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THE SALIENCE OF THE ADAPTATION ISSUE IN AN ARCTIC COASTAL COMMUNITY

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For society to effectively manage climate change impacts, the need to adapt must be recognized. At the same time there is a disconnect between knowledge and action on climate change (Hulme 2009). The salience of the adaptation issue as a precondition for adaptation action has so far been neglected in the adaptation literature, which also points to a missing link between perception, values and world-views on side and policy formation on the other (O'Brien and Wolf 2010). Perceptions of risks and the need to act on the basis of scientific knowledge hinge on whether scientific knowledge is viewed as salient, credible and legitimate (Cash et al 2003) and on the individuals' risk perception, values, world-views and livelihood (Kahan et al. 2012). The paper analyses how actors in natural resource dependent communities in Northern Norway perceive and respond to changes in weather and resource conditions, as well as projections for future climate. The Arctic provides an interesting context in that the temperature is projected to increase more and faster than the global average (IPCC 2014). Consequences of such changes are already being observed in many communities in the region, and many of the impacts are now attributed directly to anthropogenic climate change. This paper finds that the need to adapt is felt differently, if at all, amongst different actors. By drawing on the concepts from governance literatures and cultural theory (Thompson & Wildavsky 1990) the paper seeks to explain this divergence in perceptions and responses amongst different actors, which again can help policy makers understand when and why autonomous actors are willing to adapt. We suggest that climate change knowledge must be co-produced to reflect actor's values and world-views in order for adaptation to become a salient issue.

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