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BENEFIT OF GOVERNANCE
IN DROUGHT ADAPTATION



Regional Governance and Management for Drought and Scarcity Adaptation in NWE – First Insights from the DROP Project



CLARR, Bremen

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Objective of DROP

To enhance the preparedness and resilience of Northwest European regions to periods of drought and water scarcity

Key actions:

- Implementation of innovative adaptation measures
- Assessment of regional governance settings
- Defining and sharing of transnational lessons learnt

Implemented between January 2013 and June 2015 with support of the Interreg IVb programme for Northwest Europe

11 partners: 6 water authorities and 5 knowledge institutes

Nature pilots

Agriculture pilots

Freshwater pilots

Governance team



Governance assessment tool

Hypothesis: Governance settings need to become more supportive: policy implementation is as yet a key problem

Governance forms the context in which drought adaptation actions and interactions occur

- The governance setting can be described in terms of
 - the multiplicity of responsibilities and resources, instruments, goals, actors, networks and scales
- Supportive governance involves high degrees of
 - extent, coherence, flexibility and intensity

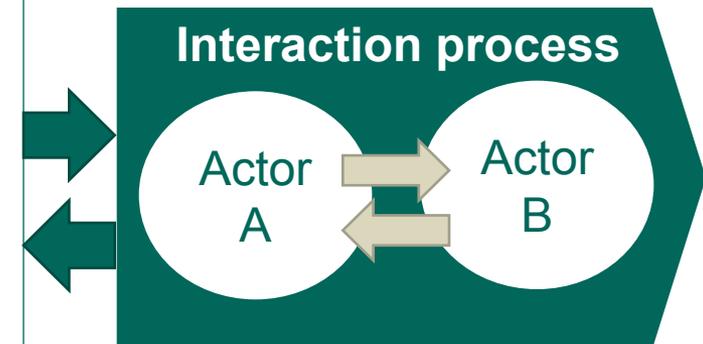
Governance: the structural context that enables/restricts adaptation actions and interactions

Wider context: political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, problem

Structural (governance) context:

- Levels and scales
- Actors and networks
- Problem perceptions and goal ambitions
- Strategies and instruments
- Responsibilities and resources for implementation

Specific context: previous decision, specific circumstances



Matrix form of governance assessment tool

Governance dimension	Quality criteria of the governance regime			
	Extent	Coherence	Flexibility	Intensity
Levels and scales	How many levels are involved and dealing with an issue?	Do these levels work together and do they trust other between levels?	Is it possible to move up and down levels (upscaling and downscaling) given the issue at stake?	Is there a strong impact from a certain level to change behaviour?
Actors and networks	Are all relevant stakeholders involved? Who are excluded?	What is the strength of interactions between stakeholders?	Is it practised that the lead shifts from one actor to another?	Is there a strong impact from an actor or actor coalition on water management?
Problem perspectives / goal ambitions	To what extent are the various problem perspectives taken care off?	To what extent do the various goals support each other, or Are they in competition?	Are there opportunities to re-assess goals?	How different are the goal ambitions from the status quo?
Strategies and instruments	What types of instruments are included in the policy strategy?	To what extent is the resulting incentive system based on synergy?	Are there opportunities to combine or make use of different types of instruments?	What is the implied behavioural deviation from current practice?
Responsibilities and resources	Are responsibilities clearly assigned and sufficiently facilitated with resources?	To what extent do the assigned responsibilities create competence struggles or cooperation within or across institutions?	What is the flexibility within the assigned responsibility to apply resources in order to do the right thing in an accountable and transparent way?	Is the amount of applied resources sufficient for the intended change?

(see report of Bressers et al., 2013)

Practice of drought adaptation: Eifel (Germany)



- Freshwater reservoirs built (100 years ago) for flood prevention
 - Currently also serving for low-water enrichment and drinking water supply
 - Conflicts about use
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- Pilot measure: Study and develop management options on the water quality of the system of large reservoirs in the upper Rur catchment for long and dry periods
 - How to create productive interactions between many diverse stakeholders in a transition setting?

Practice of drought adaptation: Eifel (Germany) – Results

	Criteria			
Dimension	Extent	Coherence	Flexibility	Intensity
Levels	↓			↑
Actors	↑	↑	↑	↑
Perceptions	↑		↑	↑
Instruments		↑	↑	↑
Resources			↑	↑
<i>Colours Red: negative; Yellow: neutral, Green: positive</i>				
<i>Arrow Up: positive trend in time, Arrow Down: negative trend, Equal: stable trend</i>				

Preliminary Observations

- Drought as yet seems to be a “second-order problem” when compared to major issues with long historical experience such as floods.
- Droughts in NWE occur with less frequency and have less visibility for general public, they still have the potential to inflict serious and even severe damages on different economic sectors
- Drought definitions are different in the different regions. Sometimes to talk about “extreme events“ instead of drought is both more precise and practical.
- Awareness for WS&D issues amongst stakeholders in most cases not much developed

Preliminary Observations II

- Central role of local or regional water authorities in most cases. At the same “retreating state”. Consequence: gaps in coherence and extent of the governance regime occur
- Gaps: Those regions seem to be successful where newbie's (e.g. water boards, water utilities) can fill this role. Prerequisite: This process need to be backed with money and accompanied with governance changes. Example: “catchment partnership” in UK

Preliminary Observations III

- In many cases the “classic” top-down Water management approach is slowly changing towards more collaborative and participatory management options. WFD and its daughter directives can be seen as main drivers.
- Regional differences of planning approaches: Statutory and voluntary approaches, SOP’s (“standard operating procedures”): e.g. science evidence approach (data gathering first) and / or network building approach

Preliminary Conclusions

Science implications:

- Solid scientific regionalisation of CC consequences and its impacts on all sectors are needed as basis for adaptation responses (natural resilience, forecasting of extreme events).

Policy implications:

- Awareness raising need to be given more attention. Two options:
 - Aiming to place drought on the agenda on its own, as an independent problem
 - Addressing drought by linking water goals with external sectors. Connect to other political agendas (“piggy backing” strategies)
- Awareness raising using “early adopters” as “showcases”. In regions with drought issues: Pilots, demonstration projects, and best practice exchange schemes

Preliminary Conclusions II

Management implications

- Prepare a strategy for when a drought receives political attention to use “windows of opportunity” (“Plans in the drawer”)
- Making use of synergies: Linking drought resilience with flood resilience and, when relevant, water quality (“fast vs. slow water”; “building with nature”)
- We need regional adaptation strategies (e.g. for basins) as input for water management. A joined vision (“Leitbild”) for the future.

Project outcomes and results

Since 2013 – project information available

- Project website (including project blog) and leaflet
- Report of the governance assessment tool
- Report with descriptions of the pilot measures

2014 – implementation of key project activities

- Governance reports and guide
- Handbook on best practice

2015 – further dissemination of results

- National meetings and publications



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