

BRIEFING NOTE: WHAT IS EXCELLENCE IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION?: 9 NOVEMBER 2017

This event, organized by the Global Centre of Excellence on Climate Adaptation (GCECA), in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, convened on 9 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany, on the sidelines of the 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The event provided a forum to discuss how the GCECA, which will be officially launched on 14 November 2017, could contribute to recognizing, building and promoting excellence in adaptation among relevant stakeholders worldwide.

Vivienne Parry, Genomics England, moderated the session. Christiaan Wallet, GCECA, highlighted the 2016 Adaptation Futures conference as the starting point for the inception of the GCECA; observed that more than 200 organizations were



Richard Klein, SEI

consulted in order to identify pressing needs in the field of adaptation; and announced that the center will be based in climate-neutral floating offices in Rotterdam, as well as in the Energy Academy Europe in Groningen in the Netherlands.

Richard Klein, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), discussed the scope of GCECA's work, which includes specific and cross-

cutting themes, such as risk management and evaluation. He also elaborated on the center's plans to publish discussion briefs to promote dialogue on key adaptation issues and engage stakeholders.

Barney Dickson, UN Environment, lauded the fruitful collaboration between his organization and the Netherlands in creating the GCECA and publishing the '2017 Adaptation Gap Report.' He observed that while the 2016 edition of the report focused on the gap in adaptation finance, the focus of the latest publication is on methodologies for measuring adaptation progress.



Barney Dickson, UN Environment

Craig Davies, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), provided an overview of the bank's activities on climate adaptation, noting that €24 billion had been provided over the past decade for climate action with the aim being to increase this amount to 40% of the bank's turnover by 2020.

Henk Ovink, the Netherlands, presented the 'Water as Leverage for Resilient Cities: Asia,' consortium, which aims to generate bankable solutions to strengthen resilience to water-related challenges, initially



Craig Davies, EBRD

targeting the cities of Chennai in India, Khulna in Bangladesh and Semarang in Indonesia.

Suada Ibrahim, Kenya Red Cross Society, pointed to the linkages between climate change and her organization's humanitarian mandate, underscoring that the Red Cross is working with communities before, during and after disasters. As an example



Henk Ovink, the Netherlands



Suada Ibrahim, Kenya Red Cross Society

of local adaptation measures, she highlighted the provision of climate data that enables communities to adapt their crop planting cycles.

During a subsequent panel discussion, Julie Arrighi, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, highlighted the need to ensure that the most vulnerable people benefit from adaptation measures and are prioritized in an effective way.



Julie Arrighi, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre

qualified current discussions on adaptation as being focused on determining “value for money” and called for more attention on the people affected by climate impacts.



Saleemul Huq, ICCCAD



Participants during the session

Nick Craven, International Union of Railways, elaborated on the concept of “graceful failure,” which is the ability to maintain functionality when parts of a system breakdown, to illustrate



Nick Craven, International Union of Railways

how the railway sector adapts to impacts such as flooding events.

Yasuko Kemeyama, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan, said time horizons play an important role in adaptation planning, pointing to differences between adapting to impacts taking place in the near future compared to slow-onset events materializing by mid-century.

During the ensuing discussion, questions were raised on: the role of local communities in sharing adaptation knowledge; the definition of “excellence in adaptation”; and the role of the insurance sector, which prompted a debate about the boundary between what constitutes adaptation compared to loss and damage.



Yasuko Kemeyama, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan