

## **Land use conflicts in the coastal zone: The potential of informal conflict resolution along the case of JadeWeserPort in Germany**

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Along the case of environmental compensation of the JadeWeserPort (a deep water harbour under construction, in Wilhelmhaven/Germany) my presentation aims to detect the conflict resolution potential of non-statutory approaches based on communication and cooperation to solve land use conflicts.

The presentation clearly relates to theme 2 of the conference presenting an innovative approach of addressing conflicts in relation to the economic development of coastal areas.

In this specific case the compensation planning for JadeWeserPort and additionally two dike enforcements caused a land use conflict in relation to the compensation site Langwarder Groden, a grassland area located between the main dike and an overflow dam within the county Wesermarsch at the north-western German North Sea coast. Induced by different land use preferences concerning the target area the conflict became manifest in a lawsuit. In reaction to this, the relevant stakeholders decided to avoid a legal dispute by establishing an informal working group in order to solve the emerged conflict in a discursive and cooperative way. This process resulted in the determination of a compromise.

Firstly, my presentation will picture the development of the JadeWeserPort by focussing on the central functional chain causing the analysed conflict. This is done by applying the DPSIR approach. Subsequently, based on qualitative interviews with the relevant actors, the local land use conflict is analysed to identify the specific conditions and processes paving the way for a compromise.

The research points out the high importance of combining technical and personal conflict resolution potentials to generate compromise. Moreover it could be proofed that a supportive framework resulting from antecedent social and institutional learning can compensate for a strictly methodology-oriented proceeding. Furthermore, the beneficial impact of a balanced distribution of power resources within an actor network could be detected as valuable precondition for achieving compromise.

The case shows that informal conflict resolution offers communities, often being trapped between interests of planning authorities and political interests at state level, the possibility to benefit by participating in defining compromise.

The results are of interest for similar land use conflicts and provide transferable assumptions concerning the role of scientific information for decision support in planning processes. Moreover, it could be proofed that a spatially, and in terms of content and context, stronger system-oriented approach to land use conflicts is needed to mitigate or resolve those conflict types.

## References

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