



Second year of the Adaptation College

One of the core activities of the Social, Economic and Institutional (SEI-) dimensions of climate adaptation network, part of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF), is the Adaptation College. The aim of the College is to build a community of future leaders in academia, policy and community organisations who are well informed about the human dimensions of climate change adaptation. In 2010, we welcomed three new Fellows to the College: Kathryn Bowen, Siri Veland and Carolina Roman, taking the final number of Fellows to nineteen.

College attends NCCARF conference

The Adaptation College was well represented at the NCCARF Climate Adaptation Futures Conference held on the Gold Coast in June. The Fellows presenting gave a flavour of the diversity of perspectives and College expertise. Emma Woodward gave a thought provoking talk exploring the communication of adaptation in an indigenous context, a topic Emma had first introduced us to at the



Adaptation challenges ahead on the Gold Coast

inaugural College meeting in the Northern Territory. Siri Veland also presented research from indigenous communities, through the lens of socially just adaptation. Two Fellows presented on different aspects of adapting to extreme heat; with Carol Farbotko talking about research from the Illawarra region, and Jess Fritze discussing community adaptation to heat stress. State government Fellow James Smith (DHF, NT) also contributed his thoughts on adaptation challenges. New Fellow Carolina Roman introduced us to her research about adaptation in the business community.

Network convener Jon Barnett, and Fellows Jess Fritze and Carol Farbotko, discuss UK adaptation with Emma Tomkins





Networking lunch at NCCARF Conference

The Adaptation College took advantage of the presence of several international experts in the social dimensions of climate change attending the NCCARF conference, by inviting them to a working lunch at the conference close. Dr Emma Tompkins (DFID and University of Leeds, UK), Dr Declan Conway and Prof Neil Adger (Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, and UEA, UK), Prof Diana Liverman (University of Arizona, USA) and Prof Steve Dovers (ANU) attended, providing a great opportunity for an exchange of experiences. Conversations ranged from experiences of local adaptation case studies, to experience of the IPCC WGII process, to career guidance. Many thanks to Emma, Declan, Neil, Diana and Steve for taking part in the event.

Adaptation governance at UNSW

The second SEI-network workshop was held at UNSW from 16-18th November, organised by A/Prof. John Merson and Sarah Terkes. The workshop addressed climate adaptation governance, with over 50 presentations exploring the issue through a range of case studies from Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

Andrew Sullivan gave the College an insight into the world of fisheries and adaptation at the Sydney Fish Market



Naomi Rakela, Ed Boydell, Ali Browne and Kim Byrnes consider adaptation issues for Botany Bay

Again, the College gave several of the papers: with Kim Byrnes and Mel Bainbridge providing a much-needed perspective from within local government institutions.

Fisheries, adaptation and the Sydney Fish Market

College Fellow Andrew Sullivan organised an early morning start for the College during the UNSW workshop to visit the Sydney Fish Market. Andrew, a Scalefish Manager for the Tasmanian state government, provided the College with a brief paper detailing his thoughts and experiences on sustainable fishing and fisheries. The Fish Market tour was a real insight into the sourcing and management of commercial fishing in Australia.

Botany Bay fieldtrip

The last afternoon of the conference involved a trip to various locations around Botany Bay to consider climate change impacts and adaptation led by Paul Brown (UNSW), with a prior briefing from John Dahlenburg at the Catchment Management Authority. Stops at industrial sites and along the Foreshore Road in Port Botany exposed issues of economics and power structures in decision making; whilst visiting the market gardens in Rockdale Municipality raised questions about values in adaptation decision making.



Adaptation College in Sydney

The Fellows gathered on Friday 19th November for the second annual College meeting. The adaptation governance workshop had raised plenty of questions and challenges for the College, which were considered in the first session of the day. The Fellows have a number of suggestions and proposals from this session which they will take forward in various ways to contribute to leadership in adaptation throughout their Australian networks.



Kate Wood and Jen Cane lead a discussion exploring adaptation leadership opportunities for the College

The Fellows immediately put into practice one of the suggestions from the first session, which was to provide facilitated spaces for more deliberative engagement with climate adaptation. Kate Wood and Jen Cane (both DSE, VIC) led an impromptu deliberative process called 'logic mapping', investigating the key adaptation problems College Fellows felt they faced. Issues raised included a lack of processes for sharing of adaptation knowledge and tools (leading to repetition and redundancy) and a lack of recognition of adaptation when it actually occurs; perceptions of risk and liability constraining adaptation action on the ground; and a perceived lack of understanding of what working in adaptation means for Fellows working in different (academic, government, community) organisations.

A number of actions were proposed by the Fellows to address these problems. First, a series of briefing notes will be developed which document relevant theory and case studies in short, jargon-free documents for wide circulation by the Fellows to adaptation policy and practice communities. The notes will draw on the various expertise of the College. Notes to be developed this year include 'Local government in climate adaptation', 'Indigenous perspectives on adaptation', 'Developing adaptation policy' and 'Adaptation and behaviour change'. Second, risk and liability will be a focus of the next SEI-network workshop in Canberra, as part of the 'Extreme Events' event. Last, the next College will see a session 'A typical day in the life of...' led by Fellows from different sectors. This will provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that working in climate adaptation brings across different organisations.

Next steps for the Adaptation College

The next College will be held in November 2011 in Canberra. A number of Fellows will meet before this at the national NCCARF conference in Cairns on 6 April. Whichever, we look forward to seeing all the College Fellows for more productive and provocative conversations in 2011.

Celebrating a successful second year of the College





Adaptation College Fellows

Melanie Bainbridge WA Climate Change Coordinator,
Local Government Association (WA)

Marcus Barber Social Scientist, CSIRO Ecosystem
Sciences (NT)

Edward Boydell Climate Change Education Officer, Live
& Learn for Environment and Community, Vietnam

Alison Browne Senior Research Associate, Lancaster
Environment Centre (UK)

Kim Byrnes Community Development Officer, City of
Rockingham (WA)

Kathryn Bowen Research Fellow, National Centre for
Epidemiology and Population Health, ANU (ACT)

Jennifer Cane Adaptation Science & Information Team
Manager, Department of Sustainability and Environment
(VIC)

Neil Collier Senior Ecologist, Energy Resources of
Australia Ltd & Honorary Research Fellow, Charles
Darwin University (NT)

Carol Farbotko Post-doctoral Fellow, University of
Wollongong (NSW)

Jess Fritze Climate Change Policy Analyst, Victorian
Council of Social Services (VIC)

Jennifer Harrison Climate Change Officer, City of
Cockburn (WA)

Kirsten Maclean Social Scientist, CSIRO Ecosystem
Sciences (QLD)

Naomi Rakela Manager Environmental Services, Eastern
Metropolitan Regional Council (WA)

Carolina Roman Research Fellow, RMIT (VIC)

James Smith Health Promotion Strategy Unit,
Department of Health & Families (NT)

Andrew Sullivan Scalefish Manager, Department of
Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)

Kate Wood Project Manager, Policy and Strategy: Future
Coasts Program, Department of Sustainability &
Environment (VIC)

Emma Woodward Researcher, CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences
(NT)

Siri Veland Researcher, Macquarie University (NSW)

SEI-Network Convenor

Prof Jon Barnett
University of Melbourne

SEI- Network Co-Covenors

Prof Philip Adams
Monash University

Prof Tim Bonyhady
Australian National University

Prof Stephen Dovers
Australian National University

Dr Marcus Lane,
CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship

Prof Marcia Langton
Melbourne University

A/Prof John Merson
University of New South Wales

Mr Joe Morrison
North Australian Indigenous Land and
Sea Management Alliance

SEI-Network Research Fellow

Dr Saffron O'Neill
University of Melbourne

SEI-network Administrative Officer

Tina Soundias

Contact us:

Department of Resource
Management and Geography,
221 Bouverie Street,
University of Melbourne,
VIC 3010,
Australia

T: +61 3 8344 9153

E: tinas@unimelb.edu.au

Adaptation College Report 2: Saffron O'Neill