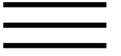


Does public policy support or undermine climate change adaptation? Exploring policy interplay across different scales of governance.

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Does public policy support or undermine climate change adaptation? Exploring policy interplay across different scales of governance

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Abstract

Policy makers have now recognised the need to integrate thinking about climate change into all areas of public policy making. However, the discussion of ‘climate policy integration’™ has tended to focus on mitigation decisions mostly taken at international and national levels. Clearly, there is also a more locally focused adaptation dimension to climate policy integration, which has not been adequately explored by academics or policy makers. Drawing on a case study of the UK, this paper adopts both a top-down and a bottom-up perspective to explore how far different sub-elements of policies within the agriculture, nature conservation and water sectors support or

undermine potential adaptive responses. The top-down approach, which assumes that policies set explicit aims and objectives that are directly translated into action on the ground, combines a content analysis of policy documents with interviews with policy makers. The bottom-up approach recognises the importance of other actors in shaping policy implementation and involves interviews with actors in organisations within the three sectors. This paper reveals that neither approach offers a complete picture of the potentially enabling or constraining effects of different policies on future adaptive planning, but together they offer new perspectives on climate policy integration. These findings inform a discussion on how to implement climate policy integration, including auditing existing policies and “climate proofing” new ones so they support rather than hinder adaptive planning.



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Keywords

Climate change; Adaptation; Policy making; Climate policy integration; Climate proofing

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