



Regional environmental agencies as facilitators for communicating climate change information

Heike Huebener

Hessian Agency for Environment and Geology, Hessian Centre for Climate Change, Wiesbaden, Germany
(heike.huebener@hlug.hessen.de)

The world is staring at the global conferences to mitigate climate change and to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Undoubtedly, the global community and the large economies of the world have the greatest influence and responsibility for this. However, regional players are the hinge between the global declarations and the people who have to actually realize the measures. A great many number of regions are already active and have ambitious goals on climate protection. Additionally, regions are already planning and implementing adaptation strategies.

Regional environmental agencies serve as policy advisors at the level where actual measures have to be implemented. They face the challenge of explaining the complex climate projection results to non-climatologists while often themselves not being climatologists. The measures for climate protection and climate adaptation are very costly and thus the decision support provided by the agencies has to give reliable answers to the respective planning questions, ideally with a financial assessment of the cost of inaction versus the cost of action. Furthermore, governmental bodies are an often sought and well trusted source of information for the general public.

The environmental agencies in Germany have formed regular working groups to face these challenges. In these working groups the interpretation of climate projections as well as regional climate impacts and the necessary adaptation measures are discussed. As one result of these working groups e.g. a guideline has been formulated on how to present regional climate and climate change information to political stakeholders and the general public.

The presentation will cover some examples of collaboration between regional environmental agencies in Germany for climate change research and will highlight some problems and challenges these agencies face. One aim of this presentation is to give the climate research community an insight into the work and responsibility of environmental agencies. The other aim is to help bridging the gap between climate research community and the local stakeholders. To reach this goal we have to intensify the exchange between the providers and the users of the climate projection data. The responsibility for improving the use of climate projections lies not only in the impact research community, but also in the climate research community.