

Analysis of results from citizen summit on climate change adaptation, in Kalundborg on the 5th of March 2011

This document provides an analysis of the results from the citizen summit and the political considerations they could bring attention to. The analysis is used in the Kalundborg Municipality to consider how the result should be incorporated into the upcoming climate change adaptation plan.

1st - Introduction

Conclusions

The age distribution of the citizen summit was shifted toward an older segment compared to the overall age distribution in the municipality. The younger age group of citizens between 18 and 30 was virtually absent, which is not unusual for these kinds of citizen summits. It should be noted that the invitations to the younger citizens were released later than other age groups due to of a technical error. This may have contributed to reinforcing the deviation.

In regards to the geographical distribution of participants, approximately half of the participants came from Kalundborg Town (zip code 4400) and the other half was distributed evenly over the municipality. This corresponds roughly to the geographical distribution of local citizens.

Although only local residents were invited, there were still over 17% of participants who own summer cottages in the municipality and hence received an invitation. Many participants also had personal experiences and knowledge of problems with flooding.

Apparently, the invitations to, and the introduction of, the citizen summit succeeded in bringing together a broad section of local citizens - even citizens who are not directly affected by this problem – who wanted to engage in discussions on municipal climate change adaptation.

Political considerations

It should be considered whether to make a special effort to involve younger citizens in the municipality, in discussions about climate change adaptation since the decisions are very long-term and thus significantly affect this age group.

2nd - Vulnerable areas in the rural landscape - the example Reersø / Tissø

Conclusions

Two thirds of the citizens were in favor of making a decisions now that will allow the coast line to move further into the area and hereby eventually discontinue current activities in these areas such as summer cottages and farming. Half of the participants thought that smaller temporary protective measures should be allowed if they are removed during this century.

About one third of the participants wanted a collective solution based on dikes. This result differs from the position of the scenario workshop. The scenario workshop was held for the stakeholders at local level prior to the citizen summit and the local stakeholders were more supportive of various dike solutions.

For a collective dike solution, as well as solutions that phases out current activities, around one third of the participants agreed on the condition, that the national government should pay the costs.

As for the municipality's role it is obvious that there is no desire that the municipality should fund any of the solutions. Of those who favors a phase-out of current activities, about one fourth of the participants wanted the municipality to play an active role as adviser and planner.

The discussion referred to the area around Reersø / Tissø, but can to some degree be seen as a general attitude towards similar areas elsewhere in the municipality. When a broader part of the municipality's citizens are asked, they will bring a more

comprehensive view of planning priorities, than if you only ask the local stakeholder who are directly involved.

It should be noted that the results reflect a position on a larger contiguous area consisting mainly of summer cottages and farm property. There are no specific observations for year-round settlements such as Reersø City. Attitudes towards the protection of permanent residents are to be seen in relation to the answers to question 3b, where citizens prioritize the protection of urban settlements.

Political considerations

There seems to be broad support for a municipal decision to allow the coastline to move inland as the climate changes and to let exposed areas flood during extreme precipitation. It would be an advantage to make this decision now, in order to allow the citizens and property owners to know what kind of future to plan for. This way the municipality, landowners and residents would have time to discuss and find workable solutions for phasing-out of activities and development of the areas. It is noted that this acceptance of phasing out is supported by the answer in question 4c. It should be considered how stakeholders can be involved in the process of specifying how a potential phase-out could take place.

When the shoreline moves inland, the current natural areas will be affected or lost. It should therefore be considered how the coastal natural areas can spread into the country in tune with this change.

3rd - Kalundborg Town

Conclusions

In contrast to current practices and distribution of responsibilities, a significant majority of participants are in favor of helping the individual homeowner with the responsibility of protecting themselves against flooding. Three quarters of the participants thus believe that the Industrial site along the quayside and Kalundborg Port, should have a

responsibility to protect the underlying homes. And as for the case example, where the houses are not located behind the industrial areas nine-tenths of the participants voted that the municipality must play an active, outreaching and planning role in relation to the affected homeowners. Two-thirds believe that the municipality should also co-finance climate adaptation solutions for permanent residences.

Political considerations

It should be considered how the municipality can meet the participants' desire to involve local industry and residents in a process that will lead to climate change adaptation for the exposed areas.

The ongoing dialogue between the municipality and the larger companies and Kalundborg Port could be expanded with a dialogue on climate adaptation. This should be considered.

4th - Division of responsibility between citizens and authorities

Conclusions

Overall, the votes in round 4, show that the participants are willing to give the municipality wide responsibility and authority regarding climate adaptation. Most participants are positive towards allowing the municipality to make demands and change the framework and conditions for private home owners, summer cottage owners and farmers. Participants are also willing to accept that the municipality does not make new investments in infrastructure in vulnerable areas.

Political considerations

The municipality may consider how to translate this mandate from the participants, into a prospective strategy for climate change adaptation, so that the municipality assumes an active role in formulating requirements for homeowners and to designate farming and cottage areas which could eventually be flooded. It is necessary to examine what options the municipality has within the current laws and regulations.

It should be considered how the daily management of natural areas and the upcoming climate change adaptation plan should take into account, that almost a third believe that climate change must be exploited, to reestablish nature/wetlands on exposed land that does not necessarily serve to protect other areas against flooding.

5th Overall Strategy for Adaptation

Conclusions

Nine tenths of the participants favor an overall plan for the development of the municipality's coastline. The plan should contain decisions about where, and where not, areas should be protected and how. About half see it as the municipality's role to undertake this planning, while approx. one third believe that the state should have the coordinating role.

An equally clear trend is found in the participants' attitude to the municipality's approach to climate change adaptation. Nine out of 10 citizens believe that it is not enough to wait to adapt to the climate changes, as they appear or the national legislation dictates action. They believe that the municipality on its own initiative must act now and prepare long term plans that take into account the expected climate changes.

Political considerations

It should be considered how the participants' clear mandate to act now, in order to prepare long term plans, may be incorporated in the upcoming climate change adaptation plan. Including when and how there will be detailed planning of the coastal zone as well as clear statements about which areas of the municipality will be protected and which areas will change to become permanent wetlands or flooded occasionally.

6th Citizens' involvement in planning for climate adaptation

Conclusions

There is a strong desire among participants to continue to participate in the planning of climate change adaptation in the municipality. The interest is distributed evenly over the various dialogue methods. The high number of votes for several citizen summits can be interpreted as an expression of satisfaction with their experience during the citizen summit.

Almost all participants indicate that their knowledge about the consequences of climate change has increased, and four out of ten say their knowledge has increased a lot. On this basis it can be concluded that a citizen summit - besides collecting opinions- is able to distribute knowledge about current and complex issues.

More than two-thirds report that they have changed their attitudes during the process up to and during the citizens summit. In other words, it is possible - through structured information and dialogue - to give people an opportunity to rethink and develop their views on an informed basis.

The vast majority of participants believe that climate change will affect them or their loved ones, and just over a third call for more information and advice from the municipality.

Political considerations

It should be considered how the participants' distinctive wish to participate in planning for climate adaptation may be a part of the climate adaptation strategy, which is under development in the municipality. For example, by setting guidelines for how, and under what circumstances, citizens must be involved in the development of new climate change adaptation initiatives. And by ensuring that all local citizens has the opportunity to actively participate in the new priorities of land use in the municipality, such as coastal planning and phasing out of current activities.

Transverse issues

It is possible to look transversely at the results from the citizen summit, and for example, see what the people who responded to the first answer choice in question 5b, have responded in second round of debate. This is not possible in the debate round 1 due to technical limitations.