THE POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF „CLIMATE CHANGE“ IN SOUTH KOREA

APRIL 12
Outline

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Hypothesis

Adaptation to Climate Change is not only a “response to climatic stimuli” (IPCC 2007) but it depends on

- Adaptive Governance
- Environmental perception
  - Capacities
  - Knowledge
Focus of study

**General:** Analysis of the reactions to Climate Change in the *political system* of South Korea, regarding how it developed and spread, what role it plays and what influences it has;

**Specific:** Analysis of effects that the policy has on farmers in Inje County
The idea behind

- Emergence of Climate Change requires an examination in the social sciences
- Climate Change as a challenge to humanity and particular social groups
- Importance of focusing on political and cultural conditions
- Traveling of the concept as well as the capability to serve as a legitimation of change

Theoretical Frame

Adaptive Governance

– Mechanisms and criteria of (political) decision making
  Blue House, Presidential Committee on Green Growth, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Knowledge and Economy, Ministry of Construction, KREI, KACCC, RDA

– Implementation on regional and local levels
  Regional and local governments and administration ATC, RDA, extension services
Aspects of adaptive governance

- Problem of measurement („scientific problem“)
- Standardized methods to approve objective data
- Scale differences in approaches complicate the convergence of data results
- Example from TERRECO: Haean – Yanggu – Soyang Watershed – Inje – Kangwon > not the same spatial units

- Problem of governance („societal problem“)
- Question of relevance for political decision makers (scale and time frame)
- Patchwork of regulatory regimes and institutional structure of adaptive governance (Robertson 2004)
- Dynamics of contradictory, and perhaps cyclic, policy impulses
- Aspects of “justice” and fair treatment

WP I-III

WP IV
Actor-Network-Theory

- (Political) systems not seen as aggregation of objects but as interrelated, interconnecting parts of actors
- Production of new properties through interaction in the network
- Examples: Laws and regulations, institutions, ideas and concepts
Actor-Network

By Netminor

- Issues: red circle
- Org.: blue square
- Link: counts
- Area: degree of connection

Source: Compon Korea, SNU
“Low Carbon Green Growth is the best solution to overcome the challenges of climate change and achieve common prosperity.”

President Lee Myung-bak (Nov 4, 2009)
Green Growth Strategy

- Emphasis on sustainable growth while reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Key Policy Agenda Items
  - Mitigation of Climate Change & energy independence
  - Creating new engines for economic growth
  - Improvement in quality of life and enhanced international standing
- Investment Plan: 2% of GDP annually, total 86 billion USD 2009-2013
- Self-conception: model strategy to face climate change (several initiatives, offensive behaviour)
Critical Assessment: Green Growth

Korea's Green Growth = Extraordinary “Green Wash” (Green Korea United)

1. Low GHG reduction target
2. Supply-centered energy policy
3. Expansion of nuclear power
4. “The 4 Rivers Project”: water pollution and ecosystem degradation
5. Overseas food supply projects (Madagascar, Manchuria)
6. Water privatization
Research perspective

- Actor-Network on the national, regional and local scale
- Implementation of national plans on regional and local level
- Emphasis on qualitative aspects: information flow, mode of implementation
- Quantitative aspects will be included by a Netminder analysis of Kangwon Newspapers
  - Context to regional political decision making
  - Comparison to national discourse and local perception of Climate Change
- Survey in 3-4 villages in Inje County (chosen by dominance of agricultural crops, sample size 100-150 households)
Objectives & Questions for survey

Political Programs

– What programs exist for farmers in Inje and how’s the acceptance?

Perception of Climate Change

– How do farmers perceive “climate” and its variability?
– How is this perception interrelated with policies and change (economic, demographic) within the social groups?

Influence of Climate Change in the agricultural sector

– What will be the driving factors of farming in Inje County in the future? (labor, price fluctuation, market, etc.)
– Will climate change play a significant role?
Outlook

Upcoming:
– Research trips May-June and in fall 2010
– Dialogue with stakeholder during June Workshop
– Eventually Master thesis on water governance systems in the Soyang Water Shed (spring 2011) by a Korean student
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COMMENDS & QUESTIONS...