

### [THEME 5: GLOBAL LOCAL NEXUS] Reading summary

In this paper, **the author refers to scenario planning as an emerging government response to climate adaptation governance in the face of dramatic climate change. He gives an accessible description of scenario planning and then introduces three criteria for strong scenarios, illustrating each one. The first is the framework description**, where scenario planning typically depicts two to five possible future worlds based on different attitudes and measures that governments might take, presenting and contrasting the similarities and differences between these future trajectories. **There are three basic criteria for scenario planning: analysis, imagination and participation**, which in turn are closely related to calculation, imagination and implementation in practice respectively. **The first criterion is analysis**. The scenario process involves the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and related bodies collecting and modelling a wide range of information and producing a number of authoritative climate scenarios that can be used as 'portals' for future assessments. Most of these scenarios avoid extreme scenarios and are not alarming, and are designed to emphasize the continuity between the present and the future in order to increase decision makers' awareness of their relevance. During the development of the scenarios, the IPCC used numbers rather than descriptive terms wherever possible in order to increase credibility. While this helps to avoid controversy, it also objectifies the scenarios and reduces subsequent discussion of them. **The second is imagination**. Imagination means that the narrator, through storytelling, envisages how the future of climate change will develop in different dimensions. Imagination concretizes the data from the first phase of the analysis and takes place in a participatory environment. Such an environment is more immersive for the participants and is more conducive to changing their existing beliefs, attitudes and worldviews. **The third is participation**. In scenario planning, the future can not only be imagined, but also acted out through simulations or games. This type of scenario planning is often positioned in emergency planning, but is also becoming increasingly popular in climate change adaptation work. It has the benefit of providing a venue for dialogue, reflection and social learning, and can be useful in promoting new participatory governance. However, there is skepticism about the impact of scenario planning on decision-making. If scenarios do not match the context of existing organizations, decision makers may delay or even deny them due to lack of attention.

**Scenario planning, as an effective tool for anticipating change and developing strategies accordingly, has not only been of great use in the context of environmental climate change, but has also shown significant value in politics.** In South Africa, for example, the De Klerk government approached Clem Sant in the mid-1980s and commissioned him to analyze what would happen to South Africa if Nelson Mandela were released. Sant made several speeches to the South African public, presenting the various scenarios that South Africa could face in the year 2000. They pointed out that there was a strong possibility that the country could ignite a civil war leading to a series of tragic consequences. But it was also possible that a constitution could be drafted at the negotiating table, that South Africa's international sanctions could be lifted and that trade with other countries could be resumed. Through scenario planning, Sant reverses the perception of the South African nation and averts civil war. Sant has changed the existing beliefs and attitudes of the South African nation, often through participatory public speaking. This is exactly what is mentioned in the second point of the strong scenario criterion, 'imagination', where scenario planning is open to what participants perceive as unpredictable ideas and portrays more precise possibilities for the future.