



## **Dealing with uncertainties – communication between disciplines**

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Climate adaptation research inevitably involves uncertainty issues - whether people are building a model, using climate scenarios, or evaluating policy processes. However, do they know which uncertainties are relevant in their field of work? And which uncertainties exist in the data from other disciplines that they use (e.g. climate data, land use, hydrological data) and how they propagate? From experiences in Dutch research programmes on climate change in the Netherlands we know that disciplines often deal differently with uncertainties. This complicates communication between disciplines and also with the various users of data and information on climate change and its impacts.

In October 2012 an autumn school was organized within the Knowledge for Climate Research Programme in the Netherlands with as central theme dealing with and communicating about uncertainties, in climate- and socio-economic scenarios, in impact models and in the decision making process. The lectures and discussions contributed to the development of a common frame of reference (CFR) for dealing with uncertainties. The common frame contains the following: 1. Common definitions (typology of uncertainties, robustness); 2. Common understanding (why do we consider it important to take uncertainties into account) and aspects on which we disagree (how far should scientists go in communication?); 3. Documents that are considered important by all participants; 4. Do's and don'ts in dealing with uncertainties and communicating about uncertainties (e.g. know your audience, check how your figures are interpreted); 5. Recommendations for further actions (e.g. need for a platform to exchange experiences). The CFR is meant to help researchers in climate adaptation to work together and communicate together on climate change (better interaction between disciplines). It is also meant to help researchers to explain to others (e.g. decision makers) why and when researchers agree and when and why they disagree, and on what exactly.

During the presentation some results of this autumn school will be presented.