



The challenge of framing adaptation policies: influence of policy design on implementation feasibility

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Introduction

- Adaptation policies are encountering barriers and their implementation seems deficient
 - Adaptation is present on political agendas and programs are being developed
 - Few concrete outputs produced by policies
 - Added value of these outputs is questionable
- Do the form and content of adaptation policies (*policy design or policy framing*) play any role in this deficit?
 - This question might be particularly relevant since conceptions of what is adaptation, to what we should adapt and with what objectives differ importantly

Different framings of adaptation

Model of adaptation	Problem-framing	Goals	Instruments	Climate change centrism	Source
Adaptation to climate change	Climate change which is a phenomenon caused by human activities represents an important threat that is additional to the risks related to climate natural variability	Mitigate the additional and specific effects and risks of anthropogenic climate change	Measures based on climate-scenarios Disaster and risk reduction focused on future events Anticipation of future conditions in natural resource management		First Assessment Report of the IPCC (Pentland, Theys, & Abrol, 1990, p. 166) Article 4, UNFCCC, 1992
Socio-ecological resilience	Climate variability, which is basically a deviation from climate norm, is problematic for the present and the future independently of its causes.	Reduce the vulnerability to present and future climate variability	Natural resource management. (Management of climate variability effects)		Second assessment report of the IPCC (Trenberth, Houghton, & Filho, 1995, p. 56) Third assessment report of the IPCC (IPCC, 2001, p. 984)
Social vulnerability	Vulnerability to climate change is a symptom of a more general vulnerability to external stress caused by a range of contextual factors	Reduce the diverse drivers of present vulnerability	Empowerment Economic Development Vulnerability Centred Natural resource management Social schemes		Fourth assessment report of the IPCC (Adger & al, 2007)

Vulnerability centrism

Research questions related to the framing of adaptation

- Which characteristics of adaptation framing are likely to lead to what outcomes in terms of implementation success?

Definition of the dependent variable: adaptation policy

- What is an *adaptation policy* and what criteria permit to distinguish it from other policies or from private adaptation
- We propose the following definition. Adaptation policy is:
“The group of decisions and activities, taken by public actors at different institutional levels, which deal coherently -at least in intention -with climate change related impacts, which target vulnerable areas or actors, and which produce concrete and identifiable outputs.”

How to measure implementation success?

- Implementation can be said successful when it encounters few barriers to its realisation. We propose two indicators to measure the presence of barriers
 - *Delay*, can occur as a result of parliamentary opposition or because of active or passive resistance by implementing actors
 - *Unconformity*, that is when outputs produced held little relation to policy objectives cannot contribute to its achievement

Policy design definition

- **Policy design” designates the main constituent of public policy:**
 - Goals that proceed from the framing of a collective problem,
 - Causal model that designates which actors are able to contribute to resolving the collective problem (target groups) and in the benefit of whom (beneficiaries) and through which burden-sharing agreement.
 - Intervention model is the set of instruments that have to be deployed to force, persuade, or incite target groups to act or to modify their behaviour in order to attain policy goals

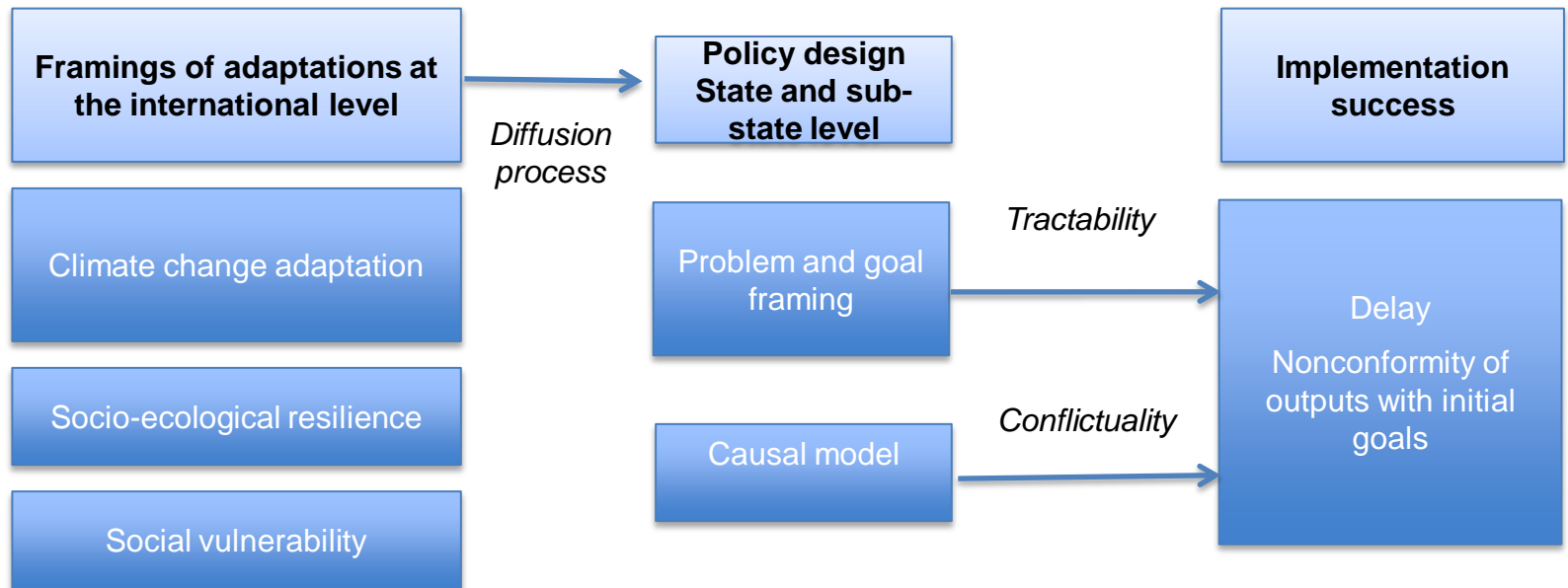
Problem & goal framing influence on implementation success

- Every policy problem and goal definition are not tractable to the same extent
 - Ambiguity (incoherence between problems – goals – means)
 - Ambiguity in the articulation between problems goals and means lead to confusion, dysfunction and uncertainty in the implementation phase. Ambiguous problem and goal definition could lead to a “programmed implementation shortfall”
 - Salience
 - Political definition of social problems can be quite divorced from people’s preoccupation. Hence, it is likely that a policy problem which is not perceived as a salient issue by implementing actors or target and beneficiary groups will be more hardly tractable.

Causal model construction influence on implementation success

- Redistributive design, which implies a resource transfer from target groups to beneficiaries are likely to generate more conflictuality in the implementation phase than distributive designs which consist of a direct transfer of good and services from state to beneficiaries
- Furthermore, policies which attribute burdens to social groups that are both powerful and well reputed (see: Schneider, 2006; Ingram et al. 2007) are more likely to face conflictuality during implementation

Analytical model: summary of theoretical expectations



Research design: comparative case study analysis

Implementation Success High Low	WOTR Climate Change Adaptation Program <i>Variables of analysis: Policy design</i> Problem framing: Vulnerability centred Causal model: Distributive, dependent model Intervention model: Natural resources management, hortatory and education tools <i>Control variables</i> Location: Maharashtra Level: Regional Domain: Rural development Time period: 2009-2013 Climate risks: Change in rainfall patterns, drought Beneficiaries: Poor communities with low adaptive capacity	Alpes Vaudoises 2020 <i>Variables of analysis: Policy design</i> Problem framing: Vulnerability centred Causal model: Distributive, dependent model Intervention model: Conditional aid and subsidies <i>Control variables</i> Location: Vaud Level: Regional Domain: Rural development Time period: 2003-201? Climate risks: Snowline elevation Beneficiaries: Exposed and sensible economic-sector with limited adaptive capacities
	Vulnerability & Assessment program <i>Variables of analysis: Policy design</i> Problem framing: Climate centred Causal model: Distributive, dependent model Intervention model: Natural resources management, hortatory and education tools <i>Control variables</i> Location: Rajasthan Level: Regional Domain: Rural development Time period: 2005-2009 Climate risks: Change in rainfall patterns, drought Beneficiaries: Poor communities with low adaptive capacity	Swiss National Adaptation Strategy <i>Variables of analysis: Policy design</i> Problem framing: Climate centred Causal model: Redistributive, polluters-pay principle Intervention model: Not defined yet <i>Control variables</i> Location: Multiple including Vaud Level: National Domain: multiple including rural development Time period: 2008-201? Climate risks: Multiple including snowline elevation Beneficiaries: Not defined yet

Results Indian context (V&A and CCA)

Adaptation Policy	Problem and goal framing	Causal model	Explanatory mechanisms	Implementation success
V&A	Climate-centred	Distributive Dependent model	<p>Low salience of the problem definition in the context of implementation</p> <p>No management of trade-offs and ambiguities between economic development pathway and climate change adaptation</p>	Lower conformity of outputs with initial goals
CCA	Vulnerability-centred	Distributive Dependent model	<p>High salience of the problem definition</p> <p>Low ambiguity. Economic development prioritised. Climate change adaptation integrated through education and sustainable production practices</p>	Higher conformity of outputs with initial goals

Results Swiss context

Adaptation Policy	Problem and goal framing	Causal model	Explanatory mechanisms	Implementation success
Suisse National Adaptation Strategy	Climate-centred	Redistributive Burden on GHG emitters to the benefit of vulnerable areas and actors	Low salience No management of potential trade-offs between climate-change adaptation objectives and current policy framework High conflictuality of the proposition to apply the polluter must pay principle	Low conformity of outputs Delay
Vision Alpes vaudoises 2020	Social vulnerability-centred	Distributive Dependent model	High salience Low ambiguity. Economic development prioritised. Climate change adaptation directly tackled in a second step through artificial snowmaking and ski area extension. Implementation conditioned to environmental impact and climate studies results	High conformity of outputs Delay in the implementation of instruments tackling specifically climate effects.

Discussion of results

- Policies that focus on climate change effects in problem and goal framing tend to be less feasible than policies aimed at reducing drivers of social vulnerability
 - Climate impacts are not perceived as a salient issue in every context..
 - Climate focused policies are likely to encounter more trade-offs because of the way they prioritise climate factors over other potential stressors in problem and goal framing (V&A+ VAP2020)
 - Uncertainty in future climate change impacts is still an obstacle even in highly developed country

Discussion of results

- Second, redistributive policy design which attributes the burden of adaptation on GHG emitters tend to generate more conflictuality and are thus less feasible
 - Political opposition of GHG emitters
 - Potential beneficiaries of adaptation policies often contribute to some extent to climate change. Counter-incitation to claim for fairness in burden-sharing
 - Uncertainty in the attribution of climate change causes makes the design of redistributive policies hard to legitimate

Conclusion and recommendations

- Ambitious adaptation policies which tackle directly future climate risks with a fair distribution of burden and benefits are those which are the less likely to be politically feasible.
 - Focus on future risks according to precaution mechanism
 - Climate justice through redistributive design
- Eligibility rules to the several adaptation funds that are managed by the UNFCCC and the GEF are counter-productive to the elaboration of policies that are feasible
- Climate change impacts can be presently addressed with positive outcomes by a reinforcement of current environmental and natural resources protection.