



# The **CLIMSAVE** Project

## Climate Change Integrated Assessment Methodology for Cross-Sectoral Adaptation and Vulnerability in Europe

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### **Introduction**

CLIMSAVE is a European research project funded by the EU to assess climate change impacts and adaptation strategies across six key sectors in Europe: agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, urban, water and coasts. Linkages between these sectors are being represented within a series of integrated models within a user-friendly web-based Integrated Assessment Platform (IAP). The IAP is being designed so that stakeholders can use it themselves to explore and understand the interactions between climate change impacts in different sectors, building their capacity to identify cross-sectoral vulnerability to climate change and determine how it might be reduced by various cost-effective adaptation options.

This fourth edition of the CLIMSAVE newsletter focuses on the policy analysis that has been undertaken at two scales: European and regional (represented through a case study in Scotland).

### **CLIMSAVE policy analysis**

The policy analysis in CLIMSAVE has two purposes: (i) to assess the policy and governance context for climate adaptation through an analysis of selected global, EU, national, and local adaptation strategies; and (ii) to evaluate existing sectoral and cross-sectoral policy mechanisms for climate adaptation.

While the first research focus requires a multi-level governance (MLG) perspective, the second establishes a policy integration

perspective. A MLG approach will reflect climate policy interplay vertically: between state and non-state actors that construct the dynamics of the policy and governance context of climate adaptation at different spatial scales. This is complemented by the integration perspective which enables a horizontal analysis of climate policy interplay between different sectors that are supposed to develop strategies and measures for climate policy integration (CPI).

### **Methodology**

The policy analysis was undertaken using a mixture of document analysis and interviewing key informants. Selected policy documents for the EU and the Scottish case study were analysed and key informant interviews were conducted with seven official experts working for the Directorates-General (DGs) of EU administration. For Scotland, seven formal interviews were carried out, supplemented by 12 phone calls and informal discussions at the Adaptation Scotland conference in June 2011.

### **Climate adaptation at the EU level**

A considerable part of climate policy in the EU, as well as in Member States, has originated from international environmental agreements and policy-making. In addition, local actors have also initiated climate adaptation strategies that feedback to the scale of EU climate policy making. There is general agreement in the scientific literature and policy documents that adaptation is a "local" issue, i.e. effective actions are taken at the national, regional, and local levels. The added value of the EU lies in supporting

and strengthening actions taken at other levels of governance. The EU can act as a coordinator and integrator in order to raise the effectiveness of adaptation, ensure solidarity among Member States, and change policy in those sectors (such as agriculture and biodiversity) that are closely integrated through the single market and common policies. The EU seems to be best suited for building up a knowledge base for adaptation that disseminates best practices and enables experiences to be shared.

### **The EU Adaptation Policy Framework**

In the key adaptation policy document at the EU level (White Paper on “Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action”), a “hard science” and economics approach is favoured in framing and forming adaptation policy; based on reliable data, prediction, indicators, and control. A market mentality is expressed through the promotion of mainly market-based instruments in the adaptation policy toolbox. The EU Adaptation Policy Framework is not a call for frame-breaking change in the sense that it promotes climate-proofing of existing production systems, physical infrastructure, products and services, but does not mention the need for structural changes in lifestyles or public institutions.

### **Influential actors at the EU level**

The European Commission is one of the very important players; it has been the driving force for the creation of DG Clima that led to the re-arrangement of responsibilities for climate policy within the EU administration. As a functionally separate unit within the EU administration, DG Clima is working for climate policy integration (CPI) at the EU level. As knowledge creators, research institutes and scientists are also relatively important actors in driving the issues. Further, there are many different environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field of climate policy, which are often strongly networked and create platforms (such as Green 10 and CAN-E).

### **How EU biodiversity policy is framing the challenge of climate adaptation**

The relationship between climate change and biodiversity policy is strongly shaped by a cognitive frame that can be summarised by the following slogan: “Working for Nature and Working with Nature.” An effective nature conservation and biodiversity policy contributes to the integrity and health of ecosystems and habitats and thus protects the stability, resilience, and diversity of natural systems. By implication, nature retains her capacity for adapting to changing complex pressures and conditions, such as climate change. Practices and tools of nature conservation and biodiversity policy, such as ecological corridors and ecological restoration, therefore, constitute a cost-efficient approach to climate adaptation: healthy natural systems provide their services to human communities free of charge. This is called Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA). EbA is claimed to offer triple-win measures; those that (i) protect and restore ecosystems, (ii) contribute to mitigation by reducing emissions, and (iii) constitute a cost-effective way of adapting to the impacts of climate change. In addition, there is an equity hypothesis: EbA options seem to be more accessible to rural and poor communities. With this win-win-win mind-set, EbA aspires to be a route to sustainable actions.

Another important element of the cognitive framing of this relationship concerns its economics. This draws particularly on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: linking biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being. In this respect, EbA means working with nature for human well-being. This well-being argument is basically an economics argument that says it is a good investment to put our resources in maintaining our natural resource base, in restoring them (if necessary due to degradation), and even developing them through investments in green infrastructure. All these investments will pay back in the longer term since preserving, or enhancing, the resilience and adaptive capacity of natural systems means they will be able to provide adaptation options, as well as ecosystem services, without compromise in their quality to human societies.

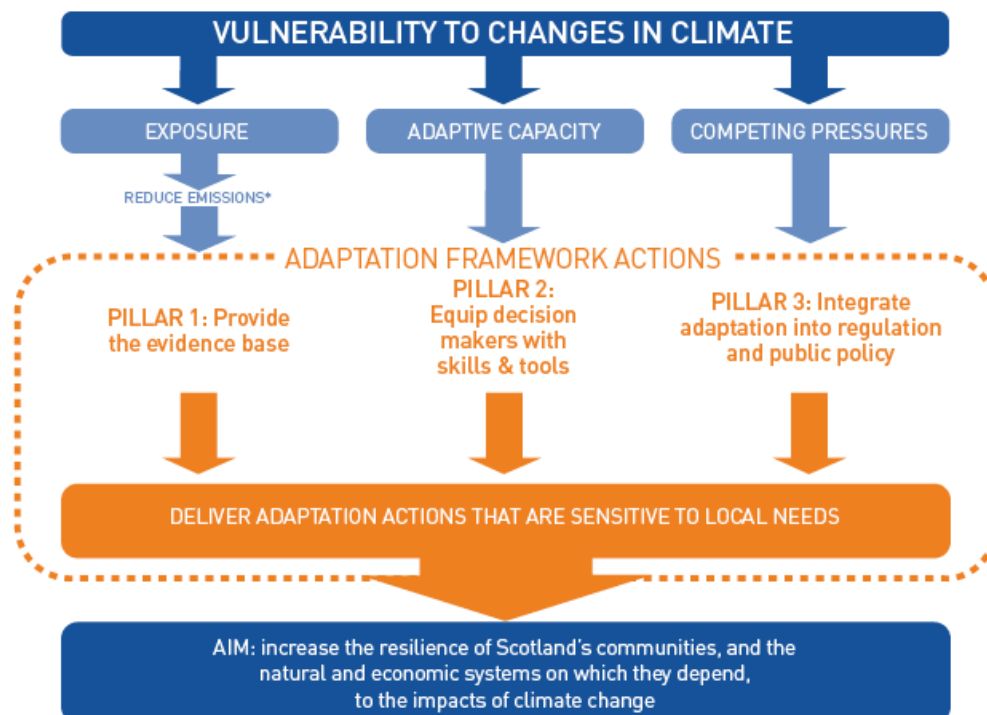
## Scottish adaptation policy

Institutionally, Scotland benefits from a strong governance culture and the dense network possible within a smaller polity. Climate change, as a policy issue, is constructed as both an opportunity and a potential threat to Scotland. Much of the focus to date has been on mitigation, and there is a feeling that the ambitious emissions targets that have been adopted are world-class. Adaptation policy has lagged behind mitigation policy, and does not have the same profile. However it is perceived as a risk to sustainable economic growth, and therefore something which needs to be addressed. A key driver for current adaptation policy is the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) called for by the UK Climate Change Act 2008. This has just been published, and the Climate Act (Scotland, 2009) requires the Scottish Government to draw up an Adaptation Programme to address the risks that have been identified in it for Scotland. The Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Framework was published in 2009, with the intention to catalyse improvements with respect to adaptation and resilience. It was based on two public consultations, a strategic environmental assessment and an equality impact assessment. The overall framework was followed in 2010 with the

publication of 12 sectoral action plans. The focus of the Scottish Government has been on preparation and co-ordination, and there has been a desire not to earmark too much money specifically for climate change adaptation because this may disincentivise organisations from taking the issue on if they receive funding. However there has been funding for research, for the adaptation unit itself and for the work of the Scottish Climate Change Impacts Partnership (SCCIP, now renamed Adaptation Scotland). There have also been some specific projects and programmes with a very clear linkage to adaptation issues, such as the development of River Basin Management Plans.

## Influential actors in Scotland

The Scottish Government is the body responsible for delivering the policies formulated by the Scottish Parliament. The Energy and Climate Change Directorate comes under Enterprise and Environment, which is oriented towards the goal of increasing sustainable economic growth; it has particular responsibility for meeting the high level goal of making a transition to a low carbon economy. The Adaptation Unit sits within Strategy and Economic Policy, the area of government that deals with sustainable economic development, delivering against the Scotland Performs indicators. It has the lead



Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation Framework. Source: Scottish Government (2009). Available from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/12/08130513/5>.

on making sure that the Scottish Government delivers on the requirements of the Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009 in respect of adaptation. The unit works with sector leaders (primarily inside the Scottish Government) for each of the 12 identified sectors. These leaders in turn work with stakeholders within each sector.

Much Scottish policy is delivered by public bodies varying from project funded bodies, such as Adaptation Scotland, to more established organisations, such as the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency. As well as delivering policy on adaptation under the statutory duty imposed on them by the Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009, many public bodies have played an active role in shaping policy. A number of NGOs (ENGOs are particularly prominent) have also been involved in forming adaptation policy through lobbying and responding to public consultation. Further, the research community plays an important role in climate change policy, given the profile of science internationally in shaping the issue. There is a perception that the private sector has not engaged with adaptation in Scotland to the same extent as other governance actors.

### **Scottish policy discourse as an aspect of CPI**

Policy integration for adaptation can be promoted through association with other ideas, and the discourse around sustainable development seems important due to its long history as a cross-cutting policy issue in British politics. As well as explicit recognition of climate change as a sustainable development issue, many of the institutions and ways of thinking about policy for climate change owe something to the policies developed in response to Agenda 21. Another example of the effect of discourse as a point of integration is the commonly shared project to make Scottish

Governance work. Given that devolution is fairly recent, there seems to be considerable goodwill for ideas and policies which demonstrate Scottish success. Headline projects, such as developing a very progressive mitigation policy, have already come into fruition, and adaptation is another site of potential national pride.

### **Other project activities**

The project held its second Steering Committee Meeting on 4-5 October 2011 in Lesbos, Greece. Progress was reported on all aspects of the project and workplans were updated in order to deliver the outcomes of the project. CLIMSAVE was also involved in a technical workshop on “Adapting to Climate Change: A dialogue between research and policy” organised by DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission on 26 October 2011. The workshop’s aim was to facilitate and enhance dialogue and interaction between researchers and European Commission DGs on the topic of climate change adaptation. Researchers from 8 FP7-funded projects (including CLIMSAVE) and representatives from policy DGs AGRI, CLIMA, REGIO and SANCO, the European Environment Agency (EEA) and UNEP attended. This workshop followed on from another workshop held in October 2010 and enabled the CLIMSAVE project to determine how it could support policy-makers with the development of the climate change adaptation agenda.

A number of CLIMSAVE outputs are now available on the project website ([www.climsave.eu](http://www.climsave.eu)). These include reports on scenario development, adaptive capacity, vulnerability, adaptation policy and governance, and the specification of the Integrated Assessment Platform and the sectoral meta-models within it. Further information on the project can be obtained from the website or the Project Co-ordinator: Paula Harrison ([paharriso@aol.com](mailto:paharriso@aol.com)).



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