



PROVIA Guidance on Assessing Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation to Climate Change

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Authors:

Jochen Hinkel, Global Climate Forum, Germany
Sukaina Bharwani, Stockholm Environment Institute, UK
Alexander Bisaro, Global Climate Forum, Germany
Timothy Carter, Finnish Environment Institute, Finland
Tracy Cull, Kulima Integrated Development Solutions,
South Africa
Marion Davis, Stockholm Environment Institute, USA
Richard Klein, Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden
Kate Lonsdale, Adaptation in Practice, UK
Lynn Rosentrater, University of Oslo, Norway
Katharine Vincent, Kulima Integrated Development Solutions,
South Africa

Scientific coordination: Richard Klein

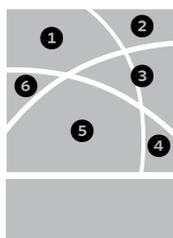
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Reviewers and resource people:

John Agard, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago
Mozaharul Alam, United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand
Dorothy Amwata, South Eastern University College, Kenya
Sarah Aziz, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia
Chizoba Chinweze, Chemtek Associates, Nigeria
Paul Desanker, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Germany
Nathalie Doswald, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, UK
Thomas Downing, Global Climate Adaptation Partnership, UK
Richard Ewbank, Christian Aid, UK
Christo Fabricius, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa
Knud Falk, Red Cross / Red Crescent Climate Centre, The Netherlands
Richard Fleming, Canadian Forest Service, Canada
John Furlow, U.S. Agency for International Development, USA
Javier Gonzales Iwanciw, Nur University, Bolivia
Tomi Haryadi, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
Saleemul Huq, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Bangladesh
Lindsey Jones, Overseas Development Institute, UK
Joseph Katongo Kanyanga, Zambia Meteorological Department, Zambia
Bruno Locatelli, Centre for International Forestry Research, Peru
George Manful, United Nations Environment Programme, Kenya
Trang Nguyen, United Nations Environment Programme, Kenya
Robert Nicholls, University of Southampton, UK
Ian Noble, Global Adaptation Institute, USA
Jean Palutikof, Griffith University, Australia
Louise Pape, Sustainable Santa Fe Commission and ClimateToday.org, USA
Martin Parry, Imperial College London, UK
Anthony Patt, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich, Switzerland
Fiona Percy, CARE, Kenya
Joy Jacqueline Pereira, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia
Emilia Pramova, Centre for International Forestry Research, Indonesia
Erin Roberts, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Bangladesh
Andrea Sabelli, United Nations Environment Programme, Panama
Roger Street, UK Climate Impacts Programme, UK
Rob Swart, Alterra, The Netherlands

Frank Thomalla, Stockholm Environment Institute, Thailand
Jos Timmerman, Alterra, The Netherlands
Jessica Troni, United Nations Development Programme, South Africa
Sebastián Vicuña, Pontificia Universidad Católica, Chile
Per Wikman-Svahn, Swedish Defence Research Agency, Sweden
Beom-Sik Yoo, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea
Carolina Zambrano Barragán, Metropolitan District of Quito, Ecuador

PROVIA Scientific Steering Committee:

Saleemul Huq (chair), International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Bangladesh
Joseph Alcamo, United Nations Environment Programme (ex officio)
Ghassem Asrar, World Meteorological Organization (ex officio)
Peter Dogsé, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ex officio)
Chris Field, Stanford University, USA
Christopher Gordon, University of Ghana, Ghana
Richard Klein, Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden
Ian Noble, Global Adaptation Institute, USA
Balgis Osman-Elasha, African Development Bank, Tunisia
Jean Palutikof, Griffith University, Australia
Martin Parry, Imperial College London, UK
Anand Patwardhan, Duke University, USA
Cynthia Rosenzweig, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, USA
Yinlong Xu, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, China
Carolina Zambrano Barragán, Metropolitan District of Quito, Ecuador

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Preface

In 1994 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published *Technical Guidelines for Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations*. These guidelines outlined a series of generic steps to be followed when designing and conducting a climate change impact and adaptation assessment. The guidelines were complemented in 1996 by the *UNEP Handbook on Methods for Climate Change Impact Assessment and Adaptation Strategies*. The IPCC Guidelines and the UNEP Handbook were applied in a range of country studies during the decade following their publication. They also inspired the publication of additional guidance, including the *International Guidebook for Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments* carried out as part of the US Country Studies Program, and the *Adaptation Policy Frameworks for Climate Change: Developing Strategies, Policies and Measures*, published by UNDP.

The past decade has seen a shift from centralized guidance for climate vulnerability, impact and adaptation assessment to the development of specific, often sectoral or place-based approaches. There has been a proliferation of assessment methods and tools, and it has become increasingly difficult for potential users to understand the utility, benefits, requirements and tradeoffs of those methods and tools. Stakeholders' demand for knowledge on vulnerability, impacts and adaptation needs to be matched with the supply from the research community of clear technical guidance that takes into account both the academic

developments of the past 20 years as well as user needs at local, national and international levels.

The Global Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA) has responded to this challenge by revising and improving existing guidance for assessing climate change vulnerability, impacts and adaptation, covering the range of available approaches, methods and tools. This document is the result of this effort, which has been a pleasure for me to coordinate. The PROVIA Guidance is meant to be informative rather than prescriptive; its intended users are researchers, adaptation practitioners, decision-makers and those involved in project, programme and policy formulation. The Guidance is conceived as a "living document": the current version is a consultation document that will benefit from feedback from users.

The PROVIA Guidance has been prepared by a ten-strong author team, supported by a large group of experts and reviewers (see opposite page). The conceptual basis, the decision trees and the methods and tools included in the PROVIA Guidance build on research conducted within the project MEDIATION: Methodology for Effective Decision-making on Impacts and Adaptation. MEDIATION was funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme under contract number 244012. The preparation of the PROVIA Guidance was funded by UNEP, with additional support provided by the Government of Sweden.

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Richard Klein, Professor and Theme Leader,
Stockholm Environment Institute

Fatoumata Keita-Ouane
Chief, Scientific Assessment Branch
Division of Early Warning and Assessment
United Nations Environment Programme

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