



Transboundary Adaptation Learning Exchange: Policy and Practice

Authors: Denise McCullagh, Anna Beswick, Stephen Jones, Jane McCullough and Jeremy Gault.

Identifying pressures

Even if global greenhouse emissions stopped today, society is locked into some degree of climate change, making adaptation essential. TALX looked at climate adaptation from both a top-down and a bottom-up perspective and identified a number of challenges across Britain and Ireland. Foremost among these is the need for resources to implement action. Currently, resources at all levels are insufficient for the aims and ambitions outlined in policy and legislation. Funding needs to move beyond short-term policy cycles to implement long-term, self-sustaining adaptation initiatives, which in turn can enable local empowerment and capacity building. Siloed working and a lack of collaboration and partnership within government and between public bodies, the private sector and communities, is a major obstacle to successful adaptation. A lack of communication between stakeholders has led to duplication of actions and missed opportunities for adaptation to be integrated into various initiatives. The pressures of climate change require society-wide ownership of adaptation. However, for this to happen, all voices need to be represented in decision-making throughout the adaptation process.

Informing policy

One of the main components of the TALX research was the assessment of national level climate adaptation policies across the five jurisdictions of Ireland and the UK, to identify if climate adaptation was acknowledged and provided for. National policies drive climate change adaptation in each country. However, in many areas, particularly regarding the provision of resources to support adaptation goals, policy is failing to enable these ambitions. To support policymakers, TALX has developed five policy briefs that outline key areas where policy is enabling adaptation action, and where it must improve. Recommendations for establishing and building on positive adaptation actions are provided within each brief.

Developing solutions

The co-development of a place-based climate adaptation partnership framework and the establishment of a transboundary community of practice were the other key components of the TALX project. A wide range of stakeholders, including practitioners, policymakers and academics, were brought together to share their insights and to create a practical framework to guide those at all levels in progressing place-based adaptation partnerships. Co-creation and inclusion were integral to the research, both to avoid maladaptation and to enable transformational change. The transboundary network established through the project has allowed for learnings to be shared and created a safe space for discussions on how best to progress climate adaptation in all regions.

