

Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Keynote Seminar: Next steps for UK climate change policy: delivering the National Adaptation Programme

Date: Tuesday, 29 October 2013

Venue: Congress Hall, Congress Centre, 28 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS

Geoff Whitman, Research Associate on the ICAD attended this event. His synopsis of the event is as follows:

This event was designed to bring practitioners, academics and policy representatives together to discuss the UK's National Adaptation Programme (NAP). It was divided into two main sessions: the first was a series of talks given by Defra, the Environment Agency, Met Office, Adaptation Scotland and Greater London Authority. These outlined the current state of play regarding the NAP including where the science is regarding projections of future climate change and how adaptation is being addressed by different communities and groups around the UK. The second session was designed to provide a forum for stakeholders from a number of sectors to discuss the relationship between their sector and the NAP. These talks outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the NAP in relation to particular sectors and also offered insights into how the UK might move forward in addressing the weaknesses and gaps within the NAP. This second session ended with a talk that focused on the international dimension of adaptation and how this presented a series of threats and opportunities for the UK. In between the sessions there were a series of opportunities for members of the audience to ask questions or seek points of clarification on the talks given.

Defra made the point that the NAP was that it was an 'on-going process' which had been started with the publication of the NAP but now required both government and society to take this forward. In effect a 'partnership' approach was being suggested where government's role is to support different sectors and organisations in their efforts to help the UK become a 'better adapted society'. It was recognised that costing adaptation in the UK was extremely difficult to do given the inherent uncertainties about how climate will change and therefore what adaptations will be needed in light of these changes. Despite the seminar being about the NAP the majority of the talks discussed climate change more widely with emphasis being given to how sectors and organisations were responding to the challenges of climate change. This was particularly the case with the stakeholder talks. This was a timely seminar that was well attended and covered a range of issues with regard to adaptation.