



<https://adaptlockin.eu/>



Public Health and Extreme Weather Events: Embedding Mental Health in Dutch Climate Change Adaptation

Dr. Lisanne Groen – Open Universiteit

Mental health effects of climate change-induced extreme weather events in the Netherlands

- **PRESENTATION CONTENT:**

- Research question and case study
- Methods
- Problem domain
- Results
- Unlocking?



Floods in Zuid-Limburg, July 2021

Research question and case study



Source: parool.nl

Damage in the Netherlands due to storm Dudley (February 2022)

- **Research question:**
 - How, and to what extent, is adaptation to the mental health effects of climate change-induced extreme weather events affected by lock-in dynamics?
- **Adapt Lock-in case studies:**
 - Netherlands: national level policy
 - *(Germany: Saxony-Anhalt – not in this presentation)*
 - *(UK: England – not in this presentation)*

Methods

- **Problem domain** as unit of analysis: the arrangement of actors, rules, resources and discourses which coalesce around a collective problem (Arts et al., 2006; Liefferink, 2006).
- We pay attention to **all relevant policy areas and sectors** (healthcare, crisis/disaster management, water policy, climate change adaptation, ...)
- **Data Collection:**
 - Document analysis and stakeholder interviews
- **Data Analysis:**
 - Shared coding protocol
 - 'Fingerprints approach' to process tracing to uncover lock-in dynamics

Dutch mental healthcare and climate change-induced extreme weather events

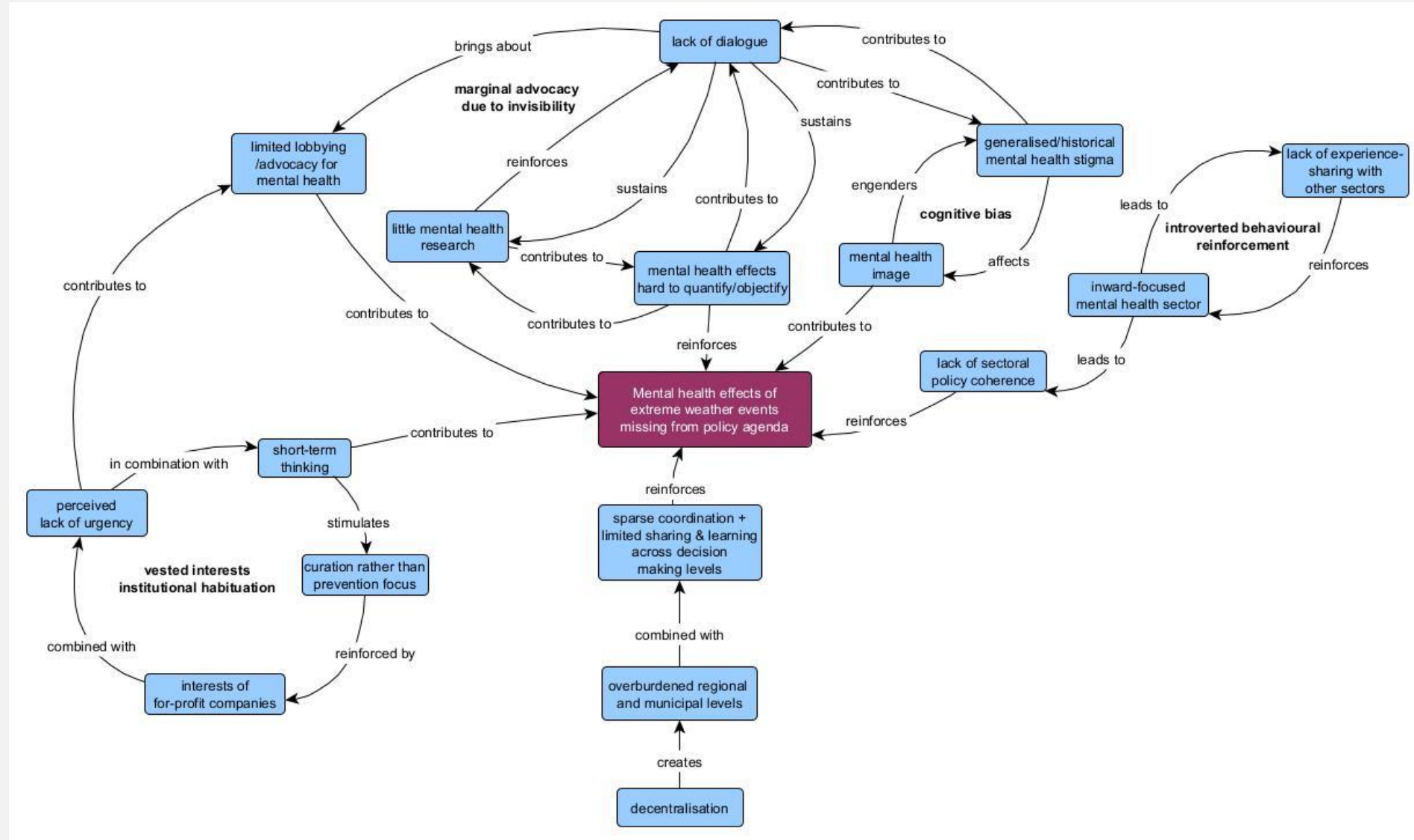
- Mental health impacts as **the “unseen” impact of climate change on human health** (van Daalen et al., 2021; Watts et al., 2017). Not (yet) adequately addressed in research (Berry et al., 2018; EASAC, 2019).
- **Mental health problems highly prevalent in society.** In NL, up to 43% of adults have officially been diagnosed with some type of mental health problem at some instance during their lifetime (de Graaf et al., 2010).
- **Sustainability of Dutch mental healthcare system under threat** due to financial confinements, increasing shortages of trained healthcare professionals and **high demand for mental healthcare** (Lemmens & Prins, 2019).
- **Mental health comprises a large proportion (+- 30%) of the (high) total cost of healthcare in the Netherlands** (RIVM, 2021).
- **Floods Limburg summer 2021: experts emphasised need for adequate psychological support and care for victims** aside from providing physical and financial aid (van Dam, 2021). Some Dutch **farmers** suffer from **mental health problems after failed harvests** as a result of extreme weather events (Huynen et al., 2019).



Floods in Zuid-Limburg, July 2021

Source: fd.nl

Results – the Netherlands



Unlocking?

- Lack of urgency (+ short-term & cure focus) => awareness (mindset)
- Additional mental health research (+ means for quantification) to increase dialogue and advocacy
- Breaking with mental health stigma (new discourse)
- Addressing inward focus of mental health sector (towards sectoral policy coherence)
- Connecting decision-making levels



Source: Sunstone counseling



Adapt Lock-in is a 3-year project with funding provided by:



<https://adaptlockin.eu/>

Questions / comments?