

## 44 - Adaptation Policy & Governance

### The innovation of adaptation policies across scales

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Adaptation policies are being adopted by national, regional and local governments at a rapid pace, particularly in Europe. In the period 2005-2010, the total number of recorded adaptation policy measures in the EU grew by some 635% .

How though can we understand this rapid growth, which presents a bit of a puzzle in times of austerity and policy dismantling? This session has two objectives. First, to allow for a deeper understanding of current policy development in the adaptation domain by examining it through the lens of policy innovation theory.

In general the existing literature on climate policy innovation has a distinctive bias towards mitigation. Second, to contribute to the policy innovation discussion by exploring the effects policy adoption and diffusion is having on governments and societies.

How do these objectives go beyond the current state of art? First, in a survey of the literature several reasons for the rapid growth in adaptation policies have been postulated but not systematically tested.

Most accounts draw on disparate sources, appear as footnotes in articles about other topics and lack an adequate grounding in an appropriate theoretical framework.

As such, a comprehensive and structured assessment of the potential drivers (and barriers) of adoption and diffusion is lacking but much needed. Second, the innovation literature largely tends to ignore what happens after policies are diffused and adopted however, it is also important to understand how changes in policy effect existing policy landscapes. This is especially true if adaptation is to have any meaningful impact.

This ¼ day session would consist of 4-5 research papers that:

1. Empirically explore the drivers of and/or obstacles to policy adoption and diffusion across countries or across different jurisdictions within countries.
2. Examine the dynamics of multileveled policy diffusion (e.g. EU versus Member States, World Bank vis-à-vis recipient states).
3. Trace the effects of policy adoption and diffusion at the local, regional and/or national level.

The outcomes of the research presented at the session should find an audience for both academics and policymakers.