

# Adaptation To Climate Change: the Policy Issues

Last line of defence...or source of  
opportunity?

# Poor cousin?

Consistently adaptation has been:

- Neglected
- Derided
- Impoverished
- Homeless

# *Adaptation* – what role in public policy?

- Adaptation=BAU? or Adaptation=revolution?
- Scope: local or national/international?
- Objective?
  - the value of resilience

*‘the process of adaptation is not new; the idea of incorporating future climate risk into policy-making is’  
(Bo Lim et al)*

BAU, national /international

Paradigmatic change,  
national/international

Where is  
adaptation?

BAU, local

Paradigmatic change, local

# UNDP – principles for policy

- Short term is good basis for longer term
  - Base long-term planning on current priorities
- Frame measures in development context
- Adaptation occurs at different levels in society
- Both strategy and implementation critical for success
  - Stakeholders really matter

## Neglected, derided?

- Seen as risk to mitigation efforts
  - Morally inferior to mitigation?
- Limited understanding and uncertainty of impacts
- Internationally, seen as development issue
  - So not relevant to UNFCCC
- Opprobrium: The policy that dared not speak its name

## Insights appear

- Dangerous climate change unavoidable
- Impacts better understood : IPCC TAR et seq
- Urgent response required : delays could increase costs
- **New** policy challenge: no template
- *Respectability achieved but not embraced*



## Impoverished?

- Conceptual labyrinth
- Estimates of funds required are just a guess
- What to measure?
- Gauging vulnerability

# Homeless

- Autonomous or not?: perhaps no home needed
  - Evidence is poor response and little integration
- A good home would provide: *information* (research, analysis, reduction of uncertainty, assessments of vulnerability) *capacity to develop resilience* across the economy, *targeted regulation*

## Homeless (cont'd)

- What if ill-considered or unrecognised delays continue?
  - Costs to the community could be enormous
  - Inter-generational equity betrayed
- If not government, then who?

## Why such perplexity?

- Uncertainty: the reason for delay ....or the reason for acting?:
  - Some irreducible – known and unknown *unknowns*
  - Some exaggerated: much of the science is now clear, at least in direction
- Inaction guarantees lock-in of infrastructure - and complacency

## National governments cautious still

- No obvious defined limits to efforts: a piece of string
- Liability concerns
- Do not want to displace effective autonomous actors
- So endless review and excuses for inaction
- But increasing interest in resilience as a source of growth – the green growth idea

# How to develop adaptation policy



Source UNFCCC

## International action on a roll

- Driven by vulnerability concerns

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Exposure} \times \text{Sensitivity} &= \text{Impact} \\ &\times \\ \text{Adaptive capacity} &= \\ \text{Vulnerability} \end{aligned}$$

- Where capacity limited, potential bad policy and expensive maladaptation
- Usual funding pressures and concerns
- Development community increasingly aware, *especially since Paris INDCs*

# UNFCCC Adaptation Fund – a modest success

- Almost \$500 m received and over \$200 m allocated since 2007
- Resourcing model innovative and reduced ‘donor domination’– but sources dried up
- Direct access model for funding was well-received
- World Bank expertise
- Now a focus on climate finance readiness
- \$77m added in 2015



# UNFCCC Adaptation Committee

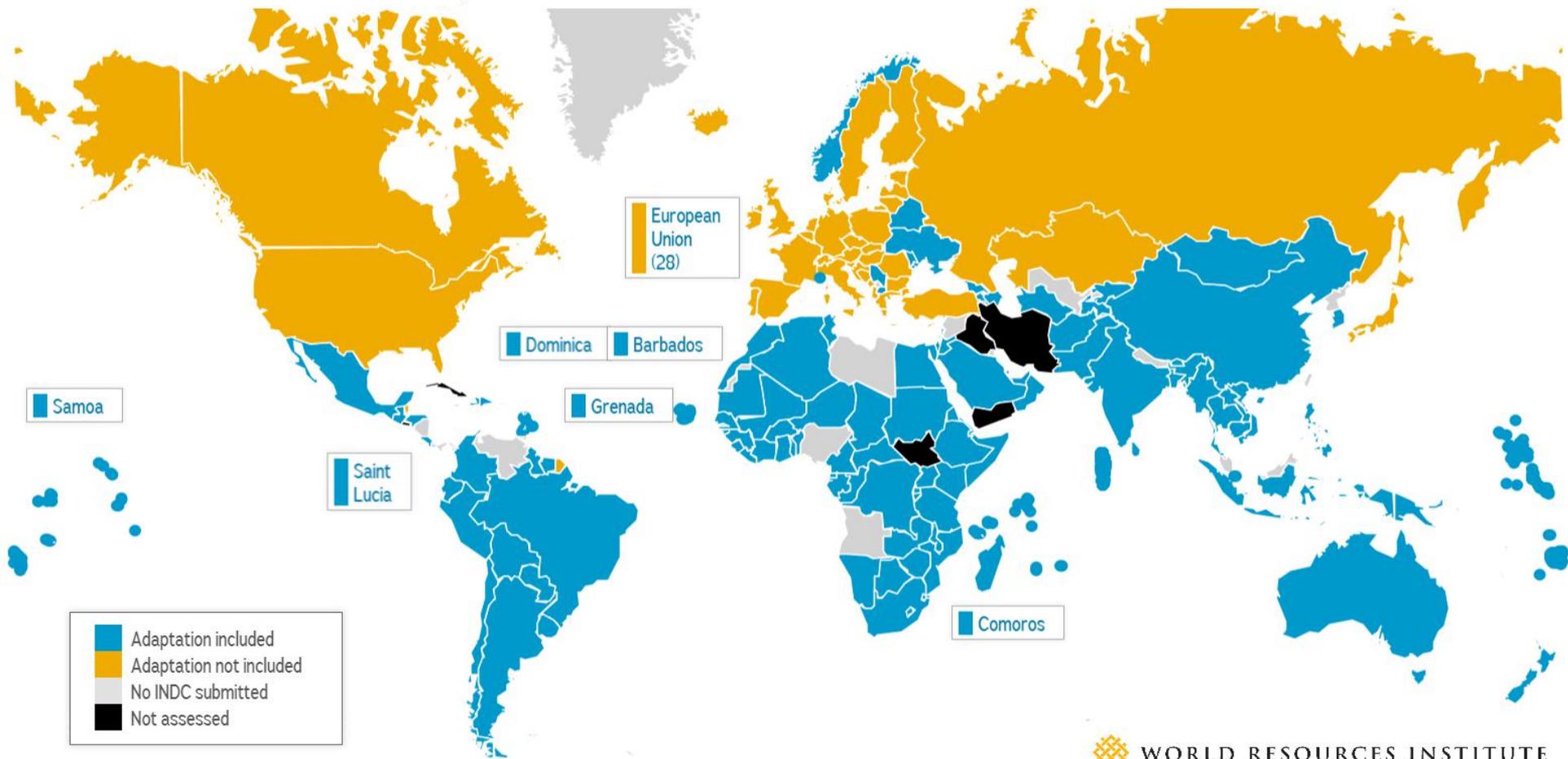
- Climate Adaptation Framework adopted 2010
- Committee now a real forum
- Improving coherence is a priority

# Loss and Damage

- Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) 2013
  - Enhance knowledge to reduce gaps, collect/share data, best practice
  - Strengthen coordination and cohesion
  - Enhance finance, capacity
- Continued from Paris
  - To be reviewed this year

# Adaptation in Paris

Adaptation included in submitted INDCs



# Adaptation Goal

- Article 7.1

*“enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal”*

# Priorities from NDCs

- Water
- Human health
- Agriculture

# Green Climate Fund

- Adaptation planning: \$3m each country for NAPs preparation
- Target: 50% of funding for adaptation Now exceeded (grant equivalent) but varies

# Green Climate Fund

50 % on adaptation expected



The End

But that's too  
depressing.....



## Strong and prominent

- ✓ Priority
- ✓ Respected
- ✓ Resourced
- ✓ Integrated policy and investment