

UNFCCC Session II

Methods on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Experiences in applying current impact and adaptation methods.

Summary Messages

- Numerous broad approaches (frameworks) have been adopted, and with them, many specific methods have been employed. The approaches and methods chosen are usually determined by the sponsoring agency.
- Many studies have been undertaken, but only a few have seen results reflected in actual adaptation policies or activities.
- Methodologies are different for different aspects or objectives of impact, adaptation, vulnerability assessment. These components or objectives include problem definition, assessments of present vulnerability, development of future scenarios, estimation of likely (autonomous) adaptation, identification of potential adaptations, evaluation of potential adaptations.
- The issue (Impact Adaptation assessment) is not only about analytical methods, it is also about processes. The analyses and their utility depend on both.
 - a) the international process, e.g. national communications within the UNFCCC, and
 - b) national planning decisions and policy processes. In particular, adaptation initiatives are unlikely to be undertaken unless incorporated within existing national or regional policy processes.
- For most stakeholders and policy decision makers, conventional climate change conditions and impacts (e.g. impacts of changed temperature in 2050) are of little interest. As a result, the impact and adaptation studies do not result in adaptation actions. However, stakeholders and policy makers are very interested in more immediate climate variations and extremes, which have significant impact.

There is a need to show the connection between long term climate change and variability and extremes. There is a need to modify variability, impacts and adaptation approaches and methods to better address climate risks associated with variability and extremes, and with climatic conditions other than temperature, e.g. flood frequency, drought magnitude and probability, rainfall intensity storm locations and frequency.

- In most studies, more time, effort and resources have been directed to the natural science components, with less attention given to the socio-economic relevance and to the adaptation component.

- To improve the utility of impacts adaptation vulnerability studies, there is a need to involve stakeholders and to build on the parts of the climate change issue that are relevant to those stakeholders.
- There is no single, best approach or methodology. Even for specific analytical questions, such as assessing the relative merit of potential adaptation measures, there is a need to have flexibility in methods so that they can be implemented and be relevant to local conditions.
- Given the limited experiences with analyzing adaptation and the limited knowledge of adaptation processes and the enhancement of adaptation capacity, there is value in assessing vulnerability and adaptation studies on the recent and current experience.
- For most countries, particularly non-Annex I, methods must be practical, appropriate, feasible, easy to implement, not costly, not requiring data which is unavailable or would require time and money to compile.
- For the enhancement of adaptations (as per UNFCCC Article 4.1) the needs relate as much to methods and guidelines to connect better with policy as to particular analytical methodologies.
- Information sharing is an essential feature of impacts adaptation vulnerability, both among countries and within countries, if studies are to relate to policy development and actual discussions.