



What is the Evidence Report?

The UK Government is required under the 2008 Climate Change Act to publish a UK-wide Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) every five years. The Act stipulates that the Government must assess ‘the risks for the United Kingdom from the current and predicted impacts of climate change’.

The first CCRA was published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in 2012. For this second CCRA, to be presented to Parliament in January 2017, Defra asked the Adaptation Sub-Committee of the Committee on Climate Change (ASC) to prepare an independent Evidence Report setting out the latest evidence on the risks and opportunities to the UK from climate change.

The Evidence Report will feed in to the development of the next UK National Adaptation Programme, expected in 2018, as well as the national adaptation programmes of the devolved administrations.

In compiling the Evidence Report, the UK Government asked the ASC to answer the following question:

“Based on the latest understanding of current, and future, climate risks/opportunities, vulnerability and adaptation, what should the priorities be for the next UK National Adaptation Programme and adaptation programmes of the devolved administrations?”

To achieve this aim, the ASC has worked with hundreds of academics and other experts to assess nearly sixty individual risks and opportunities in three steps:

- Step 1: Understand present-day vulnerability and assess current climate-related risks, opportunities and levels of adaptation.
- Step 2: Understand future vulnerability and adaptation, and assess how climate and socio-economic change may alter climate-related risks and opportunities in the 2020s, 2050s and 2080s.
- Step 3: Prioritise risks and opportunities for which additional action is needed in the next five years to manage the risk or take advantage of the opportunity.

The Evidence Report uses the concept of urgency to summarise the findings of the analysis. One of four ‘urgency categories’ has been assigned by the ASC to each risk and opportunity.

Urgency categories used in the UK CCRA 2017 Evidence Report	
<p>MORE URGENT</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↓</p> <p>LESS URGENT</p>	<p>MORE ACTION NEEDED</p> <p>New, stronger or different government policies or implementation activities – over and above those already planned – are needed in the next five years to reduce long-term vulnerability to climate change.</p>
	<p>RESEARCH PRIORITY</p> <p>Research is needed to fill significant evidence gaps or reduce the uncertainty in the current level of understanding in order to assess the need for additional action.</p>
	<p>SUSTAIN CURRENT ACTION</p> <p>Current or planned levels of activity are appropriate, but continued implementation of these policies or plans is needed to ensure that the risk continues to be managed in the future. This includes any existing plans to increase or change the current level of activity.</p>
	<p>WATCHING BRIEF</p> <p>The evidence in these areas should be kept under review, with long-term monitoring of risk levels and adaptation activity so that further action can be taken if necessary.</p>
<p>Note: Whilst there will be specific evidence gaps and uncertainties in almost every area, the ‘research priority’ category is reserved for those risks and opportunities where further evidence is needed to determine whether more action is needed, current levels of action should be sustained, or for now things can be kept under review (watching brief).</p>	





The second CCRA is underpinned by a large body of peer-reviewed scientific literature and grey literature about climate change, its associated impacts, the degree to which humans and natural systems are vulnerable to these impacts under different socio-economic futures, and the level of adaptation that is occurring or is planned.

The analysis is supplemented by four research projects commissioned by the ASC to assess future climate impacts upon flood risk, water availability, the goods and benefits provided by the UK’s natural assets, and an assessment of high-end climate change scenarios.

The whole assessment has been reviewed by an independent group of technical peer reviewers, government stakeholders and non-government experts.

In total, the CCRA Evidence Report consists of over 2,000 pages of analysis and has used over 2,000 different sources of evidence. The ASC and authors dealt with more than 6,000 review comments, and summarised the results of the CCRA in six key findings. The project took three years to complete.

UK CCRA 2017 Evidence Report products		
Evidence Report product	Purpose	Intended audience
Synthesis Report	Written by the ASC, to provide a summary of the main conclusions of the Evidence Report, focusing on the results of the urgency scoring	Government ministers, officials, arm’s length bodies, MPs and members of House of Lords, wider stakeholders
Synthesis Report appendix: Urgency scoring tables	Written by the ASC, to provide ‘look-up summaries’ of the results and rationale for the urgency scoring, with sign posting back to the relevant sections in the main report	Government officials, policy and technical experts within arm’s length bodies
Main CCRA Evidence Report, consisting of eight technical chapters	Written by chapter authors, to provide the detailed analysis that underpins the assessment of risks/opportunities and resulting urgency scores	Government officials, policy and technical experts within arm’s length bodies
Country summaries	Written by the ASC, to summarise the most relevant findings from the UK-level Evidence Report for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales	Officials and arm’s length bodies in each of the four UK countries
CCRA research projects	Written by consultants, to provide supporting evidence to inform the Evidence Report	CCRA authors and the ASC