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PLANNED AND AUTONOMOUS ACTIONS: BELGRADE WATERFRONT ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

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Abstract

There is broad consensus that adaptation to climate change is necessary and urgent. Numerous documents and guidelines are available that provide advice on how to incorporate climate hazards and risks into spatial policies on the global, European and national scale. The experiences of less developed countries have shown that, rather than simply cascading uniform procedures, methods and techniques of adaptation down from higher to lower levels of governance, a realistic approach calls for innovative procedures, tailored to specific circumstances.

The authors argue that the climate change adaptation (CCA) process in developing countries, especially post-socialist transition countries with underdeveloped institutions and procedures, differs from that seen in developed nations, which calls for taking these diverse (multiple) experiences into account when adaptation responses to particular local impacts are formulated. In that sense, adaptation is not necessarily guided by effective strategies that take into consideration overall economic, social and environmental goals, but is, rather, primarily intertwined with local spatial planning in an effort to reduce vulnerability to climate change and variability. This is mainly a reactive endeavour, as it lacks an anticipatory approach, but there are nonetheless some innovative qualities in each case that deserve to be closely inspected.

This argument is illustrated by an example from Belgrade, Serbia. The Heron Island Project on the Danube River, developed between 2006 and 2009, aimed to reduce vulnerability to flooding. In the absence of climate change adaptation policies and strategies in Serbia, the project sought to balance nature preservation with construction and CCA action. This demonstrative project can be analysed as an illustration of how climate change can be integrated into the planning system, as well as what different opportunities are available to incorporate adaptation into new and existing developments.

Key words: adaptation actions, climate change, developing countries, flood risk management, multi-level governance

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