

Theme issue contribution

## Water plus What? On the politics of addition in the good economy of climate adaptation


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### Abstract

In this article, I trace the transformation of climate adaptation in Denmark into a *good economy*. Empirically, I explore a shift in rainwater management from building sewers underground to making cheaper solutions on the surface. Moreover, these solutions are expected not only to handle rainwater but also to “add value,” particularly recreational value. I call this approach the *politics of addition*, emphasizing that it entails a specific set of principles for doing good while adapting to climate change. Theoretically, I relate this politics of addition to the concept of the good economy. By drawing on the *orders of worth* perspective, I emphasize how good economies are compromises between multiple versions of the good and that these compromises need to be stabilized through so-called composite objects. Relying mainly on document material supplemented by interviews, I identify several composite objects in climate adaptation, including tools of valuation as well as specific projects. By analyzing these composite objects, I describe how the politics of addition compromises several versions of the good in climate adaptation, eventually promising that adding value will ease “the battle for space” in cities by composing economic, technical, and recreational value into the same facilities.

Keywords: climate adaptation; rainwater management; added value; the good economy; compromise; composite objects

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<https://doi.org/10.3384/VS.2001-5992.2025.12.1.16-39>

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## **Introduction: Adding together different versions of the good**

[W]hen you have to spend much money on climate adaptation, you might as well think in added value and get urban development on top of that. (Realdania 2015).

Nowadays, adapting to climate change is a necessity. Nevertheless, some actors may try to turn this necessity into an opportunity. This article explores a concrete attempt to transform necessities into opportunities, as observed in climate adaptation in Danish rainwater management during the 2010s.<sup>1</sup> Around 2010, several damaging heavy rain incidents occurred in Denmark, including one in the summer of 2011, which flooded parts of Copenhagen and resulted in damage with an estimated value of DKK 6 billion (Fritzbøger 2018). This highlighted to experts and policymakers that the sewage systems were no longer properly dimensioned for rainfalls that are getting more extreme due to climate change. Moreover, it was also clear that adhering to business-as-usual by extending the sewers to accommodate more rain would be immensely costly. For that reason, solutions that handled rainwater on the surface instead of underground came to be valued due to their significantly lower costs. Yet, surface-based solutions were also favored for another reason, as they posed an opportunity to create “urban development” by “adding value” to the climate adaptation projects, as the quote above states.

The quote is not just any quote, but a pivotal statement from a campaign initiated by the Danish Ministry of Environment in collaboration with two influential charitable foundations (Realdania and Lokale- og Anlægsfonden). This campaign, aptly named WaterPlus (VANDPLUS in Danish), was an important step toward promoting climate adaptation on the surface with added value. This article delves into the “plus” by asking what kinds of value were added together with rainwater in this campaign and in Danish rainwater management per se.

Pursuing added value in practice is not straightforward. Previous research has highlighted that in order to make climate adaptation on the surface, new collaboration across sectors and professions is needed – mainly between engineers with expertise in handling rainwater efficiently and landscape architects with a very different kind of expertise, namely, in making room for rainwater as part of aesthetic and recreational projects such as parks (Meilvang 2019; Kvamsås 2021). This article asks what has motivated actors to undertake this collaboration even though it may be tedious. Hence, I explore the

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<sup>1</sup> The term “climate adaptation” usually refers to a broader range of initiatives to adjust to a changing climate than rainwater management. However, in this article, I use it as shorthand for climate adaptation in rainwater management.

promises and ambitions that have been assembled around the notion of added value in climate adaptation. By doing so, I excavate what I dub a *politics of addition*, consisting of a particular set of principles, aspirations, and morals influencing how climate adaptation is undertaken in Denmark, pushing it to convey more value than merely handling rainwater.

I find that a central principle of the politics of addition is to bring together qualitatively different forms of value. As indicated by the brief introduction to WaterPlus, the campaign aimed to integrate the technical value of handling rainwater, the economic value of keeping expenses down, and then something more: urban development. This bringing together of different value systems resonates with a central topic in valuation studies, namely how multiple principles of valuation become entangled (Doganova and Karnøe 2015). It also speaks to a slightly different type of entanglement: “[H]ow economies and versions of the good are entangled” (Asdal et al. 2023: 1), to which the key topic, the good economy, of this theme issue draws attention. In that respect, this article traces the dawn of a good economy of climate adaptation – one where different versions of the good are added together through a specific politics of addition. However, I argue that telling the story of actors striving to turn climate adaptation into a good economy can be aided by drawing on the orders of worth perspective introduced by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006). Boltanski and Thévenot have identified a range of incommensurable value systems or “orders of worth.” Yet, they have also drawn attention to how the tensions between these orders can be set aside by composing compromises that are stabilized through composite objects. Hence, I suggest that good economies can be assembled and sustained through *composite objects*, and I use the notions of compromise and composition to guide my analysis of how different versions of the good are brought together in the politics of addition.

In the next section, I elaborate on this dialogue between the good economy and orders of worth, arguing that good economies are compromises that need composite objects. After this, I introduce my empirical material, consisting mainly of documents supplemented by interviews. The following analysis is structured in three sections, each focusing on a specific part of my document material and each adding to the exploration of the good economy of climate adaptation and the politics of addition that it entails. First, I describe how the aforementioned WaterPlus campaign came about, paying particular attention to how it used the term added value in a novel way, extending its meaning from surplus to composing different forms of value. Next, I explore how this compromise was consolidated by tools for evaluating climate adaptation projects, focusing on one specific tool called the WaterPlus accounts. This tool foregrounds the making of “double functions” as essential for adding value. In the third section,

I move to concrete climate adaptation projects, exploring how actors describe and justify their double functions as making cities more “fun” while easing “the battle for space.” The article ends with a concluding discussion that summarizes the politics of addition and discusses it in relation to the concepts of the good economy and compromise.

### **Composing the goods of good economies**

In this section, I further describe how the orders of worth perspective can contribute to the concept of the good economy, emphasizing that good economies are compromised economies reliant on composite objects.

The good economy concept draws on the economization agenda that focuses on market devices (see e.g., Muniesa et al. 2007). Yet, it is proposed that economization “... leaves little space for exploring if and how there might be other dimensions at stake than the economical” (Asdal et al. 2023: 6). Hence, it is suggested that economization may come in many different “versions” and that each of these relates to versions of the good in its own distinct way that needs to be traced empirically (Asdal and Huse 2023; Asdal et al. 2023). To capture that valuation comes in many versions, rather than focusing narrowly on market devices, attention is drawn to the notion of tools of valuation, which captures a broad range of valuative modes from the calculative to the qualitative and narrative (Asdal and Huse 2023: 40). The good economy, hence, draws attention to how the economy “... is in need of justification beyond its contribution to surplus and on top of its eventual success at the market” (Asdal et al. 2023: 7). The concept thus stimulates critical explorations of how economies seek to “insert” themselves into society in ways that are justified as being good. As the good economy needs justification beyond the economic realm and works through a broad range of valuations, I propose to explore the notion of the “good economy” from the orders of worth perspective that offers a framework for analyzing justifications and compromises between different versions of the good.

Through empirical studies of critiques and justifications, Boltanski and Thévenot (1999) have proposed that there is a finite set of moral grammars or orders of worth in play in our society – each with its own distinct version of the common good. Eight of such orders of worth have been identified: inspired, domestic, civic, opinion, market, industrial (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), green (Lafaye and Thévenot 2017), and the projective order of worth (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). The eight different orders of worth are each dependent on their own mode of evaluation for “testing” the worth of beings (both human and non-human) that depend on their contribution to the common good (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999: 367, 2006: 76). Tests

rely on specific tools and equipment for evaluating worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 131). These tests can take various forms; sometimes, they are highly calculative, sometimes more qualitative. Hence, they align well with the breadth of the notion of tools of valuation.

According to Boltanski and Thévenot, orders of worth are in tension with each other as their notions of the common good are incommensurable. Yet, compromise between two or more orders can be achieved, suspending their conflicts and rendering them compatible (Thévenot 2001). In a compromise, the beings, objects, and value principles of multiple orders of worth are brought together in arrangements that tend to be fragile due to tensions between the participating orders of worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999). Because of these fragilities, compromises require consolidation in the form of “composite objects” that enjoin and coordinate aspects from the different compromised orders (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 278). Composite objects may take many forms including contracts, procedures, physical objects, and institutions (Thévenot 2001). Composite objects are “indivisible” because “one cannot challenge the compromise without destroying them” (Boltanski 2012: 58).

The orders of worth framework is often criticized in the field of valuation studies for being too rigid and deductive, spurring its users to identify the already defined orders of worth in new empirical settings rather than exploring in detail the specific valuation processes taking place (Heuts and Mol 2013; Kornberger et al. 2015). Yet I find that Boltanski and Thévenot’s work provides important insights into how different value systems or “valuation cultures” (Stark 2009; Lamont 2012; Zuiderent-Jerak and Van Egmond 2015) come to relate and clash and may thus add to previous work in valuation studies on how different kinds of value become entangled (Doganova and Karnøe 2015). Hence, I propose that the concepts of compromise and composite objects can help to describe how multiple versions of the good are integrated into good economies. In line with these concepts, I use the verb ‘composing’ to denote the work of adding together different value systems in composite objects. Furthermore, like Thévenot (2002: 64), I label such composite objects as “compromised”, not meaning that they are damaged or suspect, but simply that they are the objects of compromises.

Equipped with these concepts, good economies can be viewed as compromises between an economic value system and other value systems from outside the economic realm. Furthermore, through the orders of worth perspective, one would expect such compromised good economies to be fragile and prone to critiques if not supported by composite objects that could stabilize compromises between different value systems. Hence, tracing such composite objects can be one avenue for studying how good economies are emerging and being

sustained. I will suggest that some of the tools of valuation that Asdal et al. (2023) analyze through the good economy lens could be seen as composite objects since they consolidate different value systems. One example of this is their analysis of OECD's Ocean Economy project, which seeks to include the value of the oceanic ecosystems in economic calculations of the growth potential of the ocean economy. Hence, the usual opposites of economic growth and environmental regulation are made to work together here: what is good for life in the oceans is good for the economy, constituting what is promoted as a "win-win economy" (Asdal and Huse 2023: 47). Building on this, in the analysis I will identify and analyze the composite objects of climate adaptation, asking what politics of addition they convey; that is, how they integrate several versions of the good.

### **Tracing composite objects: Methods, empirical material, and analytical approach**

This article is part of an ongoing exploration of the politics of addition in climate adaptation in Denmark and draws on several types of empirical material collected over two periods. The first ran from 2018 to 2019, during which a wide range of documents about added value in climate adaptation were collected and analyzed. In the next phase of empirical collection, in 2022–2023, I conducted five expert interviews with actors in climate adaptation to contextualize my document-based data.

Most of my document material is written by and for professionals working with climate adaptation and urban planning. Hence, this material offers a view of how professionals have communicated and justified added value in climate adaptation. The documents gathered can be categorized into three groups, each corresponding to a part of the following analysis.

The first group of documents concerns climate adaptation in general and was analyzed to trace how surface-based climate adaptation with added value has been introduced historically as a viable answer to heavy rain. This will be described in the first section of the analysis, where I trace the advent of a good economy of climate adaptation back to 2012–2013, when several important things happened, including the launch of the WaterPlus campaign and its proposed compromise between different value systems through the notion of added value.

Apart from these general documents, I came across two distinct types of documents. Borrowing from Asdal and Huse (2023: 111), these could be termed "document species" to emphasize that they come with specific ways of ascribing value and ordering realities. The first of these species is comprised of a series of documents that have been made to help professionals working in municipalities or utility

companies to evaluate climate adaptation projects – not just on their technical capacity and price but also on the added value they provide. As such, these documents can be understood as what, in Asdal and Reinertsen’s (2022) method for document analysis, are called “document tools.” In my case, these tools were made to guide the professional in assessing climate adaptation projects. Some of these tools are pamphlets, while others are preformatted Excel sheets to be filled out when evaluating projects. I identified seven of these tools and have analyzed them by reading their instructions and trying to use them as the tools they are. This allowed me to explore them as composite objects that coordinate several ways of evaluating climate adaptation projects. In the second part of the analysis, I will focus on one of these tools, the WaterPlus accounts, to explore the operations that go into forging compromises between different value systems, including the making of double functions, which are given central importance in this tool.

I explored the link between added value and double functions in more depth in the third part of my document material, which consists of another document species: catalogs or online collections of examples or “best practices.” It is widespread among professionals in urban planning to assemble and distribute best practice examples to frame urban problems and their solutions (Bulkeley 2006; Blok 2012). This means that example collections entail their own mode of valuation, justifying projects as particularly good and relevant for others to learn from. For that reason, I found such collections to be interesting sites for identifying projects which were justified as having added value. I sampled ten relevant example collections in which at least some of their examples were climate adaptation projects. After having sampled the collections, I went through them to identify climate adaptation projects for which it was highlighted that they conveyed some added value. Using this method, I identified 77 climate adaptation projects with added value. I collected statements about each project and its kinds of added value from as many of the partners involved in the project as possible. Inspired by Broto and Bulkeley (2013), I gathered information about each project by systematically examining material available online including documents and videos. Based on these documents, I explored the 77 projects as composite objects and coded the kinds of added value conveyed by the projects according to the project members. Further, I coded and analyzed statements where actors narrated how the added value was achieved – not least through double functions. In the analysis, I delve into three of these 77 projects, which highlight recurrent patterns in making and justifying such double functions.

## **Introducing the “plus” and extending the meaning of “added value”**

In order to commence the analysis of the politics of addition in climate adaptation, I start in a park – Rabalderparken in Roskilde. Yet, Rabalderparken does not resemble most parks since it contains a large rainwater reservoir. However, it is more than a reservoir. It is a curvy concrete reservoir shaped to be used for skateboarding and other forms of physical activity when not filled with rainwater. Rabalderparken was completed in 2012, making it one of the first projects combining rainwater management on the surface with other functions, such as the possibility of skateboarding. This novelty was praised at the inauguration of Rabalderparken, where Ida Auken, minister of environment at the time, delivered a speech:

I had never imagined that climate change could be so much fun. (...) I'm proud to live in a country with people as creative as you. You have thought positively and solved the problem of the effects of climate change in a way that brings engineering, the environment, and people together. (Ida Auken in Kimer 2012).

The speech could be seen as a brief “moment of valuation” (Hutter and Stark 2015) in which it was made clear that engineering and technical solutions were no longer enough for climate adaptation to be satisfactory. At the least, it would be considered more valuable if the technical solutions for managing rainwater were creatively linked to the needs of humans. As hinted in the quote, this infrastructure was to be assessed not only on its ability to manage rainwater but also on its ability to generate fun for the people skateboarding and playing in it.





**Figure 1: Rainwater and a child on a scooter in Rabalderparken.**

Source: Photo by the author.

The minister's appraisal of Rabalderparken was no coincidence since the Rabalderparken project exemplified what could be achieved with a new law proposed in 2012 and passed in 2013, allowing local utility companies in charge of building and maintaining sewers to finance climate adaption on the surface if these solutions were "cost-efficient" (Naturstyrelsen 2013: 11). The principle of cost-efficiency meant that utility companies were allowed to construct surface-based solutions when they were cheaper than making or extending sewers while keeping the same "service level" or efficiency that sewers could provide. The law meant that utility companies could now co-finance projects of municipalities or private actors that contributed to rainwater management.

To promote the possibilities of the new law, the Ministry of Environment, along with two influential charitable foundations (Realdania and Lokale- og Anlægsfonden), in 2013 launched the campaign WaterPlus. Through four demonstration projects, WaterPlus aimed to show how rainwater management could be combined with aesthetic and recreational qualities to create what was termed

*merværdi* (added value) within the campaign. In common Danish, *merværdi* denotes the adding of economic value. Hence, the way it was used in WaterPlus was an extension of the word's initial meaning on two levels. First, the notion of value was enlarged from economic value to encompass more qualitative kinds of value, e.g., recreational value. Second, *merværdi* was used not only to describe the mere addition of value; rather, it denoted the joining of different kinds of value at once, e.g., the technical, the economic, and the recreational.

The WaterPlus campaign was launched not long after the inauguration of Rabalderparken, where the minister had praised the facility for being “fun.” In one of the early press releases on the WaterPlus campaign, Ida Auken almost echoed her speech from Rabalderparken, stating that:

We now have many tools and financing options for efficient climate adaptation in Denmark. However, it is even better if climate adaptation not only protects us against cloudbursts, but also creates new opportunities in the cities and perhaps provides more space for play, sports, culture or completely different experiences for citizens. (Ida Auken in Realdania 2013).

The quote encapsulates the shifts in making climate adaptation that occurred at the time and which launched what I call a politics of addition: as it became possible for utility companies to finance cost-efficient climate adaptation on the surface, this entailed an ambition that climate adaptation should do more – it should add value – in its new extended meaning. From these early efforts to promote added value, it is evident that at least three types of value were to be compromised and composed in climate adaptation: economic value by keeping expenses down, technical value by ensuring efficient rainwater management, and then the value of new opportunities for urban dwellers in the form of recreational facilities, etc.

### **Adding value in the WaterPlus accounts**

Despite there being a clear ambition to add together economic, technical, and recreational value in climate adaptation around 2012–2013, it was still relatively unclear how these different kinds of value should be compromised and, as a result, exactly how the politics of addition should unfold. One way in which this compromise was consolidated in the following years was through the composite objects of document tools for evaluating the added value of climate adaptation. Though I identified seven of these tools, in this section I will focus on one of them: the WaterPlus accounts (VANDPLUS 2015a), which were developed in connection with the four demonstration projects of the WaterPlus campaign. Analyzing this

particular tool allows me to delve further into how exactly this influential campaign promoted added value.

Figure 2 shows the final version of the accounts for one of the WaterPlus projects located in the municipality of Frederiksberg. It is evident from this figure that the accounts use a bar chart to compare the costs of two types of climate adaptation projects: A “WaterPlus project above ground” benchmarked against a “Traditional project underground.” I have not encountered such comparisons between a novel kind of project with added value and a so-called traditional project in the other document tools studied. This makes the WaterPlus accounts a particularly interesting site from which to view the politics of addition, since it quite vividly distinguishes surface projects from business-as-usual solutions placed underground.

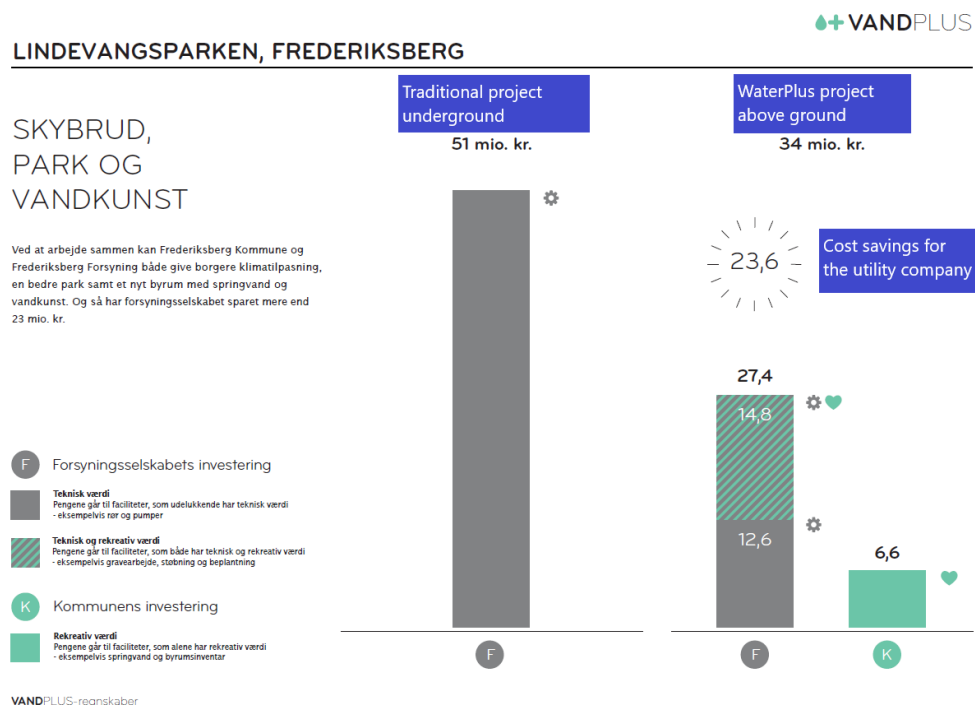


Figure 2: WaterPlus accounts for the project Lindevangsparken.

Source: (VANDPLUS 2015a, 3). Reprinted with permission from Realdania. Selected parts (in blue boxes) of the account are translated into English.

I will now analyze the particular WaterPlus account seen in Figure 2 by paying close attention to the differences that the figure establishes between the WaterPlus project and the “Traditional project underground.” This analysis is further supported by a background document (VANDPLUS 2015c) explicating the calculations behind the WaterPlus accounts.

The first difference in the account is a difference in cost: the bars in the figure indicate that the WaterPlus project has cost DKK34 m, while a comparable “traditional” would cost DKK51 m. This is based on

calculations from the local utility company summarized in the background document (VANDPLUS 2015c: 2). Here, the costs of the WaterPlus project are computed, while the cost of a fictitious project that handles the same volume of rainwater in “one large basin underground” is estimated. By imagining such an underground basin, the account demonstrates that moving climate adaptation facilities to the surface is cheaper. This first value that is added is thus an act of subtracting costs.

Yet, costs are not just subtracted; they are also divided: In the “traditional project,” the investment is solely undertaken by the utility company (emblemized by an “F” in the grey circles in Figure 2). In the WaterPlus project, another actor is added: the municipality (emblemized by a “K” in the green circles in Figure 2). As the municipality is shown to undertake part of the investments, it is highlighted in the figure that the utility company saved DKK23.6 m by making the project above ground compared to the traditional project underground. Displaying that the utility company is saving money through the operations of subtracting and dividing costs is particularly important due to the legal demand that utility companies can participate in surface-based solutions as long as they are cost-efficient, as mentioned in the previous section.

Though the increased cost-efficiency of moving climate adaptation seems to be an important aspect of the politics of addition, it does not encompass all the aspects of adding value that the WaterPlus accounts show. With the introduction of the municipality into the WaterPlus accounts, a new distinction between two qualitatively different types of value is also added: technical value and recreational value. In Figure 2, technical value is symbolized by a grey cogwheel, whereas recreational value appears in the form of a green heart. It is evident that the municipality has only invested in recreational value (indicated by the green bar representing DKK6.6 m), while the utility company has made investment of solely technical value (indicated by the grey bar representing DKK12.6 m) or of a combined technical and recreational value (indicated by the grey and green bar representing DKK14.8 m). The WaterPlus account provides short explications of these three value categories. Technical value indicates that “the money is spent on facilities of solely technical value – e.g. pipes and pumps.” Facilities that solely have recreational value are exemplified as “e.g. fountains or urban furniture,” while it is noted that “digging, casting and planting” are investments that may convey both technical and recreational value (VANDPLUS 2015a: 3). The background document designates these investments of double value as a result of the municipality’s influence:

Through the joint project, the municipality (...) has had the opportunity to influence the design of the technical part of the facility and, thus, large parts

of the utility company's investments (...) in a recreational direction. (VANDPLUS 2015c: 2).

Hence, the WaterPlus accounts point to the possibility of using investment from the utility company as a lever for making recreational facilities if one can manage to “influence” the technical solution. The WaterPlus accounts do not mention specific instances of this, but other documents that describe the facilities of the particular project of Figure 2 do so: for instance, a stage in concrete for activities like dancing that at the same time works as a rainwater basin is highlighted to be of both technical and recreational value, while most expenses including digging out and casting concrete have been paid by the utility company (VANDPLUS 2015b: 24 f.). Such instances of joint recreational and technical value were also termed “double functions” within the WaterPlus campaign. In the introduction to the WaterPlus accounts their importance is also emphasized: The key to success lies in double functions. A big part of the utility company's money goes to facilities that can both accommodate rainwater and activities. That way, we get more for our money. (VANDPLUS 2015a: 2).

Thus, multiplying functions of the facilities is at the core of adding value, according to the WaterPlus accounts. Though neither the accounts nor the background document mention it, there is a special incentive for multiplying the value of technical facilities, giving them a recreational value as well. According to the legal regulation of utility companies, they can only invest in amenities that handle rainwater (Naturstyrelsen 2013) So, while the facilities financed by the utility company may have a recreational aspect, they must also have a technical element. Hence, with double functions, one can get more for one's money, as stated in the quote, not least because the utility company is paying for them.

This reading of a specific WaterPlus account and its connected documents has offered a view of how the new extended meaning of added value, described in the previous section, has been composed and stabilized in a tool. The tool emphasizes that value can be added when shifting from “traditional projects underground” to projects on the surface. The composition of the WaterPlus accounts shows how the politics of addition entails a wider range of arithmetic operations, including dividing expenses, saving money (subtraction), adding together different types of value, and multiplying value through double functions. Hence, this range of operations supports the composition of economic, technical, and recreational value. While the accounts emphasize the importance of double functions, they say little about how they are achieved apart from suggesting that they result from the municipality's influence. As I find double functions to be a central part of the politics of addition, I will focus on their composition in the following section.

## **Composing and justifying “double functions”**

In this section, I turn to the other species in my document material – that of best practice examples – to explore how the making of double functions is described and justified in connection with these examples. I focus on three pertinent project examples, which together show the most recurrent ways of making and justifying double functions across the 77 projects examined. To start this journey through best practice examples, I return to where the analysis started: Rabalderparken, which was appraised for its fun character by the minister of environment at its inauguration due to its incorporation of skating facilities into a rainwater reservoir.

According to the documents I have assembled about Rabalderparken, this double function was not envisioned from the start as the original plan was to make a purely technical facility of water canals traversing a park and leading to an egg-shaped reservoir. However, this plan inspired local skaters as they thought: “... it looked like what we had seen in video clips from the USA, where you skate in drainage canals when it doesn’t rain,” as one skater put it (Bærentzen 2012: 27). This resemblance gave rise to an idea, and the skaters contacted the local utility company to influence the technical solution by suggesting that the canals and the reservoir should be covered in concrete, which is more suitable for skating than the cheaper asphalt that was first planned as surface material. The developer agreed to this. This brief story of actors realizing that several types of value could be compromised in Rabalderparken entails two aspects of making double functions that I have found in many of the best practice examples. First, ideas are brought in from outsiders, such as skaters. Next, a material component is introduced, which supports composing the added value with the technical value of the rainwater facility. In this case, concrete plays this role as it can accommodate both rainwater and skating.

However, more effort was put into composing the technical and the recreational in Rabalderparken, as an architect and skater with experience in designing skating facilities was engaged to work the egg-shaped reservoir into a skating bowl. In a video clip (Meloni 2013), the architect explained how the overall shape and dimensions “were given in advance” so that his task was to “... come up with a form that's fun to skate and connects with this egg shape. And it is really complicated to make this work while taking into account that this bowl has to be able to contain a specific amount of water.” Hence, the architect described how making double functions requires continual negotiation between very different demands – making shapes that are fun to skate while sticking to the fixed shapes and dimensions that are demanded for rainwater management. Yet, a potential tension between the differing demands is downplayed – the main message is that both technical and recreational value can be achieved in harmony through

creative composition. Hence, the architect added various bumps, ramps, and curbs to enhance the fun of skating in the reservoir. Making these interventions in the original egg shape "... gives this double function in an otherwise boring water management project," the architect (in Meloni 2013) further noted. I find that this way of talking about double functions as something that "gives" without taking anything from the technical facilities and their capacity for handling rainwater, is recurrent among actors making added value. Along with this playing down of any potential tensions between the technical and recreational value systems, a clear distinction is also added between boring technical projects and projects with double functions, which are justified as fun.

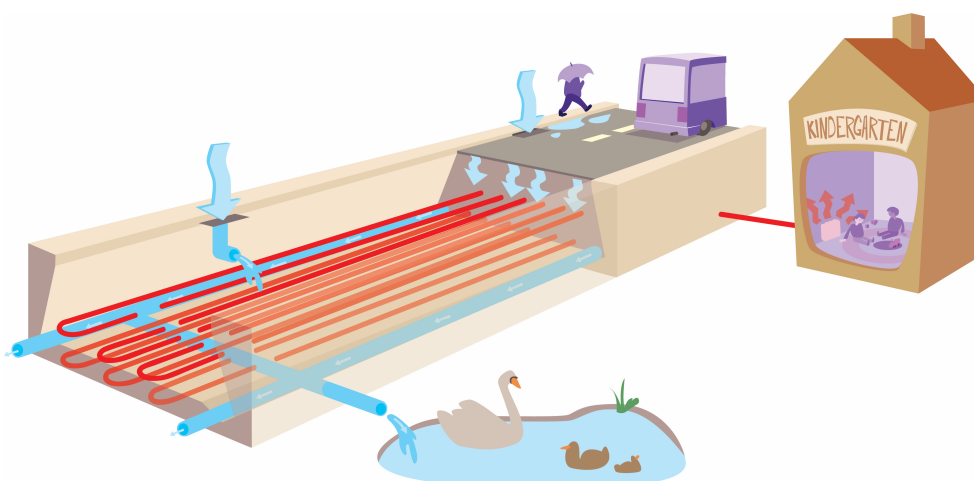
That double functions can transform boring technical solutions into something fun is not only stated in connection to Rabalderparken. For instance, I also encountered it in the project POP-UP, which is a climate adaptation solution proposed by the architectural firm THIRD NATURE. According to THIRD NATURE, "POP-UP solves three challenges at once" since it places a public park atop a parking facility located below ground within a rainwater reservoir. During heavy rain incidents, rainwater "fills the underground reservoir and the parking structure will pop up in the cityscape." According to one of the architects behind the project, the park and parking facility popping up gives "completely new types of experiences back to the city's users" (THIRD NATURE n.d.). Hence, through the material composition of POP-UP, the technical rainwater solution is turned into a spectacle. However, the triple function of POP-UP is also justified in another way, as indicated in the following quote from a consultant at Rambøll, who has assisted with the project:

There is a battle for urban space. Often the choice comes down to financials and open spaces lose to developments. By combining several solutions into one, POP-UP enables cities to ensure the economic vitality of the city whilst becoming resilient. (THIRD NATURE n.d.).

Hence, integrating several functions on top of each other is proposed as a truce in the battle for space. If several functions are not composed on the same plot of land, the consultant fears that economic interests in profitable building developments would trump the need for spaces for recreation and climate adaptation solutions. However, making double (or triple) functions is justified as relaxing tensions between these otherwise opposing interests.

Apart from placing functions atop each other, rainwater plays a special role in POP-UP as it creates a new experience for urban dwellers when it lifts the park. Putting the rain to use is another recurrent way of making the double functions that I have traced among the examples. As noted by Meilvang (2021), there has been a

shift among climate adaptation professionals from seeing rain as a risk to perceiving it as a resource for urban development as well. This “resourcification” (Hultman et al. 2021) of rain goes beyond using rainwater for recreational experiences. This is clear if one turns to another example: The Climate Road in Hedensted municipality, where rainwater is utilized to produce heating.



**Figure 3:** Drawing of the climate road showing how rainwater passes through the geothermal pipes (colored in red).

Source: VIA University College.

As in the two previous examples, the Climate Road has a playful element: It is referred to as “the magic road,” especially by children in a neighboring kindergarten. The magic of the road is that it absorbs water as it is made of permeable asphalt. However, the road contains more tricks. According to one of the researchers from VIA University College, who collaborated with the municipality on building the road, from the beginning there was an awareness of the “battle for space” in urban areas. Consequently, it was thought that “We need some added value in this [project]” (Interview A). This was achieved by treating rainwater as a resource in geothermal energy production:

We have learned that the moister the soil is surrounding the geothermal pipes, the more they produce. And hence, it intuitively made sense to combine a climate adaptation solution that handles a lot of water with an energy solution. (Interview A).

So, the idea was to integrate pipes, used to extract geothermal energy, into the roadbed below the permeable asphalt, allowing rainwater to increase the efficiency of the pipes (see Figure 3). Now, this solution provides heating to the neighboring kindergarten. When



testing the Climate Road, researchers realized that rainwater not only contributes to wetness but also to a bit of heat that is transferred to the geothermal pipes. This further supports the framing of rainwater as a resource that should be exploited instead of going to waste in the sewer. Due to its emission-free energy production, the Climate Road has been justified as one way “that we can contribute to a better global climate” (Hedensted Kommune, n.d.), as stated by a member of Hedensted City Council. Apart from its combination of climate adaptation and mitigation, the road is also valued for contributing to the local environment: when rainwater travels through the roadbed it is also cleaned, and is subsequently led to a small lake in order to improve its water quality. The Climate Road hence composes climatic and environmental kinds of value, which have not been previously encountered in the analysis. Based on my analysis of all 77 projects from the example collections, I contend that economic, technical, and recreational value are at the center of the politics of addition. However, it is important to acknowledge that certain actors experiment with composing other types of value into climate adaptation. When summarizing the Climate Road’s composition of functions and types of value, the researcher stated:

Well, if we now show that we can create a climate adaptation solution where we can handle a large quantity of water (...) If we can also extract energy from it and at the same time show that the roadbed can actually clean the water to a certain extent, then you have – what to say – an added value there. So, it’s about making it probable why this is a really, really good idea. (Interview A).

It is thus hinted that adding value by creating double functions is also a tactic for increasing the attractiveness of climate adaptation projects. This aspect of added value is further reflected in a quote from an employee at Realdania – one of the foundations participating in WaterPlus:

Well, sometimes I think that the division between what is the value and what is the “added” in reality can be a little blurred. It is dependent on the angle from which you look at a project. When politicians make decisions on many of those climate adaptation *projects*... *They* may actually not be climate adaptation projects to them, because they are in reality a new park or a new playground, or a new football field. If these projects provided none of these more recreational kinds of value to the citizens, they may not have been realized at all. The added value is actually the climate adaptation underneath. (Interview B).

As the quote indicates, the added recreational value, rather than the climate adaptation, tends to be most important to local politicians.

Hence, composing different value systems materially – sometimes by utilizing rainwater as a resource – in double functions could be seen as a means of making space for climate adaptation in cities. At least that is how they are justified: as canceling out the battle for space by making “boring” technical facilities “fun.”

### **Concluding discussion: A politics of addition to replace tensions with harmony?**

In a reading of Weber’s work, Asdal (2022: 851) has suggested that the good economy with its focus on “doing good with money” is replacing another version of economization that is mainly concerned with the rational allocation of “scarce resources,” making sure that “no penny is spent in vain.” The politics of addition, described in this article, cuts across these two versions of economization: it is obsessed with the scarcity of funds, seeking to do efficient climate adaptation as cheaply as possible on the surface. Nevertheless, actors are not satisfied with this – they also want to do good with their scarce investments, making recreational added value and urban development while sometimes also contributing to a better environment through climate adaptation projects.

In this article, I have proposed that this peculiar configuration of saving money while adding value can be understood as a compromise between different value systems, especially the technical, the economic, and the recreational. In doing so, I have tried to bring the notions of orders of worth and the good economy into dialogue, emphasizing that good economies are compromises and because compromises are fragile, good economies need composite objects. Hence, identifying and analyzing its composite objects has been proposed as a way of describing a specific good economy.

In my analysis, I turned to two kinds of composite objects: the document tools for evaluating climate adaptation and the specific projects from collections of best practice. Delving into these helped to uncover the politics of addition, which I find is sustaining the good economy of climate adaptation. Based on the analysis, I find that this politics of addition seeks to connect different stakeholders, as it will lead to sharing project costs (cf. the WaterPlus accounts), while bringing in new ideas (e.g., the municipality influencing the technical facility in the WaterPlus accounts, or the skaters’ suggestion to turn Rabalderparken into a skating facility). The promise is that these new ideas will make boring technical facilities more fun if realized in double functions that comprise technical and recreational value systems. Hence, creative engineers or architects who manage to compose various functions materially – sometimes by utilizing rainwater as a resource – are considered important beings in the politics of addition. I have found that double functions are justified

economically as a means of obtaining more value for one's money (cf. the WaterPlus accounts). However, they are also frequently justified as replacing the tensions that usually lead to a battle for space with a state of harmony, as it is promised that many interests can be realized at once. Hence, on a more overarching level, the politics of addition promises that it is able to convert the necessity of climate adaptation into an opportunity for adding value, thus making cities more fun and harmonious.

According to the orders of worth perspective, compromises are made to resolve the tensions between different versions of the common good. However, something more is at play in the politics of addition: here, making compromises is considered inherently good since it adds value and realizes different forms of worth at once, so to speak. In this respect, the politics of addition resonates with studies drawing on the orders of worth perspective describing how the compromises of corporate sustainability strategies are often framed as “win-win” arrangements of worth in both the market world and the green world (Nyberg and Wright 2013; Demers and Gond 2020). Quite similarly, but relying mainly on the field of valuation studies, Ariztia and Araneda (2022: 124) have identified how circular economy businesses are valued through a “win-win formula” where “economic and environmental gains reinforce each other.” However, all three studies conclude that these win-win arrangements are made one-sidedly in terms of generating economic value. Does the politics of addition also prioritize economic value over the other forms of value it compromises? When the WaterPlus accounts justify double functions as a means of getting more for one's money, it could indicate that the politics of addition is yet another instance of prioritizing economic value. However, rather than prioritization, I find mutual dependency between the value systems: economic concerns may be a big reason for moving climate adaptation to the surface, but justifications beyond that seem to be needed. As the analysis indicates, having double functions may make projects more appealing to politicians. Thus, adding recreational value may be the ticket to the surface areas for climate adaptation. While the analysis showed multiple justifications stating that double functions can put the battle for space to rest, another way to interpret such statements is that purely technical rainwater facilities are generally not considered worthy of taking up space in dense urban environments and thus would not withstand the battle for space. Instead, added value is incorporated to make climate adaptation more justifiable and attractive to urban dwellers and may thus act as a preemptive measure against possible criticism. Hence, making double functions conveys a certain power – in that it may keep climate adaptation out of the battle for space, allowing it to be implemented smoothly.

The Danish case of promoting added value in rainwater management can be seen as part of a global trend in urban planning of making climate adaptation with so-called co-benefits, which may include elements as diverse as improvement of air quality, nature conservation, and new recreational spaces while adapting to a changing climate (Alves et al. 2019). Therefore, co-benefits also tend to be promoted as win-win arrangements. However, this does not necessarily mean that everyone will win through such arrangements. A critical strain of literature has criticized that co-benefits are being appraised “acritically” in both practice and academia (Anguelovski et al. 2020: 1748). Hence, it remains in the shadows that projects with co-benefits may lead to depoliticization, gentrification, and marginalization of certain groups, which this critical literature argues is often the case (Anguelovski et al. 2018; Finewood et al. 2019). Based on this literature, one could ask for whom added value is being made and if the politics of addition reinforce certain inequalities and disempower specific groups. Though this is an important question, it is beyond this article's scope to answer. Yet, while this literature suggests that co-benefits are “acritically” being promoted and comprise an instance of depoliticization, this article has foregrounded another perspective: how making projects with added value (as a specific instance of the broader co-benefits) is indeed a political endeavor of its own; one that entails adding together and justifying different versions of the good, which I have sought to capture in the notion of politics of addition.

Last, I will remark that this politics of addition has moved from climate adaptation to other issues in Denmark. Quite recently, it was proposed by landscape architects that the green transition would be done more smoothly if “energy landscapes,” especially solar parks, were made with added value, hence making facilities that produce renewable energy while benefitting biodiversity and local communities (see e.g. Korsnes and Grunkin 2021). It is too early to say if this move will reduce local opposition toward renewable energy facilities and calm the battle for space in rural settings. Nevertheless, it points to a more general tendency of turning the necessities posed by climate change into an opportunity through the politics of addition.

### **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank the participants in the “Valuation and Critique in the ‘Good Economy’” track of the 38th EGOS Colloquium who provided valuable comments to an earlier version of this article. I am also grateful to the group of authors for this theme issue who, during a workshop, engaged thoroughly with a later version. A special thanks to two anonymous reviewers and the editors of this special

issue, Kristin Asdal and Liliana Doganova, whose thoughtful comments have helped elaborate the argument of the article.

### Funding

This work was supported by the Independent Research Fund Denmark [grant number 0217-00229B].

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