



CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COUNCIL ADAPTATION COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Date: 20th June 2016
Start time: 09:30
Venue: McCumiskey House, Environmental Protection Agency,
Richview,
Clonskeagh Road, Dublin 14.

Present: John FitzGerald (JF)(Chair), Laura Burke (LB)

Apologies: Jim Gannon (JG), Gerry Boyle (GB).

Observer: Gary Lanigan, Teagasc

Secretariat present: Frank McGovern (FMcG), Niall Farrell (NF), Róisín Moriarty (RM), Nichola Hughes (NH), Claire Camilleri (CC)

Presenters: *Ciarán Hayes (CH)*, Chair of the CCMA committee on Climate Change
John O'Neill (JON), Department of Environment
Daniel Johns (DJ), Secretariat, UK Adaptation Sub Committee
André Jol (AJ), Head of Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, European Environment Agency
Margaret Desmond (MD), Research Fellow, EPA
Paul Moroney (PM), Chartered Engineer, Head of the Environment Section, Clare County Council
Séamus Walsh (SW), Head, Climatology and Observations Division, Met Éireann
Tony Smyth (TS), Director of Engineering Services, Office of Public Works
Eleanor O'Rourke, Oceanographic Services Manager, Ocean Sciences & Information Services, Marine Institute

1. Workshop

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed participants. He noted that this is the first meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Council's Adaptation Committee and that it would start with a workshop which was part of the Council information gathering process.

The agenda was adopted and noting that the order had been changed to facilitate participation by key organisations working in this area.

There were no disclosures of interest for this meeting.



Workshop presentations

1.1 The contributions of local authorities - A CCMA perspective

Ciarán Hayes provided a verbal update from the CCMA. He outlined key issues for frontline actors such as Local Authorities and identified a number of policy issues, including around critical infrastructure that is essential to Ireland's economy. Lack of coordination at a governmental and local level is an on-going issue, and agencies should be utilising the same methodology when undertaking analysis. Initiatives in certain counties that are yielding results, such as the public lighting initiative, could be mainstreamed and achieve value and impact. Behavioural change is also required to support initiatives. The links between adaptation, mitigation and remediation were also highlighted and that national policy in these areas should be aligned to make the work of local authorities easier.

1.2 Adaptation in Ireland – Policy Overview

Presenter: John O'Neill, Principal Officer, Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government/ Department of Communications Climate Action and Environment

John O'Neill provided an overview of the policy context of adaptation in Ireland, outlining the timings of the development of the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) that must be delivered by the 9th December 2017.

The Committee identified that strong budgetary commitment needs to be addressed in the framework to ensure that there is traction.

1.3 UK Perspective

Presenter: Daniel Johns, Secretariat, UK Adaptation Sub Committee

Daniel Johns provided an overview of the UK Committee on Climate Change and its statutory roles under the Climate Change Act 2008. The role of the Adaptation Sub-Committee was outlined and a summary of their first statutory report to Parliament.

Mr Johns identified that the key areas of UK Climate Change Risk are water scarcity, flooding, heat stress and biodiversity, agriculture and forestry. The focus of adaptation policy in the UK are actions with no/low regrets; factoring climate change into decisions that create 'lock-in' and the need to prepare now for options with long lead-times.

1.4 EU Perspective

Presenter: André Jol, Head of Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, European Environment Agency

André Jol provided an overview of the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, along with the time schedule for its 2017 update. He highlighted that the Commission will report to the European Parliament and the EU Council on the state of



implementation of the EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change and propose its review if needed.

The work of the EEA was also presented, detailing their work and in particular the 2016 assessment reports on urban adaptation and climate change, impacts and vulnerability that is due to be published at the end of 2016.

1.5 Impacts of climate change and extreme weather

Presenter: Dr Margaret Desmond, Research Fellow, EPA

Margaret Desmond presented the observed climate impacts and sensitivities and provided a chronological overview of the most significant climate events since 2008, including storms/flooding and freezing conditions, which have led to observed sensitivities such as bridge scour (Malahide viaduct collapse); infectious diseases (Schmallenburg Virus) and the fodder crisis of 2012/2013.

Dr Desmond summarised that the projected changes in climate will have implications for both average conditions and extreme weather events and therefore it is essential to understand the current level of vulnerability to ensure that adaptations measures can be anticipated.

Presenter: Paul Moroney, Chartered Engineer, Head of the Environment Section, Clare County Council

Paul Moroney informed the Committee of Clare County Council's on-going vulnerability to coastal flooding and erosion. Mr Moroney outlined their experience of the 2013-2014 storm damage and the subsequent response by the Council to address the damage which includes not only infrastructure measures, but better warning systems and public communications.

It was highlighted that there is disparity between local authorities in regards to their approaches to climate change and adaptation measures, and that a common approach should be adopted.

1.6 Overview of Flood Risk Management in Ireland

Presenter: Tony Smyth, Director of Engineering Services, Office of Public Works (OPW)

Tony Smyth outlined the role of the OPW and flood risk in Ireland, particularly in the delivery of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme. The current focus is on the development of Flood Risk Management Plans that aim to prevent, protect and prepare for major flooding events.

An inter-department Flood Policy Coordination Group has been established to deal with policies where responsibility across departments is required and will report to government mid-2016.



The OPW's Climate Change Adaptation Plan will be published in the coming weeks, and will set out the OPW policy on adaptation.

1.7 Ireland's Changing Climate - Climatology & Observations

Presenter: Séamus Walsh, Head, Climatology and Observations Division, Met Éireann

Séamus Walsh provided Met Éireann data on Ireland's changing climate. A summary of global climate trends and projections were presented, along with projections for Ireland in regards to temperatures, rainfall and storms.

1.8 Oceans and the marine environment

Eleanor O'Rourke, Oceanographic Services Manager, Ocean Sciences & Information Services, Marine Institute

EOR introduced the role of the Marine Institute and the work currently being undertaken by the institute on climate change research. She noted that much of the MI work on climate change had been stopped during the financial crisis but that it was expected that elements of this would be revitalised.

2 Adaptation Content for First Report and Periodic Report

The Committee discussed the proposed content on adaptation for the First and Periodic reports and it was agreed that further discussion is required on behavioural change and health impacts in regards to adaptation, with a reduced focus on emergency planning. The executive summary will be vitally important in the delivery of the First Report.

The coordination of efforts should also be highlighted, to encourage departments, local authorities and other actors to work together to deliver adaptation measures. Additional barriers to action were listed, including social acceptability and the need to communicate climate change messages to the wider public.

The prioritisation methodology used by the OPW in developing the CFRAM programme was highlighted having potential for wider use, however, further consideration of how they have factored in longer term climate costs may be needed. The need to roll out a common framework to inform decision making and prioritisation at a local level should be highlighted in the First Report, as well as the role of the sectors and local authorities in monitoring on-going vulnerabilities and progress on adaptation.

3 National Adaptation Framework Consultation

The Committee discussed the required response to the National Adaptation Framework consultation process requested by the Minister in a letter dated 19th April 2016. A draft letter containing key messages with an explanatory note on the issues raised will be provided to the Council for consideration at its meeting on the 20th July.



4 Terms of Reference, Membership and Future Meetings of the Committee

The proposed Terms of Reference for the Committee were discussed, and it was agreed that this would be tabled at the next Council meeting on 20th July for consideration.

The membership of the Committee was also discussed. A list of suitable expert candidates was identified for consideration by the Council at its next meeting on 20th July.

The next meeting of the Adaptation Committee will be held on:

Wednesday 21st September 2016

John Kelly 21/9/2016