

Interactive comment on “Climate change adaptation frameworks: an evaluation of plans for coastal, Suffolk, UK” by J. Armstrong et al.

Anonymous Referee #4

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General Comments — The objectives of this paper are quite clear, although there appears to be some confusion regarding the original content of the framework typology. The methods are clear, and the processes involved are traceable and repeatable. However, the writing style is not particularly engaging, and the level of mistakes made throughout the document mean that it is difficult to concentrate fully on the task at hand and therefore some of thrust of the argument is regrettably lost.

Specific Comments — 1) I am slightly unsure as to what degree the author(s) identified the three framework approaches as part of this study? It appears to suggest, for example, that the Scenario-Led (SL) framework (P:4064, L:7) was already identified in another paper? If this is not a new concept here, then care must be taken not to present it as if the frameworks were identified as part of this research.

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2) I am principally unsure as to what there is to gain by perpetuating the separation of the SL and VL frameworks. I am doubtful that in terms of the practical initiatives this paper appears to seek to address, whether either of these frameworks are ever actually seen in isolation? For example, vulnerability assessments are almost ubiquitously bundled up with, or derived from, some kind of scenario-based modelling. So therefore, from some of the statements in this paper, aren't all frameworks, to a degree, variations on a DC model? If - like you point out in your conclusions - that reality does not often sit in the convenient boxes of these typologies, are we really that surprised? And does this constitute a novel scientific discovery? I suppose I would want to see clearer instances of initiatives clearly selecting, for example, an exclusive VL strategy in order for it not to appear here like a self-fulfilling prophecy, i.e. adaptation schemes do not fit into the categories because of the way you have structured them. Is, perhaps, the important point 'why do some frameworks choose SL over VL (or vice versa) to bolster the DC methodology?'

3) I think there tends to be a slightly normative approach to uncertainty in some of the points in the paper. For example, on Page 4074 one may well argue that uncertainty is a key part of environmental modelling and not its downfall. After all, modelling seeks to represent uncertainty. More care is needed therefore when talking about uncertainty in this context.

4) Similarly, assumptions are made regarding the proportion of projects that resulted in the production of risk assessments and advice notes; in this case that this is a consequence of "insufficient certainty". However, there are clearly many more reasons why projects do not directly lead to practical, implementational guidelines, particularly in those you mention which involved multiple stakeholders groups that consist of a socially and technically diverse membership.

5) P:4061, L:5-8 This is not very clear. Is the problem not more that "academic" literature is reluctant to advocate specific implementational advice? You say "not available" in the next paragraph (L14-15) – is that what you mean here?

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6) P:4062, L9. How was this buffer decided? Was it EDF's decision or yours? Make clear please. Also, you state the buffer is 20km here, but on Figure 2 it states 2km. I am assuming the latter is correct. Also, is there an importance on the direction of this buffer? There is rather a crude circle here, but should this not be challenged or discussed? Due to the nature of coastal processes and connectivity, one can reasonably assume that 2km inland has very different implications than 2km down-coast.

7) P4064, L20-25. Uncertainty aside, are these the true boundaries of scenario-led strategies? If this IS the case, why do a majority of stakeholders still prefer this type of output to be presented to them when offered a choice?

8) P4069, L18-19. How are you differentiating here between "environmental organisations" and "conservation" here? What about other groups, such as LEPs (representing e.g. tourism interests in Leiston, Sizewell Belts and Thorpeness)?

Technical Correction — P:4061, L20. This does not read very well P:4063, L9-11. Tie in to previous sentence to help this sentence make more sense L12. Range (of) frameworks. . . L18. Frameworks (are) often. . . L23. Demonstrates, not demonstrations P4064, L7. Check reference date P4065, L23. Century timescale(s) P4067, L11. "The" coastal zone? P4069, L14-17. Sentence needs re-structuring, as it doesn't currently read very clearly. L17. (is) are P4069, L6. You refer to the SMP document here, but do not reference it. Should this, in fact, be the appropriate PDZ and Sub-Cell document for the area? If so, this was led by local government in conjunction with EA, and produced by Haskoning. L20-25. Feels a little 'tacked on' – no details to either of these points. P4070, L9. Which framework? L26. Project(s) P4071. "Suffolk Coasts and Heaths" – I take it you are referring to the AONB here? These refer to the same thing. P4073, L3-7. "When analysing the regional scales". . ."evident most operate on a regional scale". Not sure what you are getting at here. P4078, L3-4. I'm not sure anyone would describe the SMP as existing to reflect natural systems. L21. I take it you mean Table A1, not Figure 1 here? Table A2. Categories are inconsistently labelled (this may be to do with the editing). Also in order to be clear, the 6 criteria should be labelled as part of this

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diagram.

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