



Fundamentals of Climate Change Adaptation

July 18, 2011
Washington, DC

9:00-9:30

Welcome and opening exercises

9:30-9:45

What everyone needs to know about climate change for adaptation in 15 minutes

Many of us understand the basics of climate change but may not understand several key concepts that have important implications for climate change adaptation. For example, what is climate variability and how is it different from climate change? How can events like El Niño be used as a proxy for understanding the impacts of climate change? What are our chances of limiting global warming to 2°C? How accurately can we predict precipitation patterns in the future? At what point does adaptation cease to be a viable option for conserving biodiversity?

9:45-10:45

Key Concepts in Climate Change Adaptation

One of the common challenges practitioners face in adaptation work is the lack of a common understanding of exactly what adaptation is. Standard definitions developed by the IPCC and others are complex and hard to apply to real life situations. Exactly what, then, is adaptation and what is the easiest way to convey this concept? What is the difference between coping, building resilience, and adaptation? Are droughts impacts of climate change? What does ecosystem-based adaptation really mean? How does adaptation differ from traditional conservation and development work? Even if you understand these concepts already, this presentation will provide simple, easy to understand ways communicating sometimes confusing and complex concepts to others.

11:15-12:00

Adaptation Options

For those new to the topic, it can be difficult to envision what adaptation “looks and feels” like. What strategies are used in developing adaptation solutions? Does adaptation always mean something new and innovative? How much does it cost? What are some of the solutions being tested to help reduce vulnerability to climate? This presentation provides a series of examples of adaptation options developed from around the world that are responding to various climate impacts and employing multiple strategies.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:00

Happy Village: Exploring adaptation options (group exercise)

Through this fun and fast-paced exercise, participants work in small groups to evaluate adaptation options for the small coastal community of Happy Village and will discover the importance of developing adaptation options that consider the vulnerabilities of both ecosystems and human wellbeing. Always the most popular activity in our workshops!

2:00-2:45

Integrated Adaptation Solutions for People and Ecosystems

The conservation and development fields have long recognized the advantages of working together for mutual benefit, although this has not always happened. However, success in adapting to climate change demands that these two sectors work together in a holistic and integrated manner. What are the implications of building adaptation strategies around ecosystems or people and livelihoods without considering the other? What is maladaptation? What are some successful examples of integrated adaptation approaches? What barriers do we need to overcome? What are some of the lessons learned from early adaptation projects that we can use in designing strategies for the future?

3:00-3:45

Disaster Risk Reduction and Links to Adaptation

3:45-4:45

Introduction to Vulnerability Assessments

Understanding and assessing vulnerability is the first step in adapting to the impacts of climate change. How do we measure vulnerability? Why are vulnerability assessments an important and necessary step in planning adaptation interventions? How can we determine the degree to which a community, its resources, and the ecosystems around it are vulnerable to changing environmental and socioeconomic conditions? What are the different methodologies available and when should we use them? How does a vulnerability assessment at the landscape level differ from one at the community level?

4:45-5:00 Wrap up and adjournment