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ABSTRACT_ARTICLE 1

TOWARDS LOCAL LANDSCAPE ADAPTATION PLANS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: Assessing Collaborative Planning and the Relevance of Community Engagement

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Title: TOWARDS LOCAL LANDSCAPE ADAPTATION PLANS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: Assessing collaborative planning and the relevance of community engagement

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***Abstract*:**

The development of effective, legitimate, operative and feasible Local Landscape Adaptation Plans to Climate Change depends on multiple factors and is highly connected to the specific characteristics of the considered landscape, its people, spatial patterns, functioning, cultural dimensions, history and envisioned futures, and in a general level, its performance as a highly complex and dynamic socio-ecological system. The adaptation or transformation of such systems require systemic and integrative approaches that can be easily framed within the landscape concept and that need to respond to a wide variety of challenges and interest. Through the AELCLIC-pathfinder project, we defined and tested different methods and processes to advance in the preparation of Local Landscape Adaptation Plans in 15 pilot landscapes covering most of Europe's climatic, socio-economic, cultural and bio-geographical diversity, according to the qualities listed above. In addition, the critical importance that inputs, outputs and operational conditions can have in the development of the planning process were revealed. Following these considerations and the elaboration of methodological findings, the presented research responded to four key questions. Which types of inputs, data and information can better sustain the development of local landscape adaptation plans to climate change? Which outputs or outcomes can better facilitate the implementation of the planned adaptations and transitions?, Which kind of operational conditions support the incorporation of inputs and the generation of the expected outcomes?, and finally, What scope and form should an adaptation plan assume, in relation to the specific socio-economic, political, cultural and biophysical contexts?. Methodologically, these four questions were answered through the comparative study of data and information flows in the different workshops organized in each pilot landscape and through the feedback provided by experts, decisions makers and members of the local networks on the results and deliverables of the project. In particular, the comparative study was based on the systematic analysis of existing, provided and generated information on Climate Change impacts, strategies and solutions whereas the assessment of results was developed according to a set of parameters identified as crucial in climate adaptation: connection to the specific landscape and planning conditions, validity, legitimacy, utility, feasibility, systemic character, networking potential, and exportability of methods, determinations and results. It was concluded, that in contrast to the wide palette of impacts identified by panels of experts and international or national public agencies, local networks give more importance to the consequences of climate change in their daily lives, their economic activities, their livelihoods, habits and cultural identity. In addition, it was confirmed the importance of developing tools and plans adapted to the specific characteristics of local landscapes These conclusions open new paths for more balanced and supported landscape adaptation plans to climate change, linking them with the transition towards more sustainable and resilient socio-ecological systems under the principles promoted by the European Landscape Convention.

Key words: Landscape Adaptation, Landscape Resilience, Data and Information Flows, Landscape Governance, Landscape Planning, Strategic Planning, Participation, European Landscapes, Climate Change

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