



Evaluative Evidence on Climate Action

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Chapter 2:

Action on Climate Change

What Does It Mean and Where Does It Lead To?

- Based on a meta-evaluation by Lee Cando-Noordhuizen and I on seven recent comprehensive evaluations of climate action, and some older evaluations
- Aim was to look for evidence on the micro-macro paradox in climate action that I raised in 2011
- Other findings would of course be welcome
- Methodology: meta-evaluation; i.e. an exploration of issues rather than abstracting evidence on a specific theoretical question (which would be systematic review)





The evaluations

- OPS5 of the Global Environment Facility (2014)
- Independent Evaluation of the Climate Investment Funds (2014)
- Evaluation of climate change at the IDB (2014)
- Evaluation of climate change programmes of the Swiss International Cooperation (2014)
- Real-time evaluation of ADB support for climate finance (2014)
- Real-time evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (2014)
- External evaluation of UN-REDD programme (2014)
- Older but still relevant evaluations: IEG evaluations of 2009, 2010 and 2012 and OPS4 of the GEF



Micro-Macro Paradox

- This paradox first appeared in development economics in 1987, when the question was raised whether development aid led to growth
- After long discussion, the issue seems to be settled: yes, aid contributes to growth (Arndt, 2010)
- I raised the micro-macro paradox in a keynote address to IDEAS at its Global Assembly in Jordan, April 2011
- Climate action is successful yet climate change continues unmitigated
- Financial evidence for this emerged in research from the World Bank and IMF: public funding of fossil fuels far outpaces public funding of climate action
- A *veridical* paradox: conflict is resolved if competing funding channels are taken into account



Evaluative evidence on impact

- Only available if agency has a **coherent** portfolio
 - Of the 7 evaluations, 4 reported on a coherent portfolio
 - Others included action on other issues that had climate impact
- Only a coherent and **mature** portfolio can provide evidence of higher level and longer term impacts
 - Of the 7 evaluations, only GEF has a sufficiently mature portfolio
 - If the older evaluations are included: the World Bank also has a mature portfolio
- To provide evidence on impact a consistent system of **measuring GHG emissions** must be used
 - Only GEF and UN-RED+ have a consistent set of instructions
 - Others cannot aggregate available data



The Micro Level

- Climate action was rated for efficiency in 4 of the 7 evaluations
- All 4 concluded that interventions had low efficiency
- Effectiveness of interventions was rated in 5 of the 7 evaluations
- 4 concluded that interventions had high levels of effectiveness
- 1 concluded that interventions were moderately satisfactory effective
- Another paradox seems to emerge: action is not very efficient, but effective
- Further discussions at Wilton Park 2016 indicate that inefficiency is due to applying norms and standards for efficiency that are applicable to relatively simple interventions



The Macro Level

- High levels of effectiveness are due to multi-dimensional and multi-actor nature of interventions
- Evidence from the GEF shows an important role for civil society organisations
- New technologies work and need to be enabled and funded
- Gender, equity and inclusiveness are crucial to ensure social sustainability of climate action
- Success at the macro level may occur when systems change:
 - Action from many partners – top down as well as bottom up
 - Full recognition of gender, equity and inclusiveness
 - New technologies need to be enabled
 - Changing the system is **adaptation** of sustainable practices



The future

- ▶ Al Gore claimed in “an inconvenient truth” (2006) that we have the technology to solve climate change, but not the political will
- ▶ But political will is not enough; it has to come from bottom up as well
- ▶ Markets and production systems are shifting in the right direction – but is it fast enough?
- ▶ The micro-macro paradox was reformulated at Wilton Park 2016 as “policy coherence”
 - ▶ The Sustainable Development Goals contain more of them
- ▶ We need to learn more from successful adaptation to climate change, as it may lead us to transformation of systems to achieve sustainability



Thank you!

