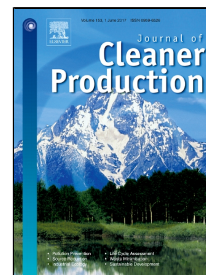


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Developing collaborative capacity in pilot projects Lessons from three Dutch flood risk management experiments



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Developing collaborative capacity in pilot projects

Lessons from three Dutch flood risk management experiments

Abstract

Pilots are frequently used to explore the possibilities for policy innovation at a distance from the policy regime in a safe environment, but they can also function as a boundary organization and contribute to the development of trust, mutual understanding and reciprocity among different actors with different viewpoints. However, the question of how pilots' particular characteristics contribute to collaborative capacity building is as yet unanswered. A specific domain in which pilots are frequently used is the emerging domain of climate change adaptation. In the Netherlands, pilots are used to explore the possibilities of using a more risk-based approach to flood management. The traditional approach of preventing floods by dikes and dams is gradually being replaced by a risk-based approach called multilevel flood safety. In this approach, which is quite complex compared to the traditional prevention-oriented approach, flood risk management is based on three types of measures at different levels: preventing floods, adaptive spatial planning and emergency management. The implementation of this new approach requires collaboration among different public authorities with different task orientations, legal competencies and resources. In 2013, three regional pilots were started to explore how this new concept could be applied. These pilots (in which collaboration was indispensable but also highly difficult because of the huge fragmentation of the policy arena) are analyzed in this paper to determine whether and how the specific functional context of a pilot project contributes to collaborative capacity building, which pilot characteristics contribute to this capacity, and which ones hinder its development.

1. Introduction

There has been a steady increase in the use of pilot projects to develop and implement innovative policy ideas (Kivimaa et al., 2015). The underlying idea of using a pilot project is that the limited scale, the special status and the room for exploration mean that innovative ideas can be developed and tested more easily. Pilot projects are used to test an innovation and also to gain support for an innovation and demonstrate its effects (Jordan and Huitema, 2014; Van Buuren and Loorbach, 2009; Vreugdenhil et al., 2010).

A specific domain in which pilots are often used is that of climate change adaptation (Bulkeley and Castán Broto, 2013; Jordan and Huitema, 2014; Howlett, 2014; Van Buuren et al., 2016). Pilot projects are, for example, used to experiment with solutions to enhance urban water storage capacity, to reduce urban heat stress or to increase citizens' self-reliance in the event of floods.

The need for adaptation is also felt in the vulnerable delta of the Netherlands, especially in relation to increased flood risk (Kabat et al., 2005). The traditional approach of preventing floods by dikes and dams is gradually being replaced by a risk-based approach called multilevel flood safety. In this approach, flood risk management is based on three types of measures at different levels: preventive measures like dams and dikes, adaptive spatial planning and emergency management (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Van Buuren et al., 2016).

However, this policy innovation (combining different measures instead of focusing solely on prevention by dike enforcement) is quite ground-breaking for the Dutch water domain, which is strongly oriented toward flood prevention (Van Buuren et al., 2016). Consequently, implementation of the multilevel flood safety approach requires collaboration by all relevant governmental authorities

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