

Co-ordinating the knowledge base for climate change adaptation measures - DK

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Managing impacts of climate change and safeguarding resilience of coasts/coastal systems

2. Key Approaches

- Participation
- Knowledge-based

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

When formulating and implementing a National Adaptation Strategy, measures need to be taken to coordinate the dissemination of information and the research activities needed to support policy development.

4. Overview of the case

Denmark has set up three distinct bodies as part of its National Adaptation Strategy. These are to advise the government, oversee the transference of information to stakeholders and the general public and to coordinate research into climate adaptation to inform policy formulation.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Climate Change is widely accepted to be threatening mankind's livelihood. Adaptation to the prospects of an altered future climate is needed across a range of societal sectors, including coastal zone management, construction and planning, water resource management, energy supply, agriculture, land use and forestry, fisheries, nature management, the health sector, disaster relief, the insurance sector, and many others. However, the development and implementation of robust adaptation measures needs to be informed by the best available research – building on findings from a broad range of scientific disciplines – and disseminated appropriately. The Danish government's 'Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change in Denmark' identified a need to strengthen the coordination of national activities in the context of climate change adaptation and to ensure that synergies across a broad range of different research areas are harvested and disseminated. Therefore, the Danish Government has established three different bodies to ensure knowledge, coordination and research of climate adaptation viz. a coordination forum, an information centre and a coordination unit for research.

b) Objectives

The objectives of the three bodies are to provide climate change expertise and advice to the government as well as providing information to a wide audience including the general public whilst strengthening synergies between research activities related to climate change adaptation with a view to providing solid information to societal decision-making processes.

6. Implementation of the ICZM Approach (i.e. management, tools, resources)

The ongoing ministerial responsibility will continue to lie with the individual sector ministries with respect to the coordination forum since they are responsible for implementing the relevant initiatives. The Information Centre for Climate Adaptation has been set up within the Ministry of Climate & Energy and the Danish Energy Agency. The coordination unit has a three-level management structure: Steering Committee, Secretariat and Science Advisory Group, each with a clear and distinct role.

b) ICZM tools

The Coordination Forum is a broad spectrum of bodies and institutions as well as municipalities and regions. This new forum monitors climate developments, research in the area, and the experience of other countries. It advises the Danish Government.

The information centre will ensure that the initiatives from the Coordination Forum are implemented. It is also meant to develop planning tools for state and municipal authorities. The Centre will inform authorities, businesses and citizens about the Government's Strategy for adaptation to a changing climate. It is meant to collect, systematise and pass on all the nationally and internationally available information about climate adaptation to a wider audience and provide general information on the subject. For all Danish citizens to have access to this updated information about adaptation to climate change, a web-portal (www.klimatilpasning.dk) has been established with information about climate change. The portal provides the public, authorities and businesses with information about climate changes and their influence on society. Furthermore, it will give practical information about climate adaptation. The portal is under constant development and will include: updated data and maps of temperatures, precipitation, sea and groundwater; articles and guidance about areas in various sectors affected by climate changes; practical advice on climate adaptation; examples of calculations of how climate change may be included as a basis for important decisions; useful analysis and assessment tools for the public and decision-makers; and information about the latest research and development into adaptation to climate change.

The Coordination Unit (in Danish: Koordineringsenhed for Forskning i klimaTilpasning or KFT) is a joint endeavour by the National Environmental Research Institute at the University of Aarhus, Denmark's Meteorological Institute, the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland, University of Copenhagen and Denmark's Technical University. It is meant to give an overview of Danish research into adaptation to a changed climate and place this information at the disposal of the Information Centre and its climate adaptation portal. The purpose of the Coordination Unit is: to coordinate national-level research activities on adaptation to climate change; to facilitate research synergies and identify knowledge gaps; to support transfer of knowledge to collate authoritative data on climate change and its impacts; and to foster national and international networks. It will thus coordinate research across the many research centres working with climate and also ensure updated data on the climate of the future. It refers to the Coordination Forum and supports the Information Centre which interacts with the stakeholders, sectors and the different authority levels. The work programme is endorsed by the Steering Committee and primarily implemented at four distinct working levels: secretarial tasks, flexible working groups which focus on thematically cross-cutting adaptation-related issues, an adaptation research network which provides a pool of interested researchers and specific tasks. Key outcomes and products foreseen to result from the unit's activities over the next years include:

KFT Research Briefs: Research Briefs are 10 to 20 page summaries of the current state-of-the-art in a particular field of research related to climate change adaptation. They are requested by the Steering Committee, based on the recommendation of Advisory Group and secretariat. They are produced by Working Groups and reviewed by the Advisory Group.

KFT Briefs: These Briefs are 2 to 10 page notes on policy relevant issues related to current research on climate change adaptation. These Briefs can either be requested by the Steering Committee (based on requests by the inter-ministerial coordination group) or developed on the initiative of the secretariat. KFT briefs are reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee.

Database of researchers and on-going research activities: A key task of the secretariat is to develop and maintain a database of on-going research activities in Denmark and Europe. This database is geared to find synergies between and gaps in current research activities. At first this database will be for internal use only; however, this may later develop into a web-based application.

Input into the web-portal: Another key task of the secretariat is to facilitate input into the web-portal hosted by the Information Centre.

Newsletters: A regular Newsletter (at least every three months) will be drafted and distributed by the secretariat. The newsletter summarises activities by the secretariat, updates on selected on-going research activities, informs on key national and international developments in the area of climate adaptation research, reports on working groups and other activities initiated by the unit, etc.

In addition, other ad hoc outcomes may also result through input to other cross-cutting reports (e.g. the Miljøtilstandsrapport 2009), input to international assessments (e.g. as prepared by the IPCC, OECD, EEA) or other dedicated background reports (e.g. a report on Danish adaptation research in the run up to COP 2009).

7. Cost and resources

The secretariat of the coordination unit is staffed by 8-10 persons.

8. Effectiveness (i.e. were the foreseen goals/objectives of the work reached?)

The coordination unit will focus on ways of adapting to climate change. For example, there is a great need for economic tools which can take climate change into account when making decisions on climate adaptation (rather than research showing that the climate is actually changing or how emissions of greenhouse gases can be limited).

9. Success and Fail factors

The activities necessarily build on strong cooperation across a wide range of scientific disciplines as well as regular interaction with both the policy-makers and other stakeholders.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

None so far.

11. Prepared by

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12. Verified by

It has not been possible to verify this case.

13. Sources

- Adaptation to climate change in Denmark (undated) Coordination Unit for Research in Climate Change Adaptation
- Coordination unit for research in climate change adaptation (undated) Coordination Unit for Research in Climate Change Adaptation
- Danish adaptation to future climate (2008) Danish Energy Agency
- www.klimatilpasning.dk



Adaptation to climate change in Denmark (630.18 KB) 



Coordination unit for research in climate change adaptation (593.4 KB) 



Danish adaptation to future climate (793.22 KB) 