

Publication

Allocation of aid for adaptation to climate change: Do vulnerable countries receive more support?

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Author(s) Betzold, Carola; Weiler, Florian

Author(s) at UniBasel [Weiler, Florian](#) ;

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Wealthy countries spend increasing amounts of aid to support adaptation to climate change in developing countries and have committed under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to prioritize adaptation aid to those "particularly vulnerable" to climate change. While research has started to track this aid, it has not yet examined its allocation across all donor and recipient countries. We thus do not know to what extent vulnerable countries indeed receive more support for adaptation. We address this research gap and ask: how does this commitment to prioritizing particularly vulnerable countries translate into actual adaptation aid allocation? To what extent do vulnerable countries receive more adaptation aid? We address these questions through a quantitative analysis of data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on bilateral adaptation aid from 2011 through 2014. In contrast to other studies, we find that vulnerability-or more precisely, vulnerability indicators-matter for adaptation aid allocation. Countries that are more exposed to climate change risks, such as extreme weather events or sea level rise, receive more adaptation aid, both on a per capita basis and as a percentage of all adaptation aid. These results indicate that collectively (even if not at the level of each individual donor) donors align their bilateral adaptation aid allocation with global promises.

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