

Work programme of the Adaptation Sub-Committee 2010/2011

Introduction

The Adaptation Sub-Committee (ASC) of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) was established in June 2009. One of its statutory obligations is to advise the Government on the UK's first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). Over the last 10 months, this has been the Committee's primary focus. The Committee has provided two pieces of advice on the evolving methodology of the CCRA to the Secretary of State for Defra¹, developed good working relationships with Defra and the contractors appointed to deliver the assessment, and put in place an ongoing process for providing useful advice as the project progresses.

In addition, over the course of the next 12 months, the Committee will begin to develop a framework for assessing and measuring adaptation. At present there is little evidence on what successful adaptation over the next five years would look like, how we might measure it and set priorities. The Committee views this as a critical knowledge gap to address if it is to fulfil its statutory requirement to assess the Government's progress on the National Adaptation Programme (NAP), which will prepare the UK for a changing climate.

Climate Change Act 2008

The ASC was established under the Climate Change Act 2008 with the following statutory obligations:

- To advise the Government on the UK's Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). The Committee must give its final advice on the CCRA no later than six months before the last date for laying the report before Parliament².
- To provide an assessment of progress towards implementing the objectives, proposals and policies of the Government's 'Programme for adaptation to climate change' in the second year after which it has been laid before Parliament³.
- To respond to requests for advice from the national authorities on climate change adaptation related matters.

¹ First piece of advice: <http://www.theccc.org.uk/asc-home/reports/2009> Second piece of advice <http://www.theccc.org.uk/asc-home/reports/2010>

² CCRA must be laid before Parliament by 26th January 2012.

³ Secretary of State must lay the Government's Programme for adaptation to climate change before Parliament as soon as practicable after the completion of the CCRA.

ASC objectives

The ASC is an independent statutory body with a wealth of expertise in adaptation. In thinking about where it can use these qualities to add most value, the Committee have established three broad objectives that encompass the statutory functions set out for the ASC under the Climate Change Act 2008. These objectives are:

1. To **advise** on the development of the UK's CCRA and accompanying Adaptation Economic Assessment (AEA);
2. To **assess** the preparedness of the UK to meet the risks and opportunities arising from climate change; and
3. To **promote** effective actions to adapt to climate change by society as a whole.

This work programme sets out the main task of the Committee and the outputs it will deliver during 2010/2011 for each objective.

Objective 1: To advise on the development of the UK's CCRA

The ASC has a statutory role to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Defra on the preparation of the CCRA. The CCRA will identify the key risks and opportunities to the UK arising from a changing climate. The outputs from the CCRA and the accompanying AEA will be critical for developing the NAP.

Deliverables

- Advise on the refined method for the CCRA (Summer 2010)
- Advise on the method for the options appraisal (AEA) (September 2010 - TBC)
- Final advice on the CCRA prior to it being laid before Parliament (by 26th July 2011)

Objective 2: To assess the preparedness of the UK

The Committee is required to provide an assessment of the progress made towards implementing the objectives, proposals and policies of the Government's NAP. To be in a position to fulfil this duty, the ASC will develop a framework for assessing and measuring adaptation over the course of 2010/2011. In the first instance, the framework will be applied to the Departmental Adaptation Plans to provide a view on Central Government's preparedness for a changing climate. Thereafter, we will refine the approach. A key challenge here will be to find outcome metrics, which describe a well prepared society against which progress can be measured. Further research into this area is seen as a priority for the Committee, and will be commissioned if resources allow.

However, action is required at all levels and not just at the Central Government level. Therefore, the Committee will also use the preparedness framework to assess the reports produced by reporting authorities under the Adaptation Reporting Power (ARP). Seven authorities will be reporting by the end of 2010 and the water sector summary report will be delivered by the end of January 2011. Other sector summaries will follow over the course of 2011.

At the local level, National Indicator 188 is used to assess the extent to which the management of climate risks and opportunities is embedded across local services, plans and estates. Local authorities are due to report their performance against this indicator in July 2010 and the Committee have expressed an interest to understanding what distinguishes the well performing authorities from those that are performing less well.

Given the multi-sectoral nature of adaptation, the Committee are keen to undertake more detailed work on cross-cutting issues such as planning and infrastructure. Especially as these are areas where decisions that need to be made now will have implications in the long-term. Through our work on the DAPs and CCRA, we will identify key risks for further investigation.

Deliverables

- Publication and launch of the ASC's 1st report: Overall UK preparedness framework including an assessment of the DAPs (September 2010)
- Review of the sector summary reports produced under the ARP. Starting with the first reporters and the water sector. Possible high-level assessment on NI 188. Possible report (March/April 2011)

Objective 3: To promote effective actions to adapt to climate change

The Committee will engage with a range of stakeholders across the public, private and third sectors to raise awareness of adaptation, improve understanding, assess current preparedness and to promulgate good adaptation planning process.

A communications plan is in place for May to September 2010. This campaign will comprise of a series of briefings with priority stakeholders and presentations at adaptation events. The adaptation area of the CCC website is being developed with new content added. Work will be done using social media sites, including Twitter and Facebook. In addition, we will have a blog to raise awareness about adaptation and the unique role of the ASC as an authority on adaptation issues. Further work will take place over the summer building up to the launch of the September report; this will include writing articles for the national and trade press, briefing of key correspondents and the production of podcasts about

adaptation.

Deliverables

- ASC website improvements, building and weekly updating of blog and social networking sites.
- Associate Parliamentary Corporate Responsibility Group event (July 2010)
- ASC's 1st report - launch and media campaign (15th September 2010)
- Stakeholder Event (October 2010) (dependent on resources)