

# Why are Utilities Reluctant to Adapt to Climate Change?

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Although the infrastructure in the transport and energy sectors is highly relevant for society and economy and although top-down estimates show very high adaptation costs, the question of how utilities should adapt to climate change has not been deeply investigated so far. Adapting infrastructure requires anticipatory action, as large parts of infrastructure are designed for long periods. To understand how utilities can adapt, it is necessary to know what is already done in this respect, and if not, whether there are good or problematic reasons to do so. The study analyses already taken efforts, future potentials and current problems of adaptation of utilities with a multi-method research design. This consists of a survey of German utilities, a series of stakeholder workshops with selected corporation, a qualitative analysis of the policy arena and a scientific impact assessment. The first objective is to identify how far utilities already start to adapt, and whether current activities are in an adequate range. Second, hypotheses about potential barriers to adaptation are evaluated. We come to the conclusion that there is some adaptation, although only at the first stages. The issue is further rising on agenda of public administration and companies. The analysis reveals potential barriers that may hinder further progress – if not addressed by adaptation policy. Thus, there is a role of the public in adapting utilities to climate change, but the process of adaptation is far from being understood sufficiently.