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Coherent Policy Instruments for Climate Change Adaptation?

Anders Branth Pedersen, Helle Ørsted Nielsen, Kirsi Mäkinen, Jenny Troeltzsch & Benjamin Boteler, Department of Environmental Science Aarhus University, Denmark

ABSTRACT

Strategic documents such as the 2009 EU White Paper on Adaptation and the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework identify climate adaptation as a necessary complement to mitigation. Cost effective and efficient climate adaptation is of key relevance, together with the enhancement of market opportunities and innovation (Europe 2020 goals; the 2050 Road Map). Climate change adaptation cuts across multiple sectors and therefore requires an integrated policy strategy. Often, procedures for addressing cross-sectoral issues lack coherence (OECD Policy Brief October 2002). Moreover, development of policy strategies to tackle a new problem interacts and may even conflict with existing policies in related policy areas, deepening the problem of coherence. This paper therefore aims to assess policy mixes being implemented to address climate change adaptation in Denmark, Finland and Germany We map and characterize the intervention logic embedded in policy instruments for climate change adaptation implemented in relevant policy areas (see e.g. Vedung 2009). In order to assess the policy mix we apply the framework developed by Howlett and Rayner (2007) examining the coherence of policy objectives and the consistency of policy instruments in the mix as well as with instruments already in place in selected related policy fields. In addition to policy sectors, the analysis will focus on the distinction between instruments aiming to encourage private action versus instruments aiming at public action in order to examine how the border between public and private responsibilities is conceptualized. Finally, we will discuss how the time frame and the intervention logic of the possible adaptive measures affect conclusions concerning the consistency of instruments. The analysis is primarily based on literature review and uses data from the European Union's Climate-Adapt data base supplemented with data gathered by national experts.