

Reflection by Sarri Öörni 27.3.2012

I found the lecture on the idea of adaptation interesting especially since so far what I have read has been on mitigation of climate change through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The idea was that one either mitigates or adapts. But since so much has changed already that affects the climate the adaptation has obviously become a necessity. The fact that reduction of risks is the main focus of adaptation could be explained by looking at why people started to talk about adaptation in Europe. With the increasing evidence of climate impacts occurring adaptation has been given a higher priority on political agendas. Laymen saw heat wave in Paris and storms in Scandinavia as manifestations of climate change and for decision makers these became problems which needed to be dealt with. Also with Stern report climate change was given a price tag.

NASs seem to be long-term visions that include both hard and soft measures. Governments and not EU led the way in outlining adaptation strategies. Most European countries have focused on risk and sensitivity reduction. However, some European countries have also talked about the capitalization on opportunities like possibly longer growth period in Northern Europe. Not only is there adaptation on national level but also on regional level since different areas inside a country can have different problems. EU has taken this into account by financing often regional level projects and bypassing the national level. Rising public awareness is seen as important in every country but information dissemination is not well co-ordinated.

The scenario workshop was interesting because it gave a good idea of how this strategic planning of adaptation strategies at the local level actually works. No-one spoke of the national, European Union or global level agreements or requirements but only of their local area and the effects salt water intrusion was having on it and their livelihoods. Of course that was the purpose of the scenario but we forgot that maybe there were laws or requirements down in the pipeline we would need to comply with and that we weren't a lone island making all the decisions as we pleased.