Maastricht University

Climate change and health : consequences and adaptation in Europe

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VALORISATION ADDENDUM

The valorisation of research findings in terms of its potential societal value and/or impact, besides its scientific justifications, has received increasing attention. Valorisation has also become an important aspect to the research activities at Maastricht University. In line with this, Maastricht University's regulations for the attainment doctoral degrees now require a valorisation addendum (Regulation governing the attainment of doctoral degrees, Maastricht University, 2013). A reflection on the valorisation of the research findings of a dissertation can help to understand better what the related societal value and relevance of the research findings are, and therefore aims to move beyond the scientific relevance and value of the research findings of a dissertation.

In this valorisation addendum, the research presented in this dissertation is used as a basis for the exploration of possible avenues of how the research findings can have societal benefits, besides the scientific value of the research.

Participatory methods and stakeholder analysis

In this dissertation, the methodological approach of participatory methods was used for several studies as a part of the integrated participatory assessment conducted for the ENHanCE research project. The research and policy community increasingly engage in transdisciplinary processes and knowledge co-creation. For these processes, the identification and involvement of stakeholders and the effective employment of participatory methods and tools are an essential part.

The research experiences and lessons drawn from projects that involve stakeholders or are designed as participatory and/or transdisciplinary projects are valuable to enlarge the methodological body in this field but also enhance the way such projects are designed, implemented, and evaluated in practice. The studies presented in this dissertation, together with similar studies, can make a contribution to the lessons and experiences on these approaches which can lead to the advancement of participatory and/or transdisciplinary projects. Existing studies using participatory methods and stakeholder analysis, such as in this dissertation, can serve as examples and can also be adjusted and improved or tailor-made for particular contexts.

Based on this research and other research in this field, not only the scientific publications resulting from this can be a way to share research experiences and lessons, but also a report or guide dedicated specifically to inform the academic, policy and other relevant actors on experiences, merits and limitations, and lessons can be produced, which should ideally take into account existing reports and papers which already address this issue and should complement and further elaborate on these.

In order to realise such a report or guide, collaboration should be sought with end-users as well as researchers and policy-makers that have worked on similar studies and that would like to contribute to this report. Existing reports relevant for this effort need to be

collected and reviewed. And finally a report needs to be produced. A timeline that could be suggested for such an effort could be 12 months.

Climate change adaptation for health in Europe

As became clear in this dissertation, climate change consequences for health and the way we can respond to these in Europe is a topic that receives increasing policy attention. The research findings of this dissertation can therefore be used to inform policy processes on climate change adaptation for health in Europe. The ENHanCE research project already started in this effort, as relevant institutions and policy-makers and advisors were involved in project meetings and workshops, and results of the project were disseminated through such meetings, but also in the form of reports, presentations, and through the project's website.

Besides this, the research in this dissertation together with the growing body of research on climate change adaptation for health in Europe, can help to design courses and trainings for policy-makers and -advisors but also other professionals that are faced with this topic in their day-to-day work and/or are able to affect or influence the way we deal with climate change consequences. The latter could for instance include businesses that are affected by or work on the issue of climate change and health, health (care) professionals and health (care) institutions, or NGO's working on climate change and health issues. Such courses can help to increase awareness and understanding of climate change and health in Europe, the potential risks, and possible strategies to respond to and cope with consequences. This could support the efforts to respond and manage climate change consequences for health in Europe in an effective manner.

If such a course should be developed, it would be necessary to make connections to the relevant target groups and assess what they would need from such a course specifically. Next, a team needs to design such a course based on the collection of relevant information and materials. There could be a core course design, and a part of the course that is tailored to whatever audience it would target. In terms of a timeline for such a project, an estimate could be 18 months.