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Vortrag: Ranking local climate policy: assessing the mitigation and adaptation activities of 104 German cities

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Climate mitigation and climate adaptation are crucial tasks for urban areas, and can involve synergies as well as trade-offs. However, few studies have examined how mitigation and adaptation efforts relate to each other in a large number of differently-sized cities, and therefore we know little about whether forerunners in mitigation are also leading in adaptation, or if cities tend to focus on just one policy field. This paper develops an internationally applicable approach to rank cities on climate policy that incorporates multiple indicators related to (1) local commitments on mitigation and adaptation, (2) urban mitigation and adaptation plans, and (3) climate adaptation and mitigation ambitions. We apply this method to rank 104 differently-sized German cities and identify six clusters: climate policy leaders, climate adaptation leaders, climate mitigation leaders, climate policy followers, climate policy latecomers and climate policy laggards. The paper seeks explanations for particular cities' positions and shows that coping with climate change in a balanced way on a high level depends on structural factors, in particular city size, the pathways of local climate policies since the 1990s, and funding programs for both climate mitigation and adaptation.