



Adaptation Without Borders

19 September 2022, Monday
2:00–3:15 p.m. Manila Time (GMT+8)
Zoom



The online event introduced the global partnership “Adaptation Without Borders” and its work in addressing the emerging global challenge of transboundary climate risks. It highlighted the impact of climate adaptation beyond country borders and the significance of finding solutions for global resilience while fostering international cooperation.

Magnus Benzie introduced the concept and issues related to cascading transboundary climate risk. Jakob Steiner discussed risks from transboundary hazards and the importance of risk communication. Sara Opitz-Stapleton tackled geopolitical risks using the water-energy nexus lens. Katy Harris gave a comprehensive introduction to the global partnership of Adaptation Without Borders.

Srinivasan Ancha and David Raitzer joined the event as discussants, emphasizing climate risks faced by Asian Development Bank (ADB) developing member countries (DMCs) and their economic impacts.

If our connections to each other expose us to the cross-border nature of climate risk, they also present an opportunity to work together and spur the kind of international cooperation on adaptation that befits our interdependent world.

KATY HARRIS

Senior Policy Fellow of Stockholm Environment Institute,
and Director of Adaptation Without Borders

SPEAKERS



MAGNUS BENZIE

Research Fellow
Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)



JAKOB STEINER

Glacier Hydrologist, Water and Air
Integrated Center for Integrated
Mountain Development (ICIMOD)



SARAH OPITZ-STAPLETON

Research Associate, Global Risks and Resilience
Overseas Development Institute (ODI)



KATY HARRIS

Senior Policy Fellow for SEI, and
Director of Adaptation Without Borders (AWB)



DAVID ANTHONY RAITZER

Economist, East Asia Department
Asian Development Bank (ADB)



SRINIVASAN ANCHA

Principal Climate Change Specialist
Southeast Asia Department, ADB

MODERATOR



ARGHYA SINGHA ROY

Principal Climate Change Specialist
(Climate Change Adaptation)
Sustainable Development and
Climate Change Department, ADB

KEY MESSAGES

- Promoting adaptation across all ADB sectors and investments can guide DMCs toward addressing risks and achieving adaptation at a system-wide level. Recognizing transboundary climate risks will help ADB to steer the development pathways toward regional and global resilience through adaptation measures that go beyond country borders.
- Adaptation Without Borders highlights the key areas where transboundary climate risks can be identified as a basis for further study and action. Presented areas include: (1) economics and trade where risks can cascade from one country to another, (2) mountain topography that serves as a territorial boundary, (3) geopolitical dynamics in water and energy of neighboring countries, and (4) public policy involving government processes such as planning and financing for development. These areas can be opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.
- Climate risk assessments using a transboundary lens can help determine cascading risks and the positive effects of climate adaptation. ADB projects can be conceptualized and appraised to avoid maladaptation and maximize adaptation outcomes of investments. The private sector can also be tapped for investment solutions in areas such as resilient agribusiness supply chain to fill gaps in adaptation targets.
- A key challenge for taking a transboundary approach to managing climate risks comes from the notion that “mitigation is global, while adaptation is local,” just as National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) tend to be defined independently by countries without consideration of cross-border risk. Another is limited willingness of DMCs to cooperate, since climate actions are sometimes viewed as a competitive undertaking of each country. And lastly, climate modeling tools may not adequately capture the complexity of risks, specifically in economics and trade, as well as country-specific or regional contexts.
- ADB’s role in expanding dialogue with DMC counterparts such as ministries of environment, finance, and planning is crucial. This in turn can strengthen the cooperation of countries in managing climate risk, better aligning NAPs and Nationally Determined Contributions, and developing a global systemic view of addressing transboundary climate risks.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Adaptation without Borders

<https://adaptationwithoutborders.org>

Adams K., M. Benzie, S. Croft, and S. Sadowski. 2021. Climate risk to trade and food security: implications for policy

<https://www.sei.org/publications/climate-change-trade-global-food-security>