



Welcome from the network convener

In many ways NCCARF is an experiment: created to steer research on climate change adaptation in Australia, build networks of researchers, and monitor and synthesise ongoing research. For researchers, it is hard to conceive of an entity that is based in Universities and with the word 'research' in its title that is not one of the ubiquitous 'centres of' that dot the Australian research landscape. For end-users of knowledge, NCCARF is similarly hard to categorise. There is only one NCCARF, and it cannot be expected to perfectly bridge the gap between the many thousands of end users with their many knowledge needs, and the relatively smaller number of researchers who are skilled, willing, and able to engage in different models of knowledge production and transfer.

However, NCCARF is an important bridge between end users and researchers, and it is the first of its kind in the area of adaptation to climate change. It has galvanised and steered research on climate change adaptation in Australia in an inclusive, and coherent manner. It has been the thought leader in adaptation research and policy, and it has provided valuable insights into the adaptation science-policy interface. It continues to do all these things, and its effectiveness increases as momentum gathers.

The networks, such as this one on the Social, Economic and Institutional dimensions of adaptation, are also experiments. They are neither research centres or providers of knowledge to end users, but facilitators both of research collaborations, and knowledge exchange. Like NCCARF, the networks are a work in progress.

The SEI has made good progress in many respects. The Adaptation College has proven to be a great success. The Fellows continue to inform and inspire, and to challenge conventions about adaptation research and policy. In the future this group will play a larger role in the activities of the network and hopefully NCCARF overall. The mailing list now has over 400 members, nearly half of which are from governments, community organisations, or the private sector. There is therefore a significant community of concern that is coming together, which is unlikely to have emerged in the absence of this network.

The network is learning about how to share information and resources. The format of workshops filled with academic presentations may satisfy researchers but is unlikely to fulfil the needs of end users. In adaptation, it seems, knowledge is better and more useful when coproduced rather than simply transferred. We are all challenged in finding ways and means of coproduction.

In the coming few months there will be a call for Expressions of Interest in research projects to be funded under the soon to be released research plan on the social, economic and institutional dimensions of adaptation. Both the final version of this plan, and the call for proposals, will be announced via the network mailing list. All applicants from research groups are strongly encouraged to liaise with end users in developing projects that will achieve knowledge coproduction.

There has been little use of the network mailing list for exchanges of information and ideas among members, and I encourage anyone who has managed to read this far to use it more: it should be seen as a shared resource. We are working towards a new and improved website in 2011, which will have a searchable database of publications (selected carefully for relevance), as well of network members and their interests. As always, I welcome suggestions for ways to make the network better serve the interests of all of its members.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

Prof. Jon Barnett
University of Melbourne



Network Highlights 2010

- SEI-network recruits over 400 members
- SEI-NARP and EO's soon for release
- UNSW 'Adaptation Governance' workshop
- Adaptation College meets in Sydney



Workshop on 'Adaptive Governance'

The second SEI-network workshop was held at UNSW from 16-18th November, hosted by SEI-network co-convenor John Merson, and Sarah Terkes. The workshop addressed climate adaptation governance - an approach which has its origins in the convergence of a range of ideas from ecology and economics, to systems theory and social psychology. However, while adaptive approaches have been advocated to address conflicts between stakeholders in relation to the use and conservation of natural resources, there have been considerable institutional and other barriers to its implementation. Over 50 presentations explored adaptive governance through a range of case studies from around Australia and the Asia Pacific region. The workshop concluded with a trip led by Paul Brown (UNSW) to several locations around Botany Bay, considering climate impacts and adaptation.



Paul Brown (UNSW) leads discussion on adaptation options in Botany Bay

Adaptation College builds on success

One of the primary aims of the SEI-network is to build a

community of future leaders who are well informed about the human dimensions of climate change adaptation, through its annual Adaptation College. A further three Fellows joined the College in 2010, taking the final number to nineteen. The 19th November saw the conclusion of the successful second annual College meeting. One action to emerge from College discussions this year is the preparation of a series of peer-reviewed briefing notes for policy and practice communities documenting relevant adaptation theory and case studies in short, jargon-free documents. Look out for these 'Adaptation Snapshots' during 2011. The next College will be held in November 2011 in Canberra.

SEI-network NARP due for release

The National Adaptation Research Plan: Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions identifies critical gaps in the information that is required by governments, industry and the community to develop and implement adaptation responses; with research priorities then based around these gaps. The draft SEI-NARP was released for open review early in 2010. We received more than 600 comments on the draft NARP: many thanks to all individuals and organisations who gave their feedback to the writing team. The finalised SEI-NARP is due for release very soon.

Joining the SEI-network

The SEI-network has over 400 members and growing – we welcome anyone who has an interest in the social, economic or institutional aspects of climate adaptation. To join, download the member form from the SEI-website. The form details will be added to the online searchable database of members. Members are also signed up to the SEI-email list.

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