

Interdisciplinary exchanges: natural resource management research in the 21st century

HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITIES OF SHEFFIELD, NEWCASTLE AND LEEDS

Welcome to the Interdisciplinary Exchanges Newsletter. Following on from the success of our first seminars in January and April, we are now drawing closer to our next workshop. Here we give a brief introduction to the issue and themes for the day. *We hope that this will stimulate discussion and feedback so that the agenda for the workshop is set by the participants.* We will also continue to produce a summary after each meeting to provide a brief record of discussions. All these outputs are available on our website (www.interdisciplinaryexchanges.org).

Local Adaptations to Climate Change

Climate change (e.g. drought, and increased frequency and severity of extreme events) most acutely affects local communities in developing countries, who in many cases are already adapting to it (Berrang-Ford *et al.*, 2011). Adaptation, has long been seen as the defeatist, poor relation of climate change mitigation, but the inevitability of climate change impacts has re-invigorated research in this area.

Given the uncertainties associated with climate change and current climate change trajectories, useful lessons can be learned from understanding how local communities adapt to uncertainty

and severe climatic events. Whilst research has grown in this field, there remains a lack of investigation into how adaptation is actually taking place, and insufficient translation of research into adaptation practice (Berrang-Ford *et al.*, 2011)

Furthermore, local communities do not act on the basis of climate change alone, but their decisions are part of complex and dynamic contexts bringing economic, climatic, political and cultural factors together in shaping decisions and livelihood outcomes across multiple levels (Osbaehr *et al.*, 2008).

This workshop will focus on the mechanisms that can both support

and hinder local adaptation to climate change, and the potential to link these into sub-national and national institutions and policies.

Workshop Details:

10am — 4pm

15th September, 2014

Location:

St George's Room,
University House,
University of Leeds,
LS2 9JT

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Workshop Speakers:

Katharine Vincent, University of Witwatersrand/Kulima Integrated Development Solutions

Martin Rokitzki, Oxfam GB

Workshops in the series:

Community-based natural resource management (Jan 2014, Sheffield)

Food security, poverty and biodiversity (April 2014, Newcastle)

Local adaptations to climate change (Leeds, September 2014)

Payment for Ecosystem Services (Leeds, November 2014)

Natural resources and environmental conflicts (Sheffield, March 2015)

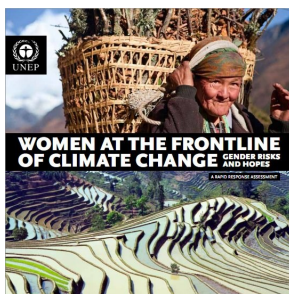
Final review and strategic planning (Location tbc, July 2015)



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Can we compare obstacles to adaptation across different contexts?

Do we need a framework for analysing obstacles to adaptation?



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What are the major challenges faced when integrating climate change adaptation into local policy and practice?

Are these challenges the same in developed and developing countries?



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Themes for discussion: Advancing debates about adaptation to climate change and variability

Theme 1: Conceptualising Obstacles to Adaptation

Findings from adaptation research and practice highlight a number of obstacles to adaptation across a range of spatial scales. Yet, there remains limited comparison and synthesis across research and practice, making it difficult to scale-up findings.

One challenge relates to the multiple conceptualisations and categorisations of obstacles.

In this session, we discuss obstacles to adaptation, the utility of current framings and the potential for a new framework

Questions for discussion:

- Given the context specific nature of adaptation, how do/can we compare between and synthesise across studies?
- How can conceptualisations of obstacles be useful for developing policy support?
- Do we need a framework for analysing obstacles to adaptation? Is there an alternative?

Theme 2: Challenges for local adaptation policy and practice

Climate change adaptation literatures identify a number of challenges for local adaptation policy and practice.

These challenges are often related to, and influenced by, a combination of individual, regulatory/institutional and socio-cultural factors interacting across spatial scales.

In this session, we discuss challenges for integrating adaptation into local-level policy and practice and reflect on similarities and differences between developed and developing country contexts.

Questions for Discussion:

- Are the challenges faced similar in both developed and developing countries?
- How can planning focus on reactive and anticipatory adaptation?
- What are the challenges in research findings into local level policy and practice?

Resources and reading:

BERRANG-FORD *et al.*, (2011), Are we adapting to climate change?, *Global Environmental Change*, 21: 25-33.

OSBAHR *et al.*, (2008), Effective livelihood adaptation to climate change disturbance: Scale dimensions of practice in Mozambique, *Geoforum*, 39: 1951-1964

SPIRES *et al.*, (2014), Barriers to implementing planned community-based adaptation in developing countries: a systematic literature review. *Climate and Development*, 6 (3), 1-11.

KLEIN *et al.*, (2014). Adaptation Opportunities, Constraints and Limits. In: IPCC (ed.) Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability.

Please tell us about other themes and questions that you think are relevant to your work on local adaptations to climate change. We will use them to structure the workshop later this month. Please email feedback to either Chasca Twyman (C.Twyman@shef.ac.uk) or Andy Dougill (A.J.Dougill@leeds.ac.uk)