategies and that greater account needs to be taken of such local specificities (and mentalities) to create a bottom-up drive for adaptation strategies.

The study forms part of the FP7- research project BASE (Bottom-up Climate Adaptation Strategies towards a sustainable Europe).

REFERENCES

- Adger W N, Barnett J, Brown K, Marshall N, O'Brien K. , 2012 "Cultural dimensions of climate change and adaptation" *Nature Climate Change* 2012
- Döring M, Settekorn W, Storch von (Eds) 2005, *Küstenbilder, Bilder der Küste. Interdisziplinäre Ansichten, Ansätze und Konzepte*, Hamburg University Press, Hamburg
- Fischer L, 2011 "Maritime Gedächtniskultur an der Nordseeküste: Adaptionen der Katastrophe". In: Fischer L, Reise K (Eds) *Küstenmentalität und Klimawandel. Küstenwandel als kulturelle soziale Herausforderung*. Oekom Verlag, München
- Kempton W, 1999 "Cultural Models of Nature". In: Boster J, Kempton W, Hartley, J (Eds) "Environmental Values in American Culture". MIT Press, Massachusetts
- Shackley S, Deanwood R, 2009 "Stakeholder Perceptions of Climate Change Impacts at the Regional Scale: Implications for the Effectiveness of Regional and Local Responses", *Environmental Planning and Management*, 45 (3) 381-402.