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Institutional perspectives on climate services

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Climate services are typically understood as creating and providing user-centric climate related information in contrast to just collecting and disseminating scientifically originated climate data. Climate services thus present a potentially major change in how climate information is produced and used in the society.

From the perspective of organizational research climate services can be considered as an emerging institutional field. Such fields are typically under the process of theorization, during which the characteristics of the field are conceptualized and institutional logics are formed. This process is evident in the field of climate services as many of the definitions, roles and responsibilities within the field remain ambiguous.

Understanding these institutional processes and their emerging outcomes is useful in developing climate services and assessing their potential. Research from institutional perspective on the topic remains however rare. I address this gap by providing an analysis of different conceptualizations and logics emerging within the field. The analysis is based on texts published by key actors such as the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the European Union (EU), as well as interviews of providers and users of climate services across Europe.

This analysis continues the work earlier presented in Harjanne (2017). The aim is to present interesting findings on what kinds of institutional logics are shaping the way climate services are forming and the potential challenges these partly competing logics may bring. In addition to this the aim is to bring useful theoretical concepts to the climate services debate and highlight the need and possibilities for further cross-disciplinary research.

References

Harjanne, A. (2017) Servitizing climate science — Institutional analysis of climate services discourse and its implications, Global Environmental Change, Vol. 46, pp. 1-16. DOI: 10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2017.06.008