



Barriers and guidelines in adaptation policy making: Taking stock, analysing congruence and providing guidance

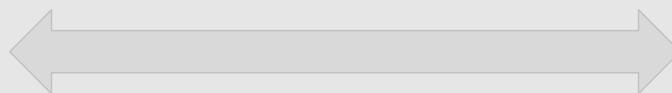
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Background

1. Adaptation policies often face **barriers/obstacles/challenges** which have been widely addressed by the **scientific community**

2. **Decision-support frameworks** (e.g. written guidelines) aim to **facilitate** adaptation policy making and thus, should address **relevant barriers**



Missing link!

Aim of the present work

= close this gap by linking research on barriers and existing guidelines for adaptation policy making

Three research questions

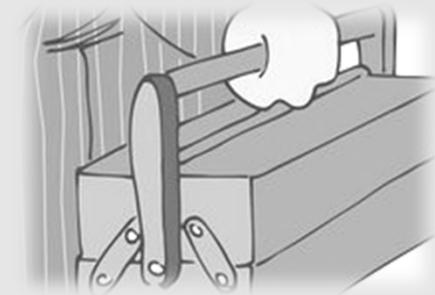
1. What are the **key barriers** that hinder adaptation policy making as identified in the scientific literature? How can the barriers be organised or **classified** meaningfully?
2. What **guidelines** exist that aim to facilitate public policy making on adaptation? Who developed them based on what kind of evidence, what sectoral themes do they address, whom do they target, and what is their key purpose?
3. **How far** do selected **guidelines** address the **barriers** identified in the adaptation literature explicitly and implicitly? What do they propose to overcome particular barriers?

Excuse: „FAMOUS“ project:

Factory for Adaptation Measures Operated by Users at different Scales

Main objective = facilitate the adaptation process to climate change in Austrian provinces, regions and cities

- develop an **tailor-made adaptation handbook** based on scientific knowledge and in cooperation with potential users (= *policy makers and decision makers working at provincial, regional or city level*)
- **apply and test handbook** in two case studies, reflecting the scales we are aiming at: (i) a province (Upper Austria) and (ii) a region (Waldviertel)
- **improve** handbook based on the **lessons learnt** from testing



Barriers in adaptation policy making



Methodology

- **Literature** analyses
 - 49 journal articles
 - all between 2001 – 2011

- **Themes** in the literature
 - Barriers in adaptation policy making
 - Governance of climate change adaptation
 - (Comparative) evaluation of policies, strategies and programmes
 - Science-policy interface
 - ...

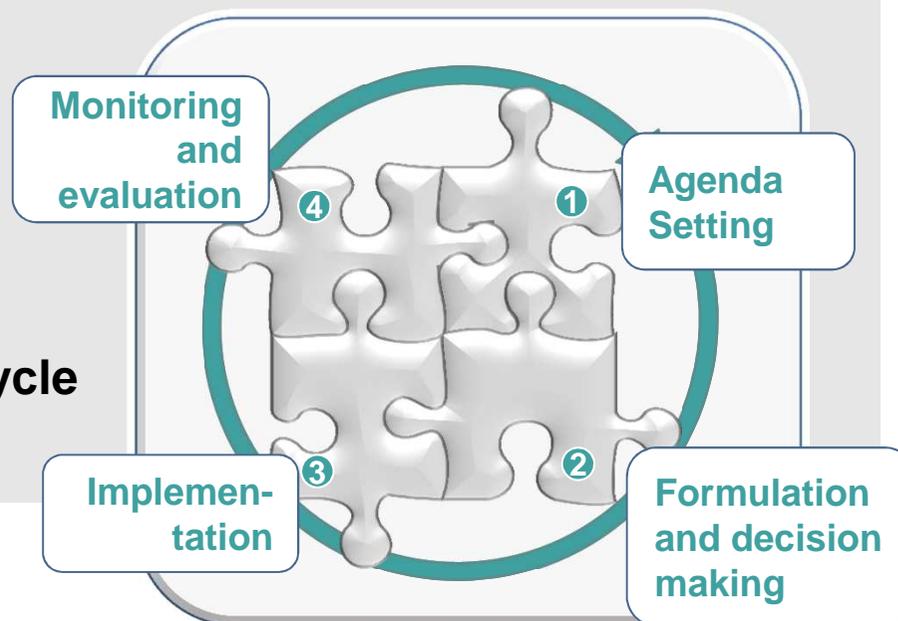
Framework for analysing barriers

Definitions

- *Limits* are absolute: physical, cannot be overcome
- *Barriers* are obstacles “that can be overcome with concerted effort, ...”
- Focus on barriers in the political domain that hinder adaptation policy making

Classification of barriers around the policy cycle model

PLUS Cross-cutting barriers relevant for all phases of the policy cycle



Cross-cutting barriers

Lack of political commitment

Responsibilities are inadequate or unclear

Inadequate cooperation

Not enough resources

Lack of evidence or certainty

Insufficient knowledge-brokerage and networking

Agenda setting barriers



No or too little awareness among policy makers

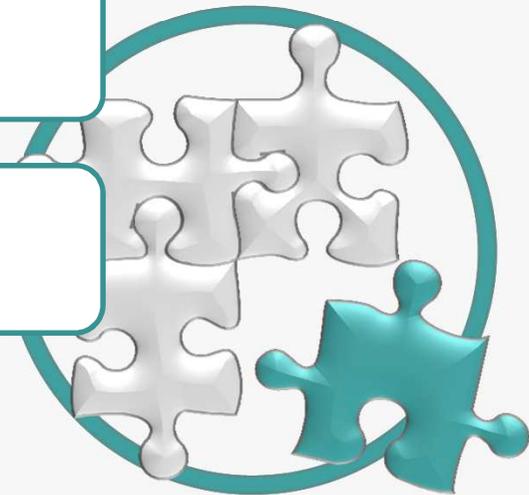
Priorities are disputed

Policy formulation and decision making barriers

Lack of expertise among policy makers

Conflicting values and interests

Available options are unsatisfactory for policy makers



Implementation barriers

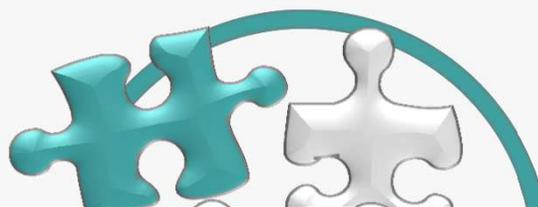
Adaptation policy is politically/administratively infeasible

No adequate technological solution available

Legal issues



Monitoring and evaluation barriers



Complexity of policy impacts and outcomes

Lack of experience with monitoring and evaluation practices in the context of adaptation

Guidelines



Guidelines for adaptation policy making

- Keyword internet search to identify written guidelines in English

Result = 32 guidelines

published between 1998-2011

- **Publishers:**

International organisations (e.g. UNDP, WHO) or institutions working on international level (e.g. GTZ, USAID)	17
National ministries	9
EU Commission (and ECDC)	3
within EU financed projects	3

Guidelines for adaptation policy making

■ **Authoring teams:**

Researchers or consultants in cooperation with publisher	17
Research institutes or consultants	11
Publisher organisation	5

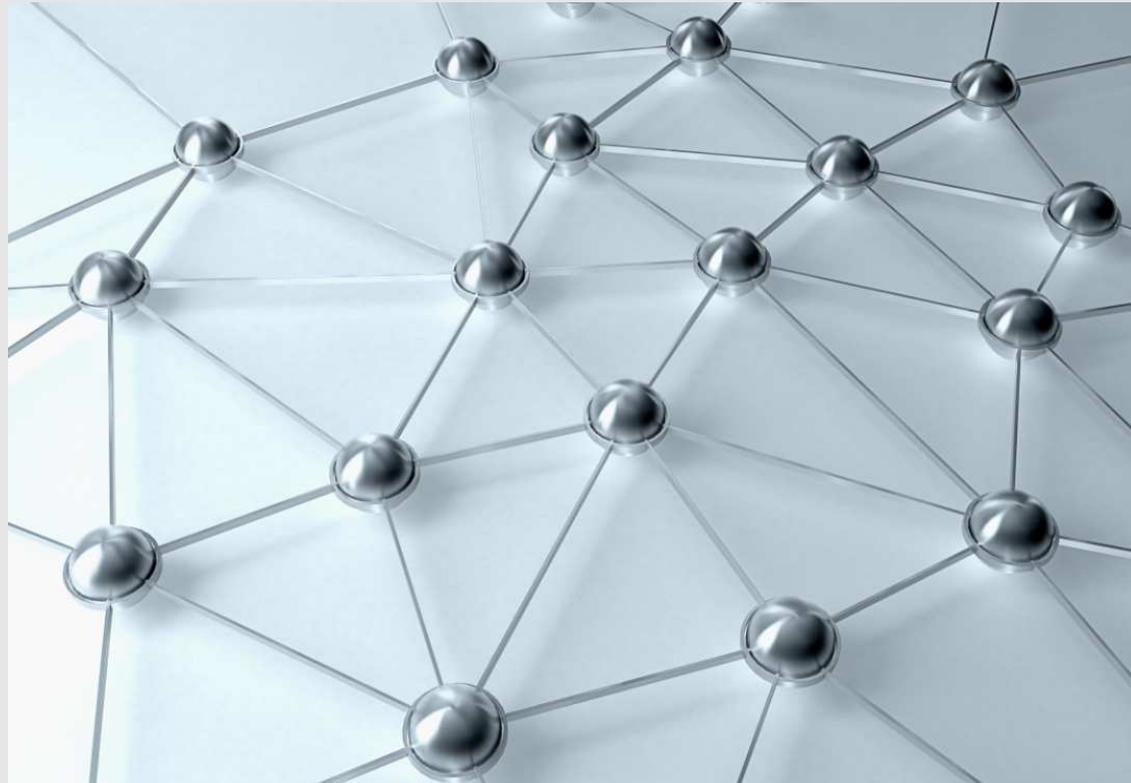
■ **Methodology:**

Expert study including external feedback	8
Expert study	5
Expert study with test cases	4
Literature review	4
No information	12

First conclusions on existing guidelines

- often **no indication** on what **evidence bases** they build (e.g. scientific results, practical experiences, case studies)
- follow mostly some kind of a **policy cycle** and thus, have a similar structure (even if they address a specific sector or level of decision making)
- **vary** in **content** and level of **detail**
- focus on **supporting** the **development** of adaptation policies and less on implementation and/or monitoring
- **provide support** in form of checklists or decision trees, compilation of methods for e.g. vulnerability assessment, prioritisation of measures ... **BUT**
- **missing information** in terms of their **actual impact and usefulness!**

Barriers in guidelines



Analysis of guidelines in two steps:

1. **Key term search** to identify which barrier (obstacle/challenge/limit/constrain) are explicitly mentioned (carried out for all 32 guidelines)
2. **Full content analyses** to identify suggestions that guidelines provide to overcome barriers (assessed for 12 guidelines selected by criteria)

Step 1: Barriers explicitly mentioned in guidelines

Barriers	# of mentions in guidelines
Lack of evidence or certainty (C.5)	17
Not enough resources (C.4)	13
Legal issues (I.3)	11
Responsibilities are inadequate or unclear (C.2)	9
Conflicting values and interests (F.2)	9
Insufficient knowledge-brokerage and networking (C.6)	5
Inadequate cooperation (C.3)	5
No or too little awareness among policy makers (A.1)	5
Priorities are disputed (A.2)	5
Lack of expertise among policy makers (F.1)	5
Lack of political commitment (C.1)	4
No adequate technological solutions (I.2)	3
Available options are unsatisfactory (F.3)	2
Complexity of policy impacts and outcomes (E.1)	1
Lack of experience with monitoring and evaluation practices (E.2)	0
Policy is politically/administrative infeasible (I.1)	0

Step 2: Suggestions on how to overcome barriers

One example

■ Lack of political commitment

A few suggestions included in the guidelines, e.g.

- ⇒ identifying the reasons why there is a lack of commitment to be able to develop more support incrementally
- ⇒ involving key decision-makers from the start
- ⇒ holding meetings with decision makers
- ⇒ providing briefings on the need for adaptation and making a business case for adaptation

Conclusion



Three main conclusions

1. Although guidelines are supposed to **help overcoming difficulties** in adaptation policy making
 - evidence base is often unclear
 - barriers are usually not at the centre of their attention (none of the guidance documents address all or even a major part of the barriers identified)
 - only one barrier („lack of evidence/certainty“) addressed frequently
2. Although most of the guidelines (27 out of 32) explicitly mention certain barriers, **linkages between barriers and recommendations are unsystematic:**
 - barriers are mentioned but not addressed with advice („unclear responsibilities“)
 - tools obviously address barriers that are not mentioned as such (“inadequate cooperation“, no or too little awareness among policy makers“)
3. Barriers that are **highly context-specific** and/or **difficult to overcome** are often addressed with **general suggestions** that may not offer much help to policy-makers

Thanks!

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