

Linking Adaptation to Climate Change and Sustainable Development: The Case of ClimAdaPT.Local in Portugal

Authors : A. F. Alves, L. Schmidt, J. Ferrao

Abstract : Portugal is one of the more vulnerable European countries to the impacts of climate change. These include: temperature increase; coastal sea level rise; desertification and drought in the countryside; and frequent and intense extreme weather events. Hence, adaptation strategies to climate change are of great importance. This is what was addressed by ClimAdaPT.Local. This policy-oriented project had the main goal of developing 26 Municipal Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change, through the identification of local specific present and future vulnerabilities, the training of municipal officials, and the engagement of local communities. It is intended to be replicated throughout the whole territory and to stimulate the creation of a national network of local adaptation in Portugal. Supported by methodologies and tools specifically developed for this project, our paper is based on the surveys, training and stakeholder engagement workshops implemented at municipal level. In an 'adaptation-as-learning' process, these tools functioned as a social-learning platform and an exercise in knowledge and policy co-production. The results allowed us to explore the nature of local vulnerabilities and the exposure of gaps in the context of reappraisal of both future climate change adaptation opportunities and possible dysfunctionalities in the governance arrangements of municipal Portugal. Development issues are highlighted when we address the sectors and social groups that are both more sensitive and more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We argue that a pluralistic dialogue and a common framing can be established between them, with great potential for transformational adaptation. Observed climate change, present-day climate variability and future expectations of change are great societal challenges which should be understood in the context of the sustainable development agenda.

Keywords : adaptation, ClimAdaPT.Local, climate change, Portugal, sustainable development

Conference Title : ICESCC 2018 : International Conference on Earth Science and Climate Change

Conference Location : Montreal, Canada

Conference Dates : May 24-25, 2018