

What Does Collaboration Mean to Governments?

Project Title: Patterns, Desires, Enablers, and Metrics of Collaboration on Climate Change Adaptation: The Case of Extreme Weather Policies in Central Canada

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Introduction

- The literature on climate change adaptation (CCA) has consistently called for collaboration across geographic scales and levels of government in order to best address climate impacts.
- This call has been met by varying, or limited, degrees of collaboration in Canadian adaptation policies (Dickenson & Burton 2011; Vogel & Henstra 2014).
- There is a gap in the CCA literature regarding what collaboration actually means to governments. A lack of understanding on the differences in approaches to collaboration are suggested as a major barrier to fostering it between governments and beyond.

Design

- The project is designed to address this gap in the literature by exploring how collaboration is conceptualized and operationalized amongst all three levels of government in Canada.
- Extreme weather planning was chosen because: it is an already well developed policy field, is inherently multilevel, and is a fundamental component of climate change adaptation (Henstra & McBean, 2009).
- Central Canada offers two provinces (Manitoba and Ontario) which have drastically different political landscapes, but are likely to face somewhat similar extreme weather impacts.

Research Questions

- 1) **THE CURRENT STATE** - What are the existing patterns and discourses of collaboration in extreme weather planning in central Canada?
- 2) **GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVES** – How is it defined and in what form is collaboration on extreme weather planning desired by those in government?
- 3) **FOSTERING COLLABORATION** - Based on existing policies and interviewee responses, what are the apparent barriers and enablers to productive governmental collaboration on extreme weather planning?

Methods

- **POLICY SCAN** - A review of existing policies (policy scan) provides an in-depth policy landscape for other methods to be positioned.
- **DISCOURSE** - Textual analysis of legislative records will explain discourses of collaboration at all three levels of government.
- **INTERVIEWS** - In-depth interviews with elected officials and policy practitioners involved in extreme weather and climate adaptation will probe directly how collaboration is defined and should be operationalized.

Expected Contributions

- **PATTERNS** - A detailed explanation of current patterns and definitions, of multilevel collaboration on extreme weather planning in central Canada. This evidence will either challenge or support existing knowledge on multilevel governance in Canada.
- **DESIRES** - Practitioner based reflections on collaboration, including whether it is desired and how it could be operationalized. This may address whether there is a disconnect between the call for collaboration in adaptation literature and different government's interests in Canada.
- **ENABLERS** - An understanding of the ideological underpinnings of governance which either enable or inhibit collaboration. This evidence will provide researchers and policy entrepreneurs with the evidence to promote flexible policy solutions which are conducive to collaborative forms of governance,
- **METRICS** - Metrics for researchers and governments to measure the presence of productive collaborative relationships in adaptation policies.

Literature Cited

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