



## Climate Change Advisory Council Adaptation Committee Meeting - MINUTES

**Date:** 14.12.2023

**Start time:** 09:30

**Venue:** MS Teams

Present: Prof. Peter Thorne (Chair); Jillian Mahon; Karen Daly (representing Teagasc); Dr. Ina Kelly; Keith Lambkin; Dr. Conor Quinlan (alternate, EPA); Prof. Conor Murphy; Prof. Robert Devoy; David Joyce; Dr. Julie Clarke; Mark Adamson (joined at 12.00); Liam Conneally.

Secretariat: George Hussey; Dr. Stephen Flood; Jodie Colgan; Bryn Canniffe; Ciara Hilliard; Claire Camilleri.

Apologies: John Spink (alternate, Teagasc); Roger Street.

**Agenda Item 5:** Brian Batt; Kevin McCormick; Lucy Pyne; Seosamh O' Laoi; Colm Bates (all DECC); Dr. Barry O' Dwyer (KPMG consultant).

### 1. Opening of Meeting (09:30)

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present. Karen Daly introduced herself as the head of the Environment, Soils and Land Use Department at Teagasc.

#### a. Minutes for the Adaptation Committee

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were approved.

#### b. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted without amendments.

#### c. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

## **2. Council Update (09:34)**

The Chair briefed the Committee on the Climate Change Advisory Council meetings that took place on 28<sup>th</sup> September and 16<sup>th</sup> November. The phased approach to the release of sectoral chapters for the 2024 annual review was discussed and it was noted that resilience issues would be integrated into the sectoral chapters and that there would also be a specific adaptation chapter in 2024.

## **3. Secretariat Update (09:44)**

The Secretariat provided a verbal update of the main events that took place since the previous Adaptation Committee meeting.

- **National Adaptation Framework Update**

The Committee was updated on the development of the new National Adaptation Framework, which was shared with the Secretariat and sectors on the 17<sup>th</sup> November with a deadline for comments of 29<sup>th</sup> November. It was noted that the Secretariat reviewed the draft against the 33 recommendations that were made by the Council in 2022 and submitted comments accordingly.

- **Adaptation Futures**

The Secretariat participated in the Adaptation Futures Conference that was held in Canada from 2-6<sup>th</sup> October. It was noted that Dr. Stephen Flood was the convener of a session on how to embed justice in climate change practices and gave a presentation on Ireland's transboundary climate change impacts.

- **International Network of Climate Councils update**

The Committee was informed of two online events that were organized through the International Network of Climate Councils (ICCN) and attended by the Secretariat. Both events were on monitoring and evaluating progress in adaptation and were organized by the UK Climate Change Commission and Finnish Climate Change Panel respectively. It was noted that the next ICCN event would focus on the transboundary risks of climate change, although the date and agenda is still to be determined.

- **CCAC webinars**

The Committee was informed of two webinars that were organized through the Secretariat. The first was a webinar held with the Climate and Health Alliance on 25<sup>th</sup> October and the second was held with the Irish Water Forum on 29<sup>th</sup> November. Both events were attended by members of the Council, Adaptation Committee and Secretariat.

- **Budget tagging engagement**

It was reported that there had been several meetings with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR) to better understand the Government approach to financing adaptation and their climate change budget tagging work. It was noted that the climate related expenditure report was published the previous day as an annex to the revised budget estimates for 2024. A more detailed report is expected to be published later in December on the new approach DPENDR is following to make its budget tagging more comprehensive and in line with the EU Taxonomy regulation.

- **New Economy and Recovery Authority (NewERA) engagement**

The Secretariat reported that an engagement took place with NewERA as part of an event that was held with Maynooth University on sea level rise in October. It was noted that NewERA advises commercial semi-state companies and that it has a climate change strategy in place and is expanding its team on climate change. The strategy does not currently have an adaptation pillar in place and it is interested to expand work in this area.

- **Research studies**

There are currently three pieces of research being progressed by the Secretariat:

(i) Coastal Communities research project aimed at developing coastal resilience policy recommendations. This is being undertaken by MKO consultants and the kick-off meeting was held in November.

(ii) Farm level behavioural change in building farm level resilience, which is being undertaken by Teagasc and is set to kick-off in January 2024.

(iii) Marine biodiversity study aimed at examining options for integrating biodiversity-friendly design and approaches into the development of offshore wind farms in Ireland. This is being undertaken by BlueWise Marine Limited and the kick-off meeting was held in December.

- **Destination Earth workshop**

The Committee was informed that the Secretariat participated in Ireland's Destination Earth Workshop on 4<sup>th</sup> October, which was organized by the European Commission and Met Éireann. The workshop explained the EU's destination earth initiative, which is a new digital system being developed over the coming years to monitor, simulate and predict extreme weather events and their impact of human activity making use of digital twins and AI technologies.

- **Adaptation Fellow update**

The Secretariat informed the meeting that a steering committee meeting to review the work of the ESRI adaptation fellow on the economic impacts of climate change was scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> January and that it was planned to invite the team from ESRI to present this work at the next meeting of the Adaptation Committee.

#### **4. Workshop Planning (10.10)**

The poll on the topic for the Committee's 2024 workshop was completed and the Secretariat provided an update on the outcome and there was a discussion around the next steps for planning the 2024 workshop. It was noted that the topic of adaptation metrics and indicators was the winner of the poll.

A sub-group was established to prepare for the workshop and Dr. Ina Kelly, Dr. Julie Clarke, Keith Lambkin, Conor Quinlan and Mark Adamson volunteered to be in the sub-group. It was agreed that the sub-group would meet in January 2024 to start the preparations. The need to convene the workshop as early as possible was noted so that the outcomes feed into the development of the new Sectoral Adaptation Plans.

#### **5. DECC Policy Development Update (10.30)**

A team from DECC provided presentations on (i) the draft National Adaptation Framework (NAF) and (ii) the Local Authority Climate Action Plan drafting process.

The Adaptation Committee thanked the team from DECC for its work on the NAF and its support to Local Authorities. It was agreed that the Secretariat would coordinate the input from the Adaptation Committee on the draft NAF during the public consultation period in January.

#### **6. 2024/2025 Workplan (12:15)**

The Secretariat outlined the proposed Adaptation Committee workplan for 2024/2025, including the proposed focus of the Adaptation Committee meetings, programme of webinars and research priorities for consideration. The workplan focuses mainly on 2024 with key known events for 2025 also identified.

It was noted that the gap in meetings from September to December 2024 was to allow for the finalisation of the Carbon budgets. The workplan was considered comprehensive and covering a broad range of topics. It was noted that the issue of environment and agriculture was being taken up more through the Council which was planning a thematic session on sustainable food systems and that it would also form a key part of the economic impacts of climate change work being undertaken by the ESRI adaptation fellow.

The Secretariat was requested to consult further with EPA on the planned behavioural science webinar, OPW on the planned session on flood preparedness and to bring in the aspect of linking adaptation and nature-based solutions to the planned webinar on biodiversity in Irish climate policy.

## **7. Adaptation Scorecard (12:30)**

The Secretariat gave an overview of two documents for consideration relating to the adaptation scorecard. The first was a summary report of the workshop held on 26<sup>th</sup> September to review the scorecard for approval and publication on the Council website. The second was a draft guidance document prepared for sectors when completing the questionnaire in 2024.

It was agreed to approve the adaptation scorecard workshop report subject to the inclusion of a paragraph on having a stocktake of progress at the end of the implementation period for the SAPs. The complexity of how to assess annual changes in sectoral progress was also noted.

The Chairperson emphasized the importance of the scorecard and requested for members to provide comments over SharePoint on the guidance document by 21<sup>st</sup> December.

## **8. Documents for approval (12:50)**

Observations were invited on the final draft of the report on the identification and assessment of best practice in nature-based solutions for climate action and ecosystem restoration in Ireland. It

was noted that this report was available for comment in SharePoint until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and that it would also be presented at the next Adaptation Committee meeting for further discussion.

## **9. AOB, agreed outcomes and plans for next meeting**

### **a) Next Meeting**

The next Committee meeting was scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and would be held virtually on MS Teams.

It was noted that the June and September meetings would be held in-person and that the themes of these meetings should be linked with case studies from the local area where the meetings would be held.

Concern was expressed about the challenge of attracting and retaining staff to work on climate change issues across Government and Local Authorities. It was suggested that a more proactive approach is needed on this matter and to communicate this concern to the Council to take further. It was agreed to report this issue to the next meeting of the Council for its consideration.

The issue of positively framing communications around adaptation was discussed. The need to improve the understanding of adaptation and to effectively communicate its benefits effectively and simply was emphasized.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the initials 'P.W.' followed by a large, stylized scribble.

Signed electronically 25.01.2024