Year three of the Adaptation College

The aim of the Adaptation College is to build a community of leaders in academia, policy and community organisations who are well informed about the human dimensions of climate change adaptation. The College meets annually. This year, the College theme was the legal and institutional dimensions of adaptation. College members also contribute to NCCARF events throughout the year. In April, several College Fellows led a workshop exploring climate adaptation communication for Local Government, as part of the 2011 NCCARF conference.

Adaptation College held in Canberra

The third annual SEI workshop on ‘Legal and institutional dimensions of adaptation and emergency management’ was held in Canberra November, with many of the College in attendance. The Adaptation College then met afterwards in Canberra for the annual Adaptation College event, for a busy and productive few days.

Fieldtrip: ‘Adaptation and Emergency Management’

Prof. John Handmer, convenor of the NCCARF Emergency Management network, led a fieldtrip for College Fellows on ‘Emergency management, adaptation and the 2003 fires’. The College first visited the ACT Emergency Services Agency, hosted by Michael Joyce (Rural Fire Service Deputy Chief Officer) and Nick Lhuede. They both gave an overview of the 2003 fires, and then provided some of their insights into how large-scale emergencies are handled. Andrew Mackenzie (Canberra University) then took the group to Mount Stromlo to discuss issues around the post-fire rebuilding of Canberra. Last, the College heard from Dr Michael Eburn (ANU). Dr Eburn gave the College a great insight into legal issues following the 2003 fires. He then answered some of the many questions College Fellows had on legal liability issues related to climate adaptation.

The College meet Minister Combet

The College, together with NCCARF Director Jean Palutikof and SEI-network leader Jon Barnett, met with Minister Greg Combet at Parliament House. On the agenda were equity issues in adaptation, the adaptation / mitigation interface, and the role of Local Government in leading adaptation to climate change; as well as the upcoming negotiations at COP-17 in Durban.
College contribute to Adaptation Policy Inquiry

Fellows Marcus Barber and Kate Wood work on the College submission

College Fellows drafted a submission to the Productivity Commission’s Inquiry into Regulatory and Policy Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation during the Annual College meeting.

Communicating Adaptation

Engaging people with adaptation is an area of common interest across the College. Fellow Melanie Bainbridge led, together with Fellow Kim Byrnes, a workshop in April titled ‘New modes of communication for climate change’. The workshop explored how Local Government can better understand and engage with communities to ensure the development of cohesive policy, practices and projects which engender trust across all actors.

In November, Eight College Fellows attended a focussed writing workshop led by SEI-network Research Fellow Dr Saffron O’Neill on ‘Communicating Adaptation’. Insights from the College Fellows, drawing on their diverse experiences in engaging communities with adaptation, will be drafted into two policy briefing notes and an academic journal article.

SEI-Network Convenor
Jon Barnett University of Melbourne

Adaptation College Fellows
Carolina Adler ETH Zurich (Switzerland)
Melanie Bainbridge WA Local Government Association
Marcus Barber CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences
Kathryn Bowen Australia National University
Edward Boydell CARE Australia
Alison Browne Lancaster Environment Centre (UK)
Kim Byrnes City of Rockingham
Jennifer Cane Department of Sustainability & Environment
Carol Farbotko University of Wollongong
Jennifer Harrison City of Cockburn
Kirsten Maclean CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences
Naomi Rakela Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council
James Smith Department of Education and Training
Andrew Sullivan Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment
Siri Veland Macquarie University
Kate Wood Department of Sustainability & Environment
Emma Woodward CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences

SEI-Network Research Fellow
Saffron O’Neill University of Melbourne

SEI-network Administrative Officer
Tina Soundias University of Melbourne

Contact us:
Dept. Resource Management & Geography,
221 Bouverie Street,
University of Melbourne,
VIC, 3010,
Australia
T: +61 3 8344 9153
E: tinas@unimelb.edu.au

Adaptation College Report 3: Saffron O’Neill