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Adaptation Atlas
Newsletter

Atlas Report

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Meet the Atlas Advisory Board

Bo Kjéllen

Ambassador Bo Kjéllen joins the Adaptation Atlas advisory board from the Stockholm Environment Institute. He brings a wealth of experience with international climate policy to the Atlas project. From 1990 to 2001 he served as Chief Negotiator and head of the Swedish delegations to the Rio process & UNFCCC negotiations. He also chaired the Negotiating Committee for the UN Convention to combat Desertification from 1993 to1997. He has written widely on issues related to climate and sustainable development and recently authored the book *A New Diplomacy for Sustainable Development: The Challenge of Global Change*. (Routledge, 2008)

Each month we will introduce a new Advisory Board member.

Bonn – June 1-12, 2009

The recent UNFCCC climate talks in Bonn marked an important step on the road to Copenhagen. Country delegations began deliberating over the text for a new climate treaty. Adaptation was the first major topic up for review. The debate highlighted some early points of contention looking to Copenhagen, such as monitoring and reporting on adaptation funds. For an overview of these issues check out a recent Weathervane blog post and Clean Skies TV interview by Shalini Vajjhala.

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Adaptation and the Road to Copenhagen

Welcome to the first issue of the *Atlas Report*. As some of you may already know, our team at Resources for the Future is creating a dynamic new online tool: The *Global Adaptation Atlas*. The aim of this effort is to help diverse communities of users visualize and download spatial data on projected climate impacts and adaptation activities on the ground in their regions and around the world.

The upcoming UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP 15) has instilled greater urgency within ongoing adaptation debates. We have been following the science and policy advances in the field and plan to launch the *Atlas* in Copenhagen. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for monthly updates on our progress!

About the Atlas

The global community of policymakers, scientists, and citizens are faced with complex tradeoffs when choosing the most appropriate adaptation activities for their areas and communities. Even if the most severe predicted impacts of climate change are successfully averted, local changes will complicate the already-demanding tasks of finding clean water, combating disease, and sustaining livelihoods around the world. Numerous policies and funds have recently emerged to support adaptation, the process of adjusting to changing environmental conditions. Some of the largest are expected to channel billions of dollars to adaptation activities in coming decades. However, funding allocation is still controversial because of the diversity of possible responses and funding sources.

Successfully prioritizing, implementing, tracking, and evaluating adaptation activities requires extraordinary new ways of coordinating and disseminating data to understand: What are the critical impacts we need to address? What are our options for responding? Have our efforts been effectively targeted over time?

Our aim is for the Atlas to become a primary source for dissemination of the best-available science on human impacts of climate change and data on adaptation funds and activities supported by international agencies, foundations, governments, and other organizations. Through the use of this tool, we hope that funders and stakeholders will have the ability to make informed and timely decisions on the use of their resources now and into the future.

Data & Technology Partners

Project partners are vital to the success of the *Atlas*. We are currently working with Blue Raster, LLC – a Geographic Information Systems web application developer based in Virginia- to design and build the prototype of the *Atlas*. We are also pleased to announce that we have partnered with RMSI, a geospatial and information technology organization based in Noida, India. The firm has collaborated with multilateral funding agencies such as the World Bank and FAO, various national governments, and Indian government agencies in order to conduct climate vulnerability assessments, perform agriculture and coastal zone management studies, and evaluate economic and fiscal impacts of natural disasters. RMSI has valuable experience in handling, processing, and storing geospatial information related to climate change impacts. We are thrilled to welcome them to the Atlas team.

What's Next?

In the next issue of the Atlas Report, learn more about the Atlas prototype development process and climate impact and adaptation data sources.

For more information on the Atlas, please visit our website at www.adaptationatlas.org. To learn more about RFF's research, visit www.rff.org.

Have data? We want to hear from you! Send us an email at data@adaptationatlas.org, and we'll be in touch on how to feature your study or project(s) in the Atlas for its launch in December.

Questions? Email us at info@adaptationatlas.org.

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