



briefing note

Managing the UK Climate Change Projections 2009 (UKCP09) in flood and coastal erosion risk management appraisal and decision-making

Background

- UKCP09 was released on 18 June 2009.
- It is a comprehensive update on climate change for the UK and will improve our understanding of future coastal extremes and future rainfall and river flows.
- UKCP09 not only gives data for different emissions scenarios, but across a range of probability levels. As such it is more useful for decisions-makers, but also more complex and will take some time to fully understand.
- Defra has funded a training and support programme until the end of the year to help us all understand how we can access the projections – for more details see:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/adapt/adaptation/projections-in-practice.htm>

What should operating authorities do?

- Continue to use existing climate change guidance for the coast and for river flows, until a decision is taken if the guidance will be updated.
- Project teams should not use the outputs and should not apply the projections in their work or advise others on its application before the updated guidance is available.

Who is updating the guidance and when will it be available?

- Defra and the Environment Agency will undertake a short review of the existing guidance and decide how it should be updated.
- A timetable for the revision of guidance will be set out in July 2009. Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Communities and Local Government will also be engaged in the development of any new guidance.
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When will the updated guidance apply?

- We will follow a similar approach to Defra's Flood and Coastal Defence Project Appraisal Guidance (FCDPAG) update in October 2006.
- We will apply the updated climate change guidance to all future appraisals, strategies and management plans that are started from the date that the update is issued.
- For work already in progress, a transition period will be allowed depending on how advanced your work is.

- Work to complete after the transition period should be assessed making sure that any changes to the updated guidance are followed. Exact instructions on the transition will be part of any new guidance.
- In exceptional circumstances, there may be particularly vulnerable or sensitive projects where you may want to appreciate in detail the implications of UKCP09 before any new guidance is issued. If this is the case you should contact bill.donovan@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Background to UKCP09

- The future coastal extremes in UKCP09 have been largely derived from work commissioned by our Thames Estuary 2100 Strategy (the TE2100 project). This research showed that current Defra guidance on sea level rise is still suitable for planning for flood risk in the tidal Thames.
- Defra and the Environment Agency have two joint research projects that are evaluating how best to use UKCP09 information and data. New supplementary guidance within HM Treasury Green Book, will also be an important input.

Will the Shoreline Management Plans (SMP2s) include the latest climate change projections when launched this summer?

- With UKCP09 launched in June 2009, the first SMP2s to be published will not include UKCP09 information, but will have used climate change information from Defra's guidance October 2006. These SMP2s will need to be reviewed with the new data to check that the latest climate change projections do not change any of the policy decisions. If they do, then there would be further consultation on those particular sections of the SMP2.
- All SMP2 Action Plans will have an action to consider the plan findings in respect of key new information, with UKCP09 being one of the key issues. UKCP09 marine projections are complex and will require interpretation. The Environment Agency's intention is to undertake this interpretation and issue guidance for application to SMP2s. Defra, Welsh Assembly Government and Coastal Groups will be consulted during this process and guidance for SMP2s is expected by the end of September 2009.

For more information please contact Bill Donovan, Policy Advisor on Climate Change, Environment Agency on 07733 015 201

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