



Climate Change Adaptation : What are we doing about it?

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Climate Change Adaptation

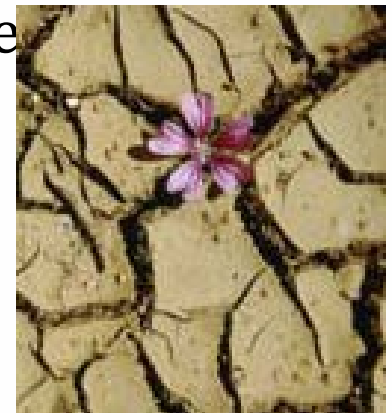
What are we doing about it?

Anne Olhoff, UNEP Risø Centre



Topics

- Adaptation – A very brief intro
- Trends: UNFCCC negotiations and work on the ground
- Integrating adaptation in development
- Efforts so far
- Challenges and opportunities: Candidate priority areas of action



Adaptation: Managing the unavoidable

Global **warming** will continue to affect the natural systems of the earth for several hundred years, even if greenhouse gas emissions were substantially reduced or ceased altogether today

World Bank (2008) estimate: Global warming of around 2°C is likely unavoidable by now

The corresponding best estimate from the IPCC (2007) is 1.8°C

Scientific evidence on climate variability and change and observed and projected future impacts

It is paramount to avoid the unmanageable, through mitigation, but equally necessary to manage the unavoidable, through adaptation

Trends: Adaptation within the UNFCCC, I

“Adaptation must be addressed with the same priority as mitigation”

(UNFCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1)

- The Cancun Adaptation Framework identifies a broad set of priority areas for action on adaptation, including:
 - The development of plans, projects and programs
 - Strengthening institutions
 - Improving research, observation and information management systems
 - Impact, vulnerability and financial needs assessments
 - Adaptation technology

Trends: Adaptation within the UNFCCC, II

Innovations in the Adaptation Framework:

- Attention to disaster risk reduction
- Focus on institutional strengthening
- Attention to migration
- The Technology Mechanism created in Cancun further emphasises technologies for adaptation as a priority area for action

Role for donors

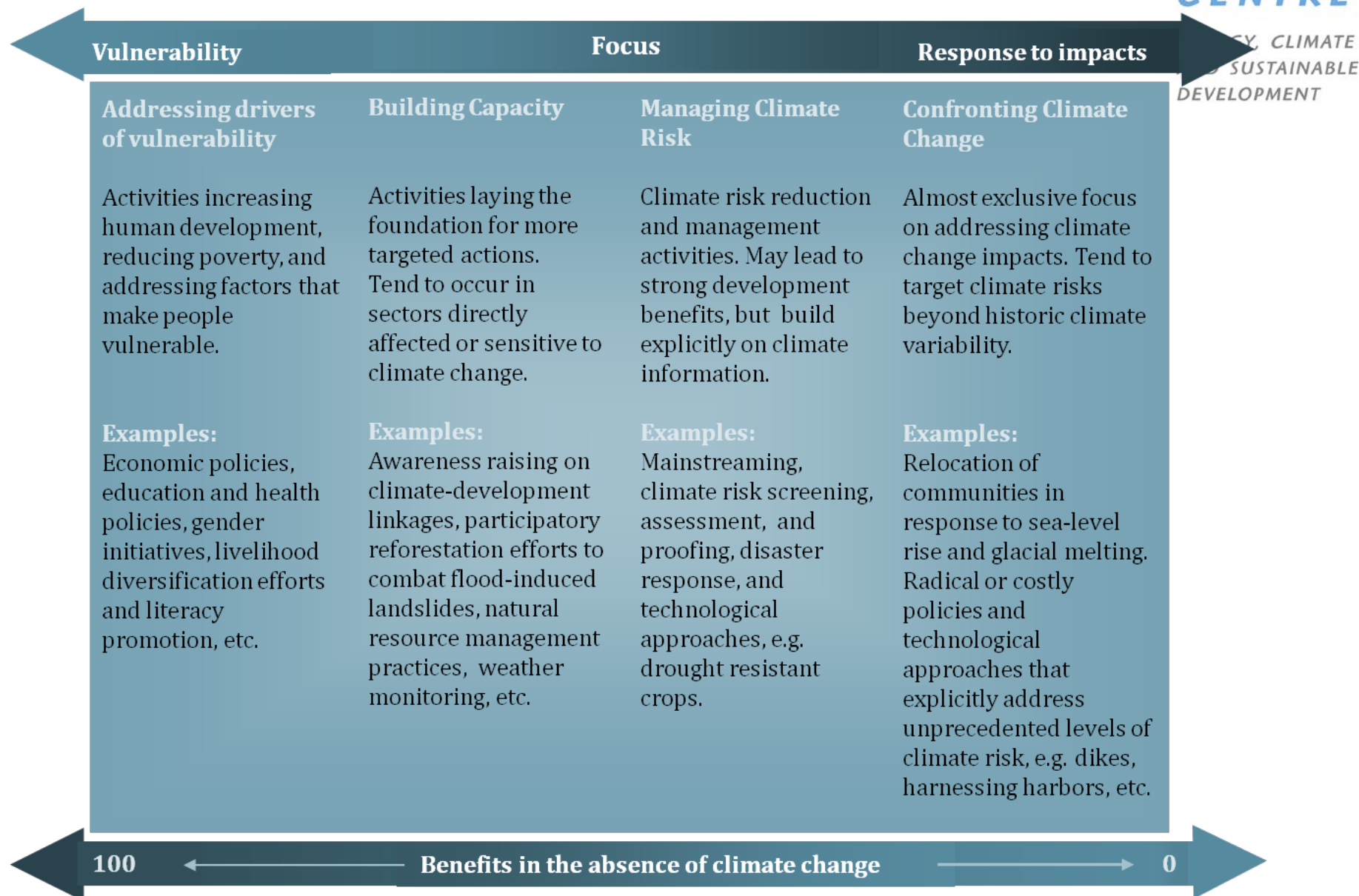
Role for donors

Trends: Increased focus on integrating adaptation in development

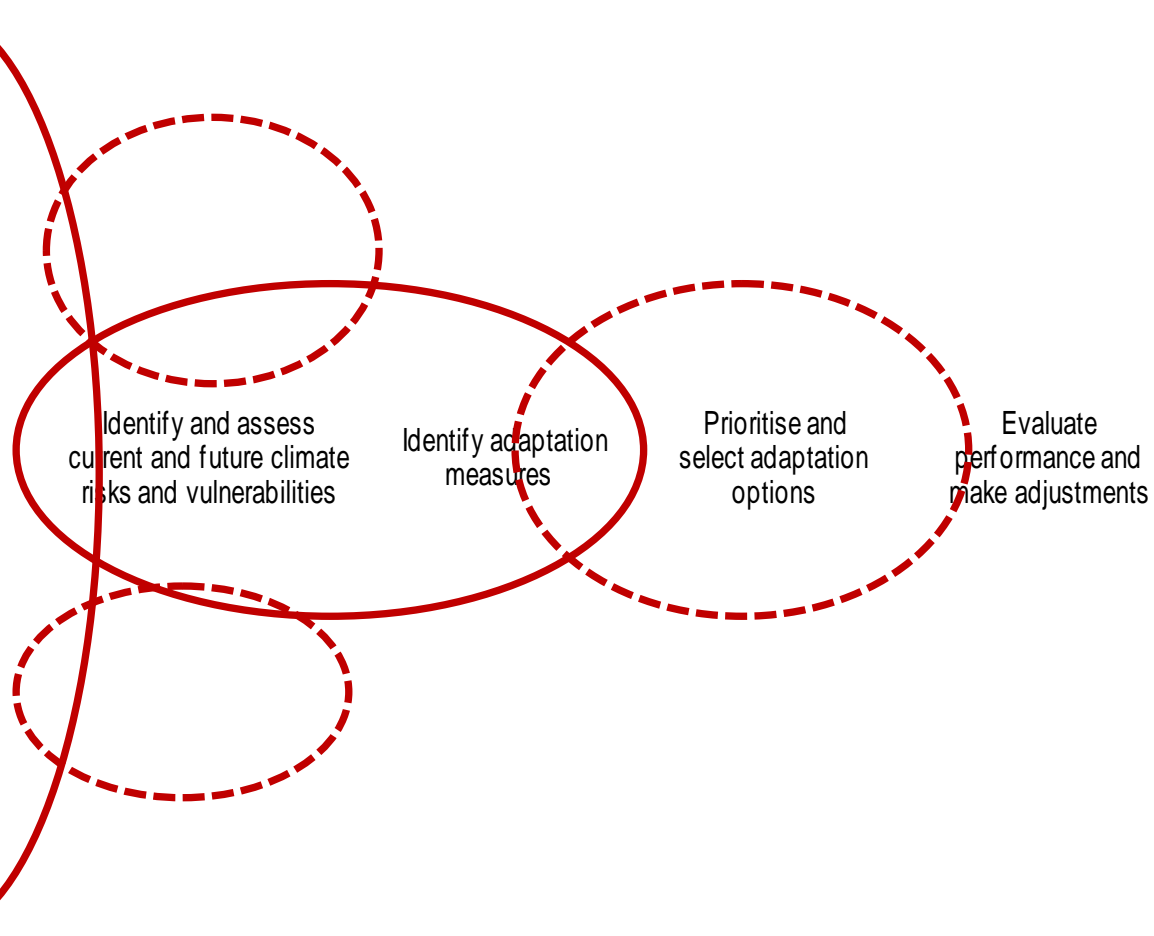
Motivation:

- Climate change may jeopardize development efforts and investments and the achievement of key development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals
- Development activities may lead to 'mal-adaptation' – an increase in exposure and vulnerability to climate change – by overlooking climate change impacts, or by undertaking climate change adaptation actions that fail to adequately address the impacts of climate change
- Development activities targeting drivers of vulnerability have positive implications for adaptation and adaptive capacity – even in cases where climate change has not been explicitly considered. By integrating climate change, synergies can be further exploited

The Development-Adaptation Continuum



Integrating development and adaptation – Efforts so far, I



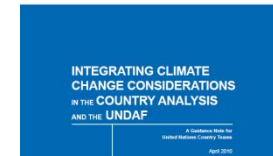
National and
sector level
policy cycle
steps

Adaptation
decision-
making steps

Project cycle
and local
level steps

Integrating development and adaptation – Efforts so far, II

- Considerable knowledge on:
 - Key climate change risks and vulnerabilities
 - Potential adaptation measures
- But: Lack of interdisciplinary efforts by natural and social scientists
- Plethora of mainstreaming guidance, climate risk screening and assessment tools available
 - Mainly developed and implemented by donors and international NGOs
 - Primarily conducted as separate efforts
 - Strongest on identification and assessment of risks, vulnerabilities and adaptation options



Integrating development and adaptation – Efforts so far, III

- Increased awareness on climate-development linkages and the need for adaptation
- Numerous capacity building efforts undertaken

BUT: Slow progress on moving from assessments to implementation

Need for financing; need for quantitative assessment of costs and benefits of adaptation; institutional and technical support issues need to be addressed

Challenges and Opportunities, I

Keep addressing knowledge gaps:

- Expand capacity to model climate change impacts at local and regional scales
- Provide information and guidance in a form appropriate for decision-makers
- Improve geographical coverage of risk, vulnerability and adaptation analysis
- Induce interdisciplinary efforts by scientists, environmental analysts and economists and engage policy makers, planners and citizens
- Establish improved knowledge on damage costs and on adaptation costs and benefits – Also to catch the attention central decision makers



Challenges and Opportunities, II

Support emerging priority action areas:

- Institutional aspects/strengthening :
 - Support National Implementing Entities in project development and securing funding from the Adaptation Fund
 - Establish functional linking between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
 - Contribute to improved overview of adaptation and climate change efforts at country level and systematic assessments
- Capacity building and technical guidance
 - Support progress towards implementation of adaptation activities and their integration in development planning and decision-making
 - Assist countries in addressing technology aspects of adaptation



Thank you!

