

Better together? Reconciling the supply of, and demand for, climate knowledge in adaptation decision-making – 9-11 September 2014

Cumberland Lodge, The Great Park, Windsor, UK

Many scholars have sought to unravel the conundrum of how best to reconcile the production and use of science. An eclectic mix of approaches now vie for attention from Mode-2, post-normal science, use-inspired to varieties of co-production, all of which call, in different ways, for science to be done differently. Making science more open, accountable and immediately usable to those reliant on it sits at the heart of these efforts. In 2007, Daniel Sarewitz and Roger Pielke Jr challenged science policy researchers to answer: how do we know if we are doing the right kind of science? Using the “supply” and “demand” metaphor, they argue that “better” science portfolios could be achieved if science policy decisions reflected knowledge about the supply of science, the demand for that science, and the relationship between the two. Few studies have explored this in-depth, however.

Adaptation to climate change falls into that category. Given unavoidable changes in the climate system, adaptation remains a crucial challenge for society. Deciding how to adapt is an intensive endeavor involving countless sources of scientific knowledge (climate models, scenarios, observed data etc). Many actors are involved in the adaptation process in different institutional contexts leading to diverse information requirements and use. Despite advancements in climate science and adaptation policy, the critical understanding of which kinds of knowledge systems can most effectively harness science and technology for long-term sustainable adaptation is still lacking. Different countries, inevitably, have approached things differently - from more centralized approaches in the UK to less regulated approaches in the US – and therein offer an opportunity to learn from these experiences.

Workshop Aims & Objectives

This international workshop brings together scholars from different disciplines, philosophical traditions, and national contexts, to reflect on the socio-technical and institutional-political considerations affecting the supply of, and demand for, climate knowledge in adaptation decision-making.

Over 48 hours, this residential workshop will allow participants to give talks, share ideas, and debate. Workshop papers will be circulated to everyone prior to the workshop but to introduce greater interaction and reflexivity, each paper will be delivered first by a discussant, followed by the author’s response, then opened up for general discussion. One or more of the following themes will guide each session:

- *Adapting to climate change.* Who are the actors involved in adaptation? What knowledge is needed to inform the adaptation process? And how important is scientific information for adaptation?
- *Supplying knowledge and information.* How is climate knowledge produced? What influences that process? And what do scientists think decision-makers need/want?
- *Demanding knowledge and information.* How is climate information used in decision-making? What barriers are encountered? And what do decision-makers want/need from scientists?
- *Co-producing knowledge.* Is this achievable? Does it work? And can it be co-opted?
- *Better together?* Is reconciling the supply and demand of climate science feasible and desirable? What challenges remain? And where do we go from here?

This workshop is funded by Project ICAD – Advancing Knowledge Systems to Inform Climate Adaptation Decisions – funded by the European Research Council: <http://www.icad.leeds.ac.uk/>. For further details please contact Prof. Suraje Dessai (s.dessai@leeds.ac.uk), Dr James Porter (j.j.porter@leeds.ac.uk) or Dr Geoff Whitman (g.p.whitman@leeds.ac.uk).