

Session 1.b.3 Do not reinvent the wheel: Many non-regret adaptation measure are already available, Wednesday 21st March, 9h00-10h30, Room 30

Notes for the intervention of Mr. Marc-André Demers :

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What adaptation measures have you implemented successfully ?

From our point of view, climate change is a wicked problem, calling to step back or away from path dependency.

Our key observation, regarding adaptation, is that it sometimes comes from local and civic initiatives which did not plan or focused on climate change or adaptation.

The most successful measures we have observed are the ones that rely on a civic sense that something can be done easily and that this something can be achieved through local mobilization.

For example, we experimented a 'on-the-ground' initiative in Saint-Raymond, 45 km from Quebec city. The people of Saint-Raymond, took the lead in order to prevent future impacts of flooding. Not long after a considerable flood event in 2014, just 2 years after a previous one, the 10 citizens mobilized sat down with the Watershed organization, with the mayor and with the general manager of the city.

They talked about their feelings, they talked about what they saw, about the situation. They put into words the definition of the problem in their view. And they affirm that they could help address the problem. They offered their time, their help, their motivation. And it served as example for the mayor, for the representatives in Parliament.

As non-regret adaptation measure, they :

- Realize an inventory of the 2014 flood victims
- Implement a voluntary alert system
- Create a local expert comitee
- Developp a resilience plan to flood risk
- Offer public course on river dynamics, risk management and IWRM
- Mandate experts to study ice flood risks
- Create information videos about their process and on individual adaptation measures to flood risk
- And they keep going on 4 years after the last flood...

2- How can we foster the implementation of existing adaptation measures that have already proven their relevance ?

To foster the implementation of existing adaptation measures, Quebec's network of basin organisation have created a community of practice in adaptation to hydroclimatic change called Rés-Alliance.

The goal of our community of practice is to create opportunities to share experiences and learn as a group. Doing so, we question the traditional way to adress socio-environnemental issues : looking at immediate consequences of an hazard manifestation and responding with a technical solutions.

We have 3 strategies to meet our goal. We are :

- Financing 8 watershed organisations to facilitate their emerging experimentation in 18 communities.
- Devolopping and sharing participatory tools
- Recruiting new communities.

As the animator of this community of practice, I would say that our major obstacle to implement adaptation measure is also our biggest opportunity. We need to allow ourself to deal with less formality, per say distinctions, and to be flexible in the way we are pooling our ressources.