



Adaptation Without Borders

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Adaptation
Without
Borders

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Agenda



1. Introduce Adaptation Without Borders, a global partnership established to support the management of transboundary climate risks worldwide
2. Outline how countries and regions are starting to consider these risks
3. Provide further details on how the international community, including the UNFCCC and other global bodies, are sharpening focus on these risks
4. Lay out some implications for adaptation and broader development planning
5. Pose some questions for reflection



Adaptation
Without
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Adaptation Without Borders is a global partnership working to strengthen international cooperation on adaptation to manage the cross-border and cascading impacts of climate change

Transboundary climate risks

When an impact from climate change in one country generates risks to people in another...

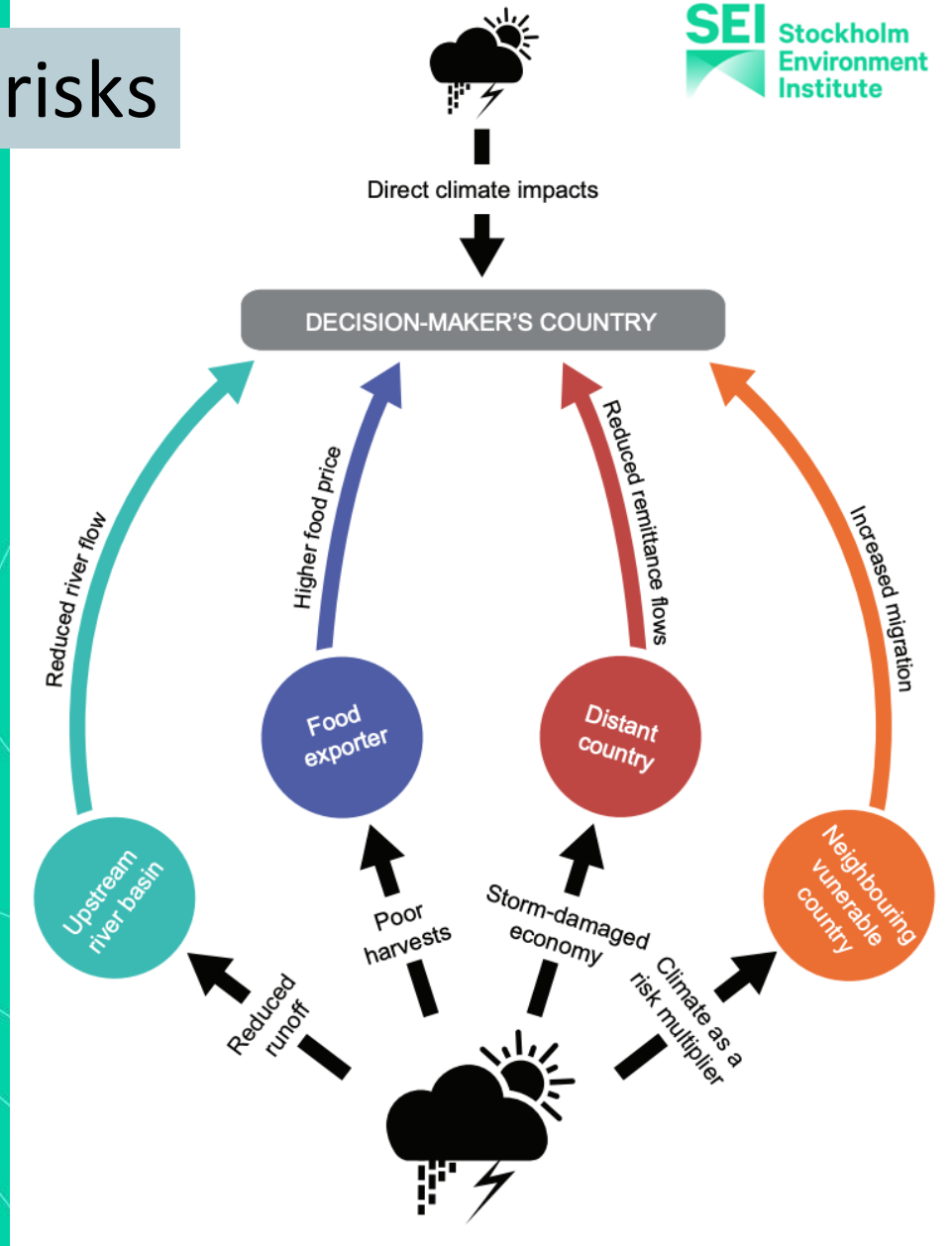
...or when an impact from adaptation in one country generates risks to people in another



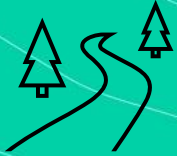
Between neighbours



Between countries
several thousands of
miles apart



Risks propagate through dependencies between countries –



Through biophysical systems – when climate change or adaptation actions disrupt the flow of transboundary rivers and aquifers, or exacerbate regional air pollution, or affect shared ecosystems and natural resources



Through flows of people – when climate change or adaptation actions change patterns of migration and displacement



Through trade and supply chains or financial investments – when climate change or adaptation actions damage infrastructure projects, the production or distribution of goods, services and critical raw materials, or alter remittances and financial flows



Why does this matter?



- Left unchecked, cross-border and cascading climate risks could impede progress towards many of the **SDGs** – increasing food and water insecurity, threatening trade and energy supplies, risking jobs and livelihoods, escalating geopolitical instability, spurring social inequality, undermining social and economic development
- Such risks will become a defining issue for **climate diplomacy** in the years ahead – including in UNFCCC negotiations
- There is a **growing demand** – from governments in the Global South and North alike – to consider these risks in adaptation planning and build resilience to climate change on a truly global and transformative scale



Multilateral adaptation finance for systemic resilience: addressing transboundary climate risks

(SEI brief, 2022)

Transboundary climate risk types

**Resources/
ecosystems**
(e.g. transboundary
river basins)

Infrastructure
(e.g. power grids)

Movement of People
(e.g. migration)

Trade
(e.g. supply chains)

**Financial Flows/
Investments**
(e.g. remittances)

TCR complexity

Common

two or more countries experience similar
hazards because of their geographic
proximity (e.g. drought, cyclones)

Shared (neighbouring)

knock-on effects of climate impacts cross
borders of two or more neighboring countries
(e.g. through transboundary ecosystems)

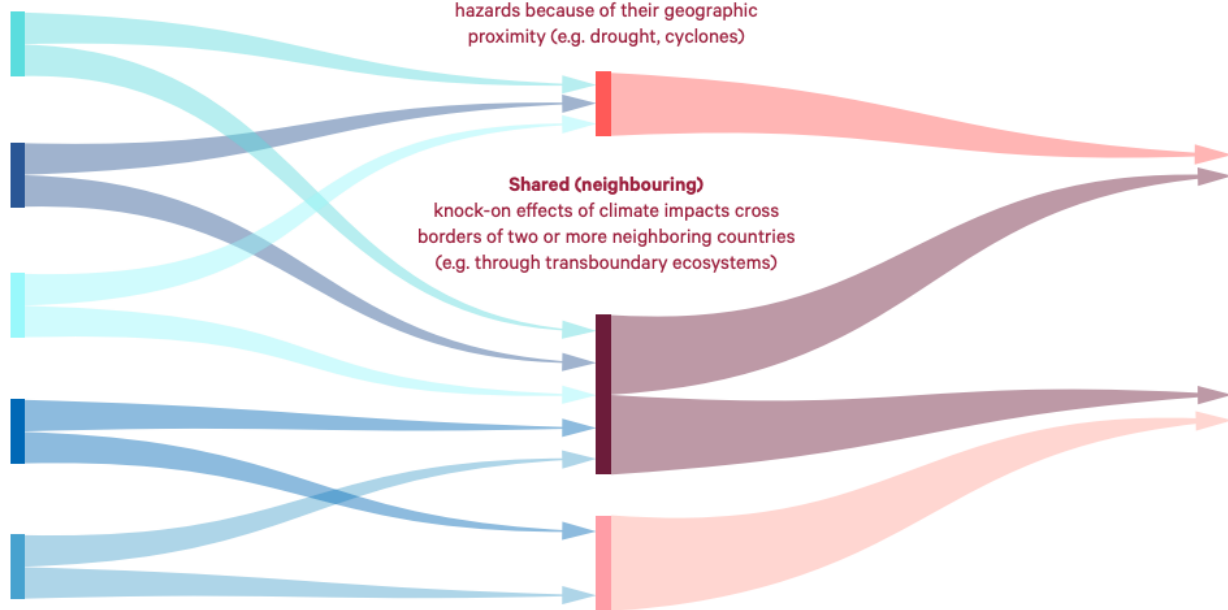
Teleconnected (non-neighbouring)

knock-on effects of climate impacts cross borders of two or more
non-neighboring countries either directly (e.g. through simple supply
chains) or through a complex system (e.g. commodity markets)

Systemic resilience approaches

**Current multilateral
finance models**
enhance transboundary
risk management and
regional cooperation.

Paradigm Shifting
enable long-term
cooperation between
countries.





“Vulnerable communities in climate hotspots are being blindsided by cascading climate disasters without any means of prior alert.”

UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres



“Climate change does not respect borders and boundaries; it doesn’t respect political election cycles. But what it does do is impact the lives of people globally. It’s not just from a moral perspective, it’s not just from an ecological perspective. It makes good business sense, and the cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of action.”

UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Simon Stiell

Three key problems:

1. We don't yet understand or manage the propagation of climate risk between countries
2. Adaptation can also have cross-border effects – redistributing rather than reducing vulnerability
3. Most national adaptation plans are defined independently from each other, do not yet account for cross-border risk, and spur little international cooperation on adaptation

How does Adaptation Without Borders meet these needs?

Our global partnership brings together organisations from across four continents:



What we set out to achieve



- Identify and assess cross-border climate risks
- Appraise policy options to better manage those risks
- Catalyse stronger international and multilateral cooperation on adaptation
- Develop climate-resilient solutions that enhance preparedness and strengthen resilience

Impact Statement

Improved and accelerated global action on adaptation and enhanced international cooperation on adaptation, creating an enabling environment for the more effective management of cross-border and cascading climate risk.

Outcomes:

1. **Workstream 1 (policy-driven research):** The provision of breakthrough insights on globally significant cross-border climate risks and analysis of the critical pathways through which they propagate, as a critical step in re-shaping the dominant discourse on adaptation towards a framing that acknowledges the need for enhanced global action and international cooperation
2. **Workstream 2 (policy engagement):** The harnessing of opportunities for policymaking at different levels (national, regional, international), in different domains (climate, trade, foreign policy etc.) and through different modes (bilateral, multilateral) to spur greater cooperation on adaptation and better governance of cross-border and cascading climate risks
3. **Workstream 3 (planning and implementation):** The empowerment and enhanced enabling of national and regional adaptation planners to manage cross-border and cascading climate risks, and the impacts of their adaptation actions on others

How are other countries and regions starting to think about transboundary climate risks?



EU Adaptation Strategy, 2021

Recognises that:

- Climate change can have 'knock-on' effects
- Climate impacts from outside the EU can cascade and spill-over into the EU
- Coordinated action on adaptation is needed
- Some issues have cross-sector relevance and need commensurate action



“The impacts of climate change [also] have knock-on impacts across borders and continents... even local climate impacts have regional or global repercussions... This makes international climate resilience not only a matter of solidarity, but also of open strategic autonomy and self-interest for the EU and its Member States”

Plus efforts by many European governments to integrate transboundary climate risks into their adaptation plans and strategies (Germany, UK, Sweden, Norway, Spain, etc).

The African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032)

Proposes to ‘Enhance coordination between the regional economic communities and Member States in addressing and managing transboundary and cascading climate risks’.



An emerging priority for African Union Commission, African Union Development Agency, African Group of Negotiators Expert Support Group.

How are other countries and regions starting to think about transboundary climate risks?



ASEAN State of Climate Change Report 2021

Places the 'assessment of transboundary climate risks and actions' as one of the prioritised actions for enhancing adaptation by 2030.



“The region is rapidly integrating in terms of economy and culture. This provides immense economic and social opportunities for the region while also having implications for transboundary climate risks.

ASEAN countries are still drawing up their NAPs, and these need to be strengthened with new evidence suggesting the transboundary impacts of climate change. The understanding generated from transboundary risk assessments can inform the region in its development of a regional adaptation plan that bridges the gaps not covered by national adaptation plans (NAPs) and addresses climate risks holistically.

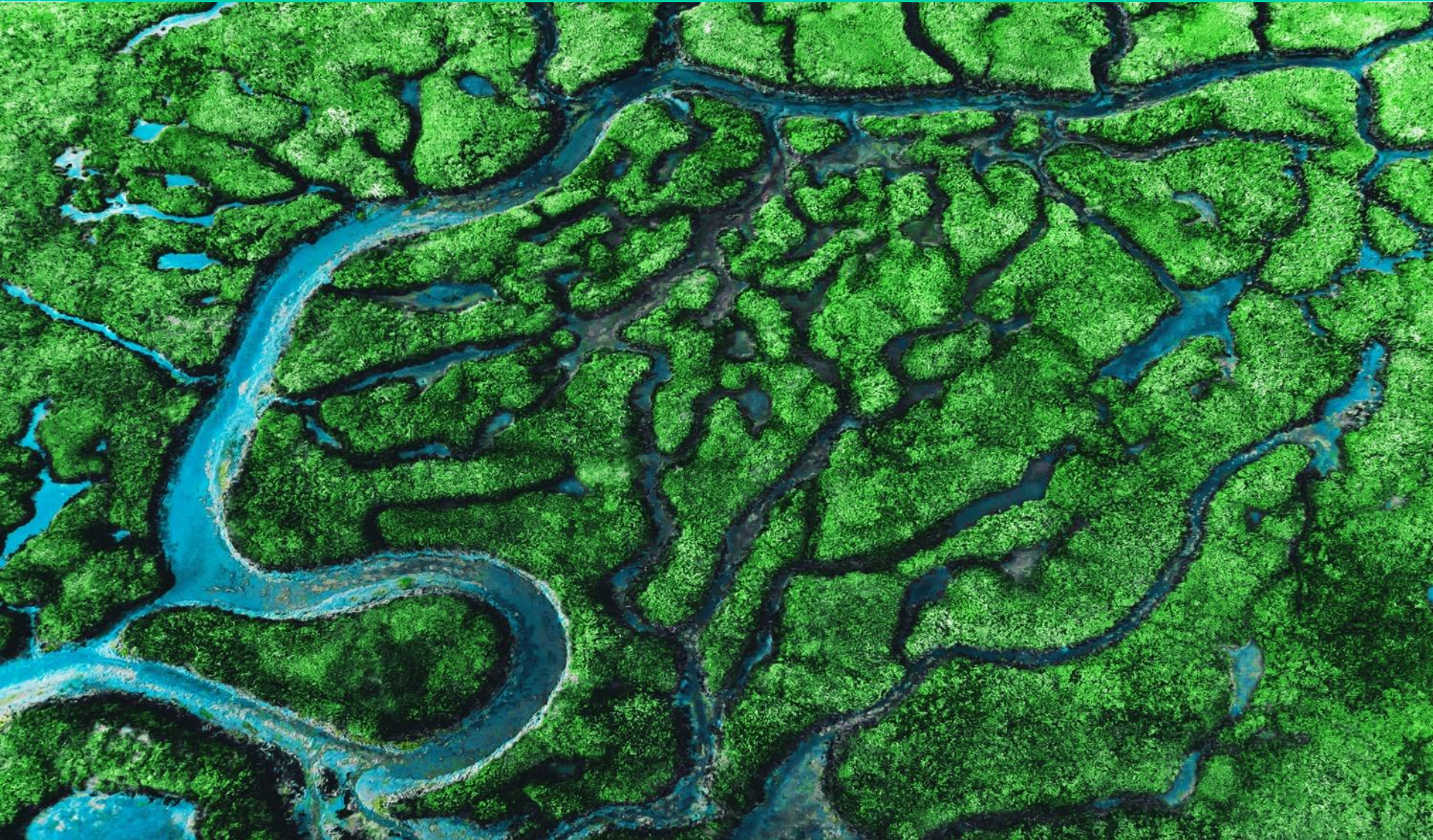
Establishment of an ASEAN regional adaptation fund could make adaptation a regional agenda, help build solidarity, help address transboundary climate risks that individual country adaptation planning may not be able to address, and make easily available new resources that countries need”.

The Hindu Kush Himalaya



ICIMOD has four long-term impact areas to 2030, one of which is transboundary risk and adaptation to enhance safety and socio-economic security – working towards building to cascading climate risks through a regional cooperation mechanism between the 8 countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan).

The international community – moving towards a reconceptualization of climate risk



The UNFCCC



The Adaptation Committee technical report on the Global Goal on Adaptation

Adaptation Committee

AC20/TP/5A

1 September 2021
Version 01.0

**Approaches to reviewing the overall progress made in
achieving the global goal on adaptation**

Technical paper

> Significant focus on transboundary climate risk, with a section on existing transboundary approaches to assessing adaptation progress

Adaptation negotiations under the UNFCCC

Requested multiple presentations on transboundary climate risks, including under the GlaSS (Glasgow – Sharm El-Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation)

Multiple interventions from Parties and Groups on the need to consider transboundary climate risks in adaptation planning in negotiations on the GGA and GST, including: AILAC and ABU, AOSIS, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Ecuador, the European Union, Iceland, Norway, the Republic of the Maldives, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the United States of America, YOUNGO, Zambia...

Opportunities under the UNFCCC



- **UNFCCC Global Goal on Adaptation:** opportunities for the two-year Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation, and the development of the framework on the Global Goal on Adaptation announced at COP27, to strengthen cooperation on adaptation to manage systemic and cascading climate risk
- **UNFCCC GST:** opportunities for the Global Stocktake to account for the needs, challenges and opportunities of assessing systemic and cascading climate risks as well as levels of progress towards resilience to them
- **National adaptation plans:** the NAP Global Network will be developing a briefing note on transboundary risks and the NAP process and working with Adaptation Without Borders to convene a peer learning process (between countries) on how to account for transboundary climate risks in NAP planning processes and assess the need/logistics of building a robust methodology for integrating a transboundary climate risk assessment within the national risk and vulnerability assessments upon which NAPs are based

Table 1. Adaptation Fund projects with transboundary risk framing (emphasis added)

Project title	Countries	Years	Funding (millions USD)	Objectives (emphasis added)
<u>Integrating flood and drought management and early warning for climate change adaptation in the Volta Basin</u>	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Togo	2019–2023 (ongoing)	7.92	“The Volta Flood and Drought Management (VFDM) project has the ambition to provide the first large scale and transboundary implementation of Integrated Flood and Drought Management strategies through the complete chain of End-to-End Early Warning System for Flood Forecasting and Drought Prediction.”
<u>Building urban climate resilience in South-eastern Africa</u>	Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Comoros	2019–2023 (ongoing)	13.99	“To promote inter-country experience sharing and cross-fertilisation regarding the adaptation to transboundary climate-related natural hazards and disseminate lessons learned for progressively building urban climate resilience in south-eastern Africa.”
<u>Integration of climate change adaptation measures in the concerted management of the WAP (W-Arly-Pendjari) transboundary complex</u>	Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger	2020–2024 (ongoing)	11.54	“The WAP Complex is one of Africa’s most important compositions of terrestrial transboundary ecosystems ... [aims to] improve the resilience of ecosystems (fauna and flora) and populations’ livelihoods through the development of infrastructure, (transhumance corridors, drinking troughs, and anti-flood structures...)”
<u>Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans</u>	Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece	2019–2024 (ongoing)	9.93	“The objective of the project is to assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods. The countries will benefit from a basin-wide transboundary flood risk management (FRM) framework based on: improved climate risk knowledge and information; improved transboundary cooperation arrangements and policy framework for FRM and; concrete FRM interventions.”
<u>Adapting to climate change in Lake Victoria Basin</u>	Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda	2018–2021 (completed)	5.00	“Strengthened institutional and technical capacity to integrate climate resilience into transboundary water catchment management . Regional resilience to climate change promoted through innovative, community-based projects. Improved knowledge management frameworks for the collection and maintenance of regional knowledge in transboundary water catchment management and climate change adaptation practices.”

Implications for adaptation thinking: the transboundary nature of climate risks presents a new way of thinking about adaptation.

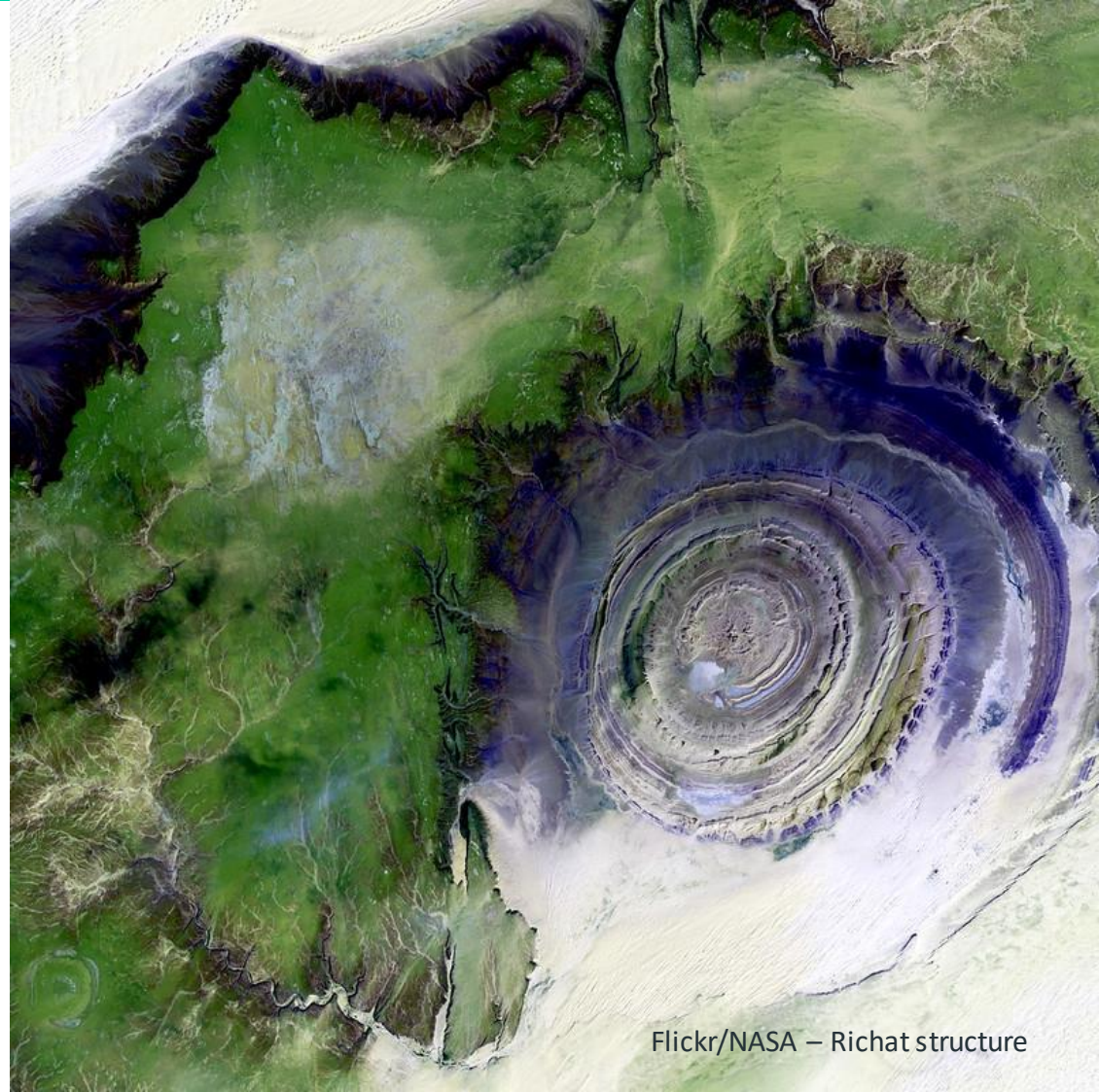
Adaptation is not often thought of as offering a financial return. But adaptation to the international nature of climate risk is about protecting financial interests, geopolitical interests, trade interests – requiring us to bridge across traditional siloes and develop coherent policies that build resilience to a broad range of shocks and disruptors in today's polycrisis world.

They require us to think about how our countries are exposed and vulnerable to climate impacts from overseas.

They require us to think about how are adaptation plans might create negative spillovers for our near neighbours and distant communities.

But they also present opportunities to demonstrate how domestic adaptation efforts help build regional and global resilience – how they strengthen the supply of exports on which others depend, enhance the resilience of financial investments from overseas donors, and adapt critical ecosystems from which we all benefit.

This could present possibilities to leverage new funds for adaptation that not only benefits the country in question but, in reducing the risk of transboundary impacts, generates co-benefits for others.



Flickr/NASA – Richat structure

Implications for adaptation planning and investment



Flickr/UNDRR – multistakeholder planning

Countries need:

- Better guidance on how to assess transboundary climate risks and integrate them within national adaptation plans
- Support from regional organisations, bodies and institutions to strengthen regional cooperation to manage such risks
- The integration of transboundary risks within existing tools, platforms and reporting requirements of the international community
- Consistent support and other incentives to frame and implement adaptation projects with a transboundary scope

But there are opportunities to harness if countries start to reframe adaptation in these terms, and integrate it into reconstructions processes and national development and socio-economic plans.

The Global Transboundary Climate Risk Report



2023



Launch: 20 April

- The first ever illustration of 10 globally significant transboundary climate risks (from both climate hazards and maladaptation)
- 35 people (authors, reviewers, editors) from 20 institutions

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1. What kinds of needs/demands arise at the national level from exposure to cross-border and cascading climate risks?
2. Are there governance gaps in strengthening resilience to these sorts of risks as a result of current adaptation planning processes? How is adaptation and resilience being considered in national development and socio-economic plans?
3. How can we bring countries together to collaborate on adaptation in a way that carefully navigates geopolitics and accounts for questions of governance and risk ownership? How do we keep working level cooperation going when tensions are high at the political level?
4. What governance mechanisms could facilitate such cooperation – is it a case of mainstreaming adaptation into existing agreements or creating new frameworks – such as regional adaptation plans?
5. What forms of technical input and support would be required to further explore and advance such options?