

Making Urban Strategy Climate Proof

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What is the research question?

People involved in spatial planning processes are dealing with scientific knowledge, but its usage is far from straightforward. Digital tools (Planning Support Systems) can be an effective aid in these processes. What is the added value of these types of tools? How can these tools best be used in a spatial planning process so that they are truly effective?

What are the findings?

- A literature study showed that a Planning Support System (PSS) can be especially useful for testing knowledge claims in a planning process. Those involved in the planning process should be able to use these systems to gather existing knowledge, as well as evaluate the validity of the knowledge.
- A Group Decision Room session showed that in the participants' perception, the added values of a PSS for the process (e.g. communication, cooperation) are at least as important as the added value for the outcome of that process (e.g. integrality, sustainability).
- A PSS can play a supportive role in workshops, but can also act as a barrier. It limits social interaction and has a guiding effect because it emphasises dimensions that are part of the instrument and that can be quantified.
- There are major differences between the different PSS, making it difficult to obtain generalisable outcomes regarding their roles. Each situation is unique, as it depends on the tool and the context.

What are the recommendations?

- Involve users and those responsible for the planning process as early as possible, for instance when preparing the indicators. It is important for the persons involved to feel that they own the tool and to have confidence in the outcome.
- Model outcomes are only a part of digitally supported workshops, yet these are usually given the most attention. Although substantive considerations are often taken as the starting point, the process is at least as important. When organising workshops, also pay attention to facilitation, visualisation and the use of hardware such as touch tables, pens and paper.
- Include and incorporate the latest technological developments, such as GIS-based web viewers, iPads and 3D visualisation. Try to accommodate existing habits as much as possible, but depart from them where necessary.
- Recognise the blind spots of digital tools, such as their potentially negative effect on creativity and limited focus on soft dimensions like spatial quality, and recognise complex preparation. Take this into consideration when evaluating which set of tools should support the planning process.

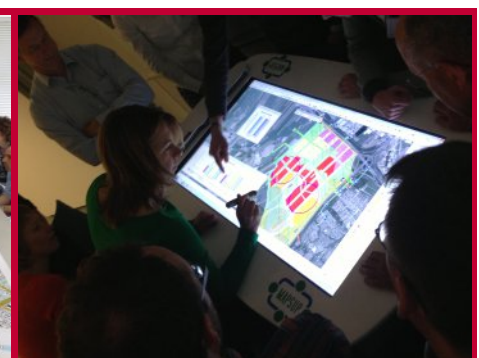
For more information go to <http://www.climateplanning.tk/>



Group decision room



Support planning process



Map table

CESAR is part of the NWO-programme Sustainable Accessibility of the Randstad



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