Co-production of fit-for-purpose climate services: An example from the health sector

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Climate services have to be co-produced by providers and users in order to be fit-for-purpose

A climate service is a service or a tool designed to provide with climate information to individuals or organizations that have to make a decision, taking into account the climate.

Despite having better quality climate data, this data is rarely incorporated in policy and planning. Knowledge co-production creates a science-stakeholders interface that involves users in the design of climate services and their later incorporation in decision-making.
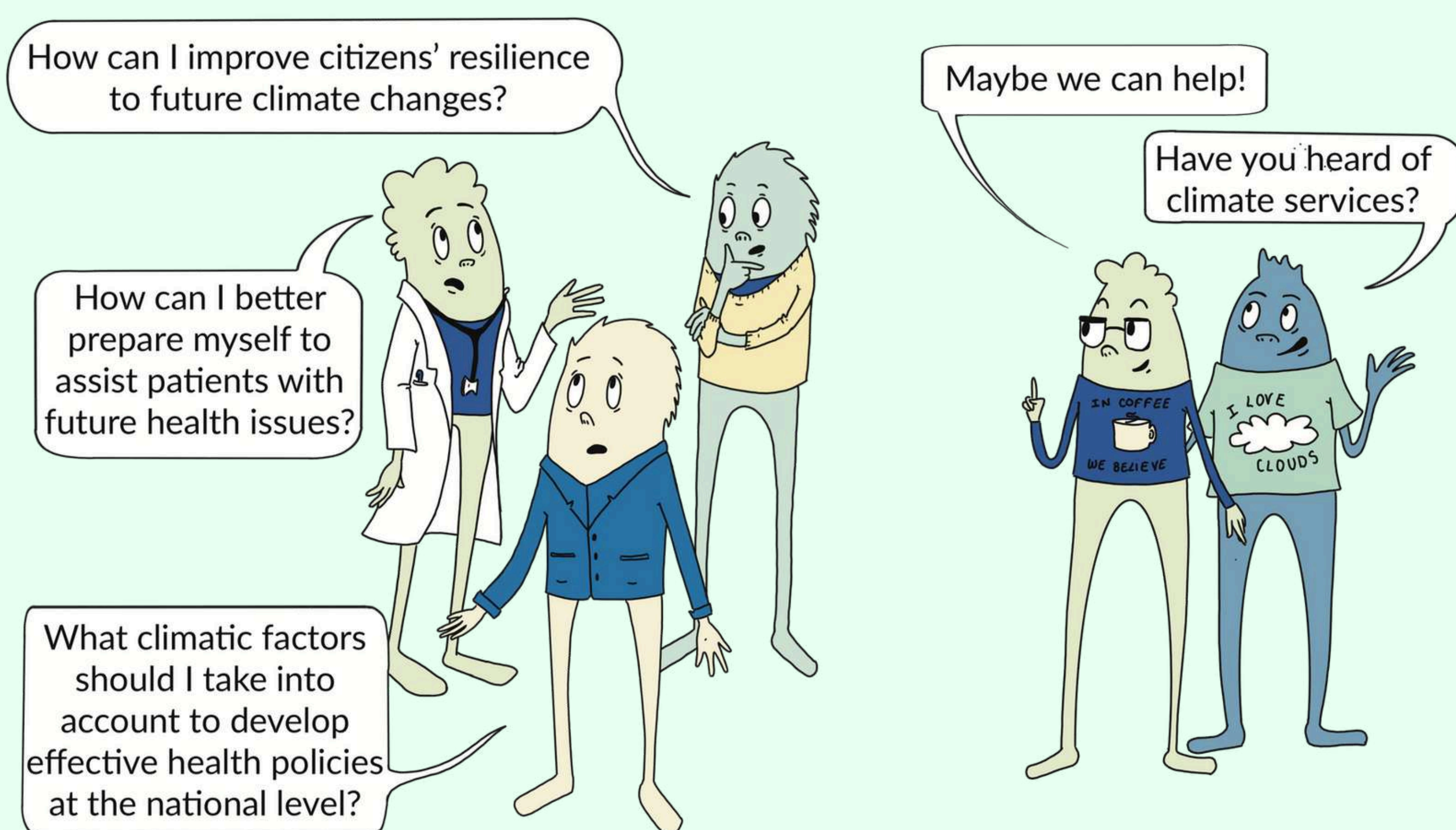
Developing standards and guidelines fosters high-quality climate services

Standards are measurements, descriptions, conventions or design specifications aimed at inducing conformity of practice or behaviours. In the field of climate services, they can offer a benchmark for both providers and users, ensuring product functionality, compatibility and/or interoperability. Currently, there are no agreed-upon standards for climate services, nor is there a consensus on the criteria or the range of participants needed to establish these standards, best practices, and guidance. Given the complexity of climate services, the Climateurope2 project suggests dividing them into four high-level components.
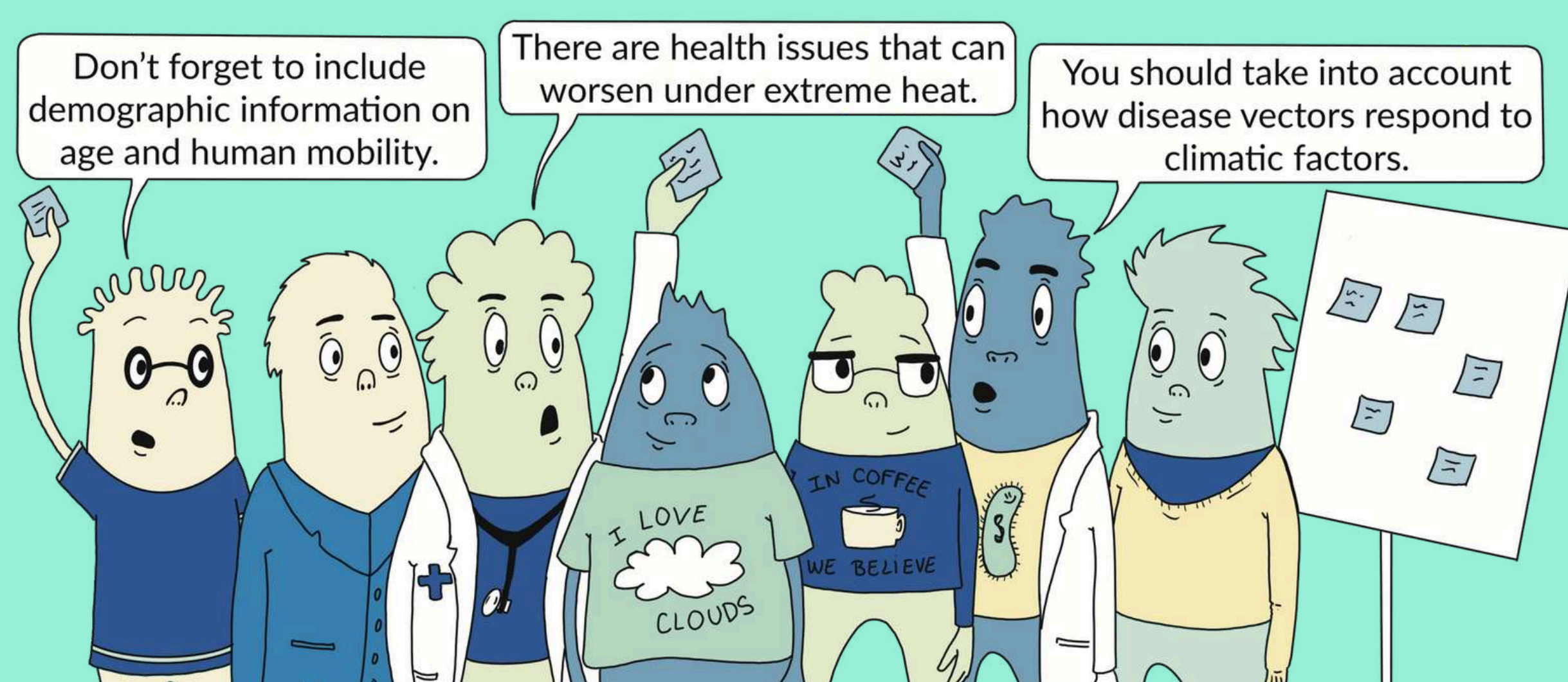
Climate services components

1 Decision context

It involves the decisions supported by the climate service, including its geographic and political context, along with policy structures and governance enabling climate service development.

2 Ecosystem of actors and co-production processes

This component identifies actors involved in producing, evaluating, and using climate services, including those relevant to specific decision contexts. It also covers co-production processes relevant to different actors and stages of service development.

3 Knowledge systems

Knowledge systems encompasses environmental, social, economic, and technical data, including engineering data and local knowledge, for local adaptation and mitigation strategies. It also involves selection, evaluation, and translation processes for this data, along with considerations for data accessibility, storage, and stewardship.

4 Delivery mode and evaluation

This component regards how a climate service is delivered, and how this delivery is evaluated at various steps. It involves tailoring data and processes to match the practitioner's decision and context. Delivery can take various forms depending on stakeholders' needs. For health practitioners aiming to tackle the emergence and transmission of infectious diseases in Europe in the upcoming months, a seasonal indicator platform is being developed in the context of the IDAlert project. The platform provides seasonal indicators for diseases such as dengue, malaria or West Nile virus, which support early actions to address climate-related health threats.