

Adaptation preparedness scoreboard:

Summary for United Kingdom

Disclaimer

Based on the scoreboard in Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2018)460 accompanying the evaluation of the EU's strategy for adaptation to climate change. For referencing this Commission analysis from June 2018, please use the full version in the SWD.

SUMMARY

Overall progress

Development of a national adaptation programme has been legally required in the UK since 2008, with responsibility shared between UK and devolved administrations. The first adaptation strategies became operational across the UK in 2010 (Wales), 2013 (England and UK issues) and 2014 (Northern Ireland and Scotland). A second round of adaptation programmes are under development, with the England and UK NAP expected in the second half of 2018). Reports indicate positive progress towards implementing adaptation actions, suggesting adequate funding resources are available.

Adaptation strategies

The first UK NAP¹ (concerning England and UK policy issues) was published in 2013; and programmes concerning the devolved administration were published in 2010 (Climate Change Strategy for Wales, which covers adaptation)² and 2014 (Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme; Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme)^{3, 4}. Together, the programmes cover the complete territories of the UK. There is no further regional sub-division of UK governance before the level of cities or local authorities.

Adaptation action plans

The respective adaptation programmes specify the policies and actions to be implemented to meet adaptation objectives. These correspond to key sectors (e.g. buildings; infrastructure; communities; agriculture; natural environment; and business). Annual progress reports indicate that 51% of the 370 actions included in the UK NAP were complete in 2017 and 35% were on track for completion. Progress reported by the devolved administrations varies. Scotland reported that almost 100% of actions are on track for completion; progress in Northern Ireland and Wales is under review.

Step A: Preparing the ground for adaptation

¹ Her Majesty's Government, 2013, The National Adaptation Programme: Making the country resilient to a changing climate, paragraph 25. URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209866/pb13942-nap-20130701.pdf

² Welsh Assembly Government, 2010, Climate Change Strategy for Wales. URL: <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/101006ccstratfinalen.pdf>

³ Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), 2014, Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP). URL: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Northern%20Ireland%20Climate%20Change%20Adaptation%20Programme.pdf>

⁴ Scottish Government, 2014, Climate Ready Scotland Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme. URL: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/05/4669>

1 Coordination structure

Adaptation policy making is a devolved matter in the UK, with separate departments within the respective governments having been assigned the responsibility. The roles of the delivery bodies and partners are defined by the adaptation programmes by sector and according to the level of governance.

Under the CCA (2008), an independent Adaptation Sub-Committee (ASC) of the Climate Change Committee (CCC) was established to provide advice and assistance in relation to the implementation of climate change adaptation programmes and actions.

2 Stakeholders' involvement in policy development

Stakeholders were involved with the preparation of the climate change risk assessment at UK level, and additional detail was developed at national level. Stakeholder engagement involved: a call for evidence, workshops and work groups for stakeholders to attend; and a peer review process. Transboundary cooperation on climate adaptation with Ireland is led by the British Irish Council.

Step B: Assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change

3 Current and projected climate change

The Meteorological Office is responsible for making and collecting meteorological and atmospheric observations, and works with the relevant UK research council to communicate and share information across the observations and research community. Improved climate projections due to be released by the Hadley Centre in November 2018 will consider 60 climate risks and opportunities against current levels of adaptation and assess how climate and socio-economic changes may impact them.

International aspects are integrated in risk and vulnerability assessments, but transboundary risks relating to Ireland are not explicitly considered.

4 Knowledge gaps

At a UK level, the relevant research council programme has worked with 22 public sector organisations involved in research and its use. The report cards identify research needs, and develop national strategies and funding to address them. A similar initiative has been developed for the marine sector. Similar initiatives are also run by the devolved administrations.

5 Knowledge transfer

Platforms for knowledge sharing and capacity building include: advice and support by the Environment Agency to key sectors; consultancy training by the Met Office to help users interpret climate information; and online tools and information provided by the UK Climate Impacts Programme). An informal network supports local organisations in managing climate risks, and sharing knowledge and lessons learned about adaptation. Similar mechanisms exist in the devolved administrations.

Step C: Identifying adaptation options

6 Adaptation options' identification

Adaptation actions are aligned to risks identified in the CCRA, which are prioritised according to urgency. The priority sectors include buildings and infrastructure, health and

emergency services, the natural environment, businesses and the agriculture and forestry sectors.

The Natural Hazards Partnership is responsible for developing the UK risk register and incorporating adaptation actions within DRM. The UK NAP aims to further coordinate DRM with adaptation, outlining capacity building actions to strengthen resilience to severe weather events.

7 Funding resources identified and allocated

Funding is available for climate resilience based on the progress reported of implemented actions. In particular, significant funds have been made available for flood protection infrastructure and flood and coastal erosion risk management. The 2017 ASC progress report notes that UK departure from the EU will mean that EU Structural and Investment Funds are no longer available for adaptation.

Step D: Implementing adaptation action

8 Mainstreaming adaptation in planning processes

EIA legislation in the UK stipulates that the assessments must identify, describe and assess climate impacts. In Scotland, EIA and SEA procedures are combined, strengthening the requirements of the former.

Climate change projections and anticipated consequences affecting the UK's capacity to respond to risks is factored into the current national risk register.

The main spatial planning instruments address climate adaptation in detail with specific chapters on climate risks included in planning policy frameworks adopted by the UK and the devolved nations.

Adaptation is not yet mainstreamed into insurance or other policy instruments incentivising investments in risk prevention.

9 Implementing adaptation

Annual progress reports for the respective adaptation programmes indicate that many of the actions have been or are being implemented. In England, the Environment Agency's Climate Ready Support Service provided targeted advice to key sectors and developed sector specific guidelines, thereby supporting sectoral implementation and stakeholder engagement. In addition, the UKCIP has produced a range of guidelines over the years.

There is little UK-wide coordination of action in the four parts of the UK, although each administration has mechanisms to encourage local government action.

Step E: Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation activities

10 Monitoring and reporting

For the UK NAP, the ASC developed an adaptation performance indicator framework. Within this framework, implementation results have been published in progress reports; and, the ASC has a statutory duty to report biennially to Parliament. Some public and commercial organisations are required to report periodically on adaptation. For devolved administration programmes, monitoring arrangements are less detailed, although the ASC was invited by Scotland to report on Scottish progress, which it did in 2016.

11 Evaluation

A periodic review of adaptation action is planned at the UK level (as a statutory requirement every five years) and by the devolved administrations; the second UK CCRA was published in 2017. Stakeholder engagement in this process is extensive, as noted above. The evidence gathered is used to inform the development of subsequent strategies and action plans, following a five-year cycle.