Transnational climate risks: re-thinking adaptation in a globalised world

Philip Osano, PhD
Keynote presentation at the NAP-Expo
Email: philip.osano@sei.org

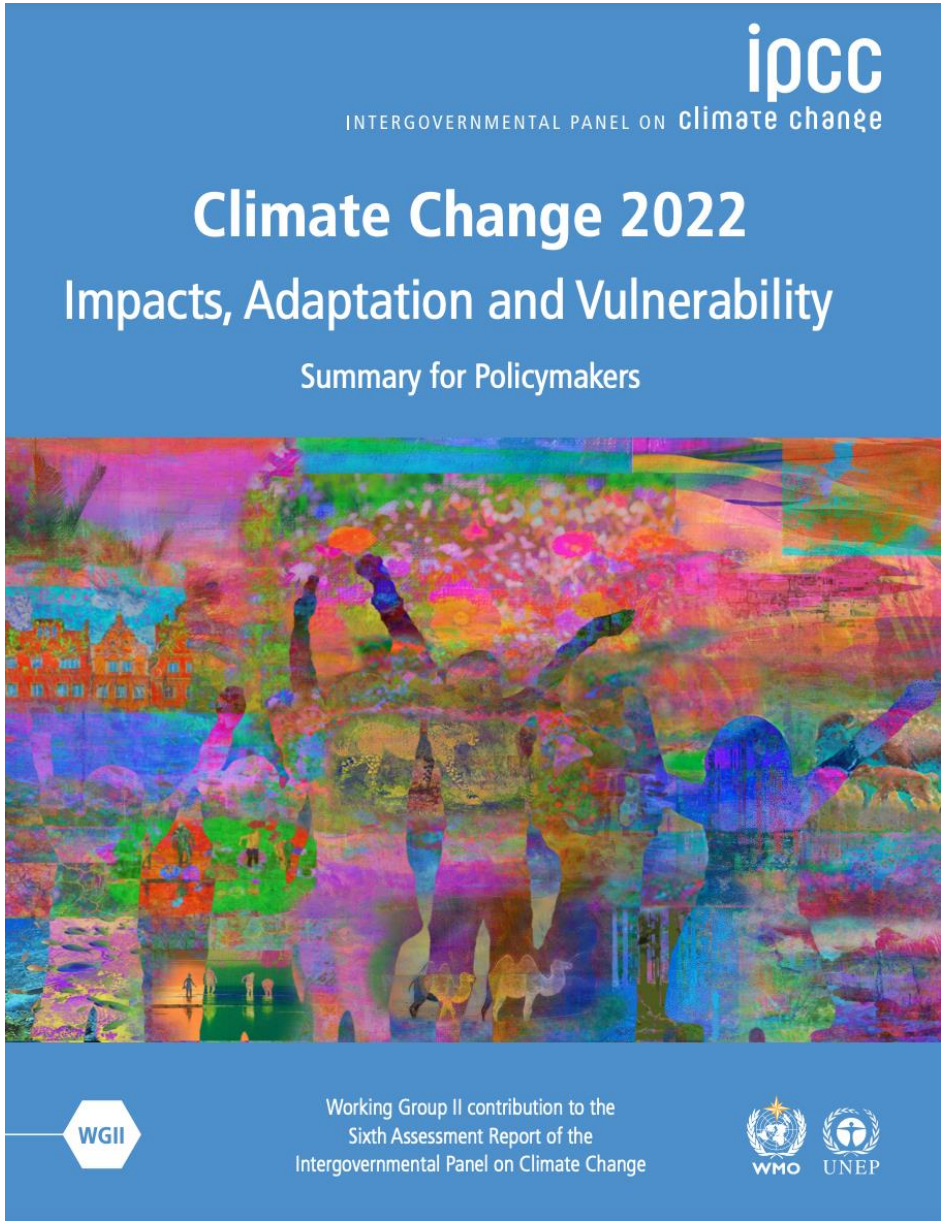
SEI Stockholm Environment Institute

26 August 2022

Three key messages

1. We need to reimagine climate risk
2. We need to reimagine adaptation
3. Policy-making on climate change adaptation should thus consider global interconnections between countries.

We need to reimagine climate risk



"Climate change impacts and risks are becoming increasingly complex and more difficult to manage. Multiple climate hazards will occur simultaneously, and multiple climatic and non-climatic risks will interact, resulting in ***compounding overall risk and risks cascading across sectors and regions****."*

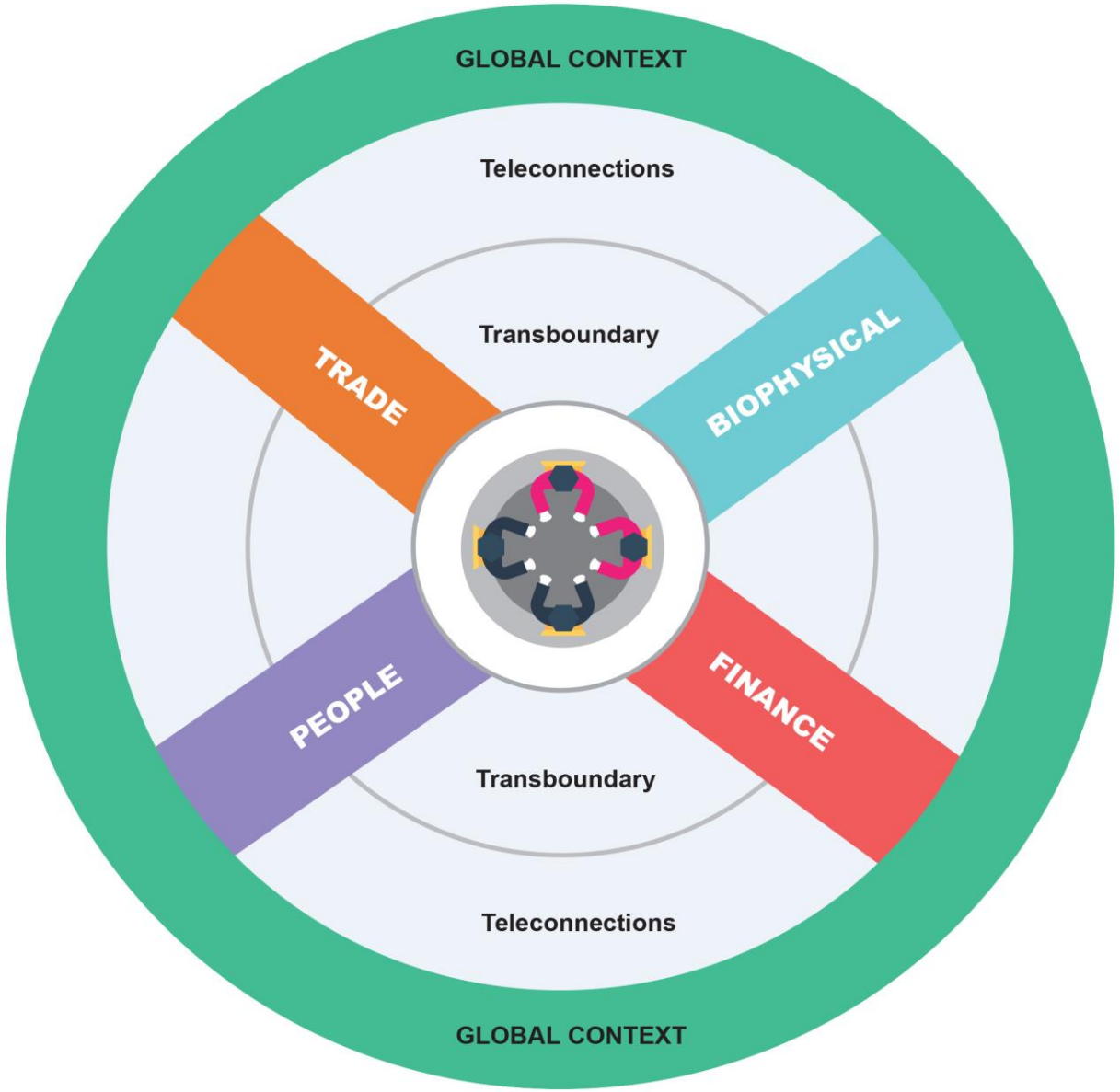
We live in an interconnected world where a threat in one place can easily ripple out: cross countries and continents, cascade from one sector to another, or disrupt and destabilise global systems and markets.

Photo credit: 123RF/Konstantin Faraktinov

cross-border and cascading climate risk

climate hazards impacting one part of the world – and policy responses to those impacts – can trigger cascading effects across borders and sectors – impacting people's lives and livelihoods in other parts of the world

Climate Risk Pathways



1) **Biophysical**: rivers, oceans, cross-border movement of wildlife

2) **Trade**: flows of commodities and products via supply chains and markets

3) **Finance**: public and private investment, insurance, remittances

4) **People**: human migration, tourism, health risks

Rice, maize, wheat, soy, sugar cane and coffee

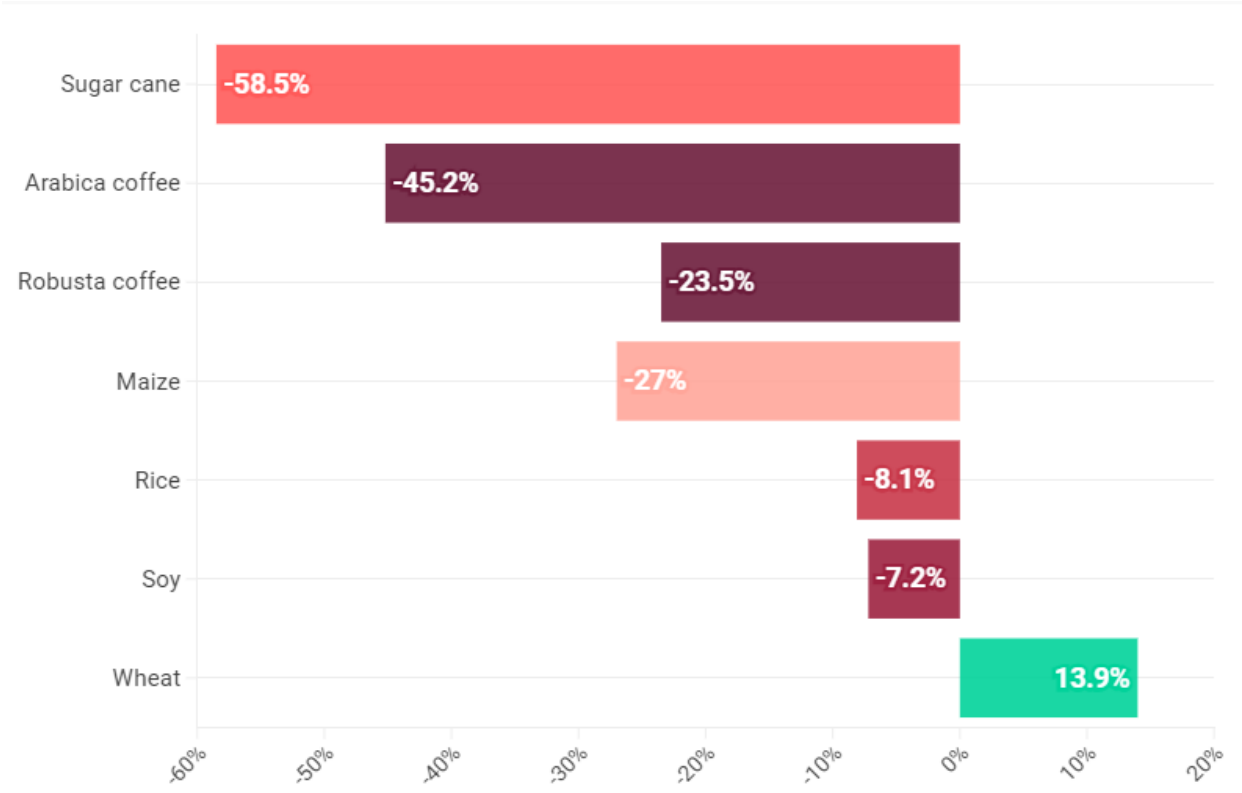
Climate change, trade and global food security

Major risk exporters:

- Maize: Brazil, China and USA
- Rice: Thailand, USA
- Wheat: USA

Three types of crops:

- Staple foods: maize, rice and wheat
- Embedded crops: soy and sugar cane
- Luxury goods/cash crops: coffee



Predicted average global change in yield

Example Rice imports in Senegal and Kenya

Senegal and **Kenya** get most of their **rice** from countries in Asia like India, Thailand, Pakistan and Vietnam.

Now, Southeast Asia produces much of its rice in **low-lying coastal and delta zones** – areas likely to be slowly flooded and salinized as climate change causes the sea level to rise.

So, if climate change means less rice can be produced in these regions, this is a clearly a major concern for countries in Southeast Asia – and can and should be considered in their National Adaptation Plans.

What could be the effect in Senegal and Kenya if climate change causes countries in Asia to stop producing as much rice?

And moreover, what happens if those countries stop their international exports altogether in order to feed their own populations – a very legitimate resilience-building measure?

The food price crisis of 2007-8

In **Senegal**, prices of rice – which is a staple crop in the country – **rose 200% in local markets**.

Photo credit: Flickr/Breville USA

Multiple factors, including **extreme weather events**, rising oil prices, changes in food demand, a range of trade policies, and government responses to the unfolding crisis such as export bans, all interacted to generate a surge in global food prices, creating food insecurity for vulnerable people worldwide.

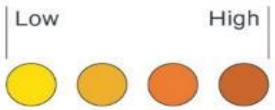
Senegal

Rice trade flows

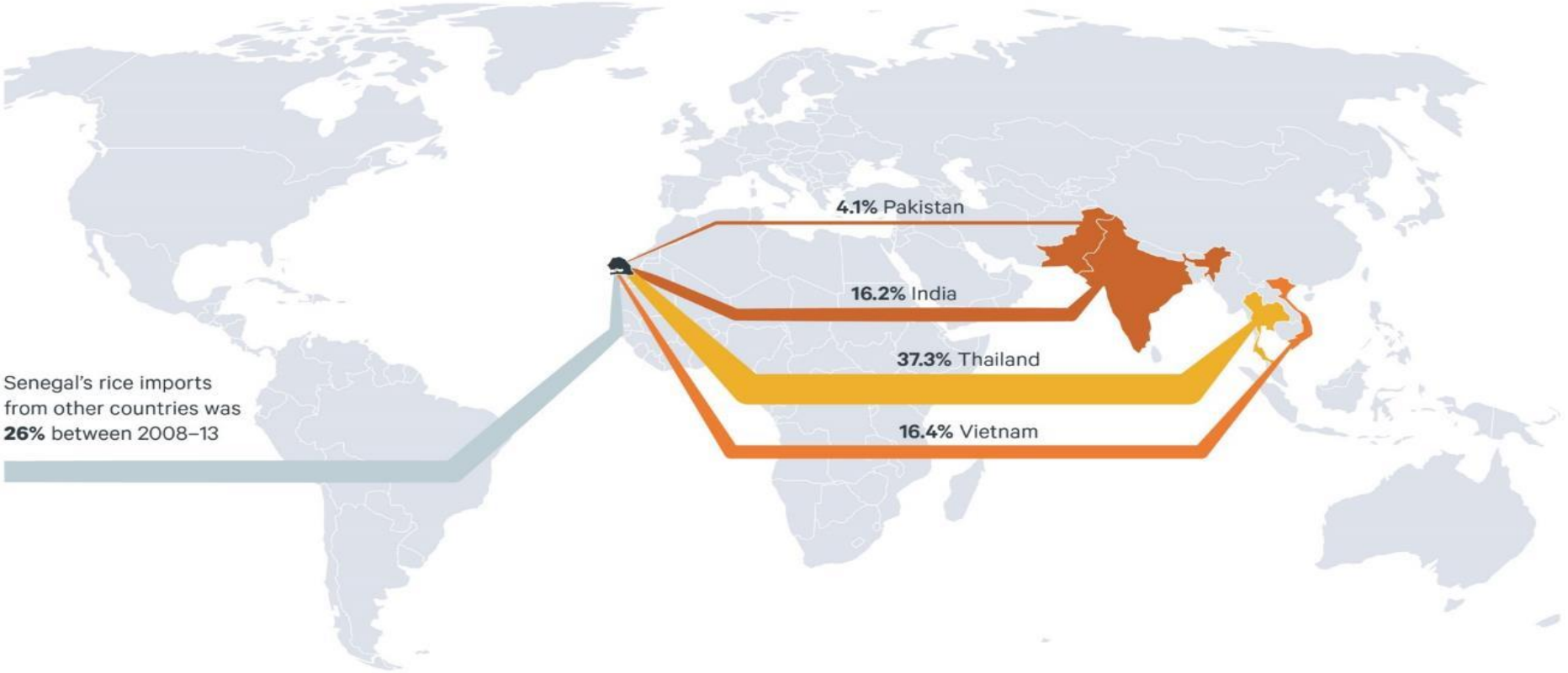
85%
Senegal's rice imports before 2008 crisis

>200%
Rice price increase in Senegal 2008–2009

Size of trade link

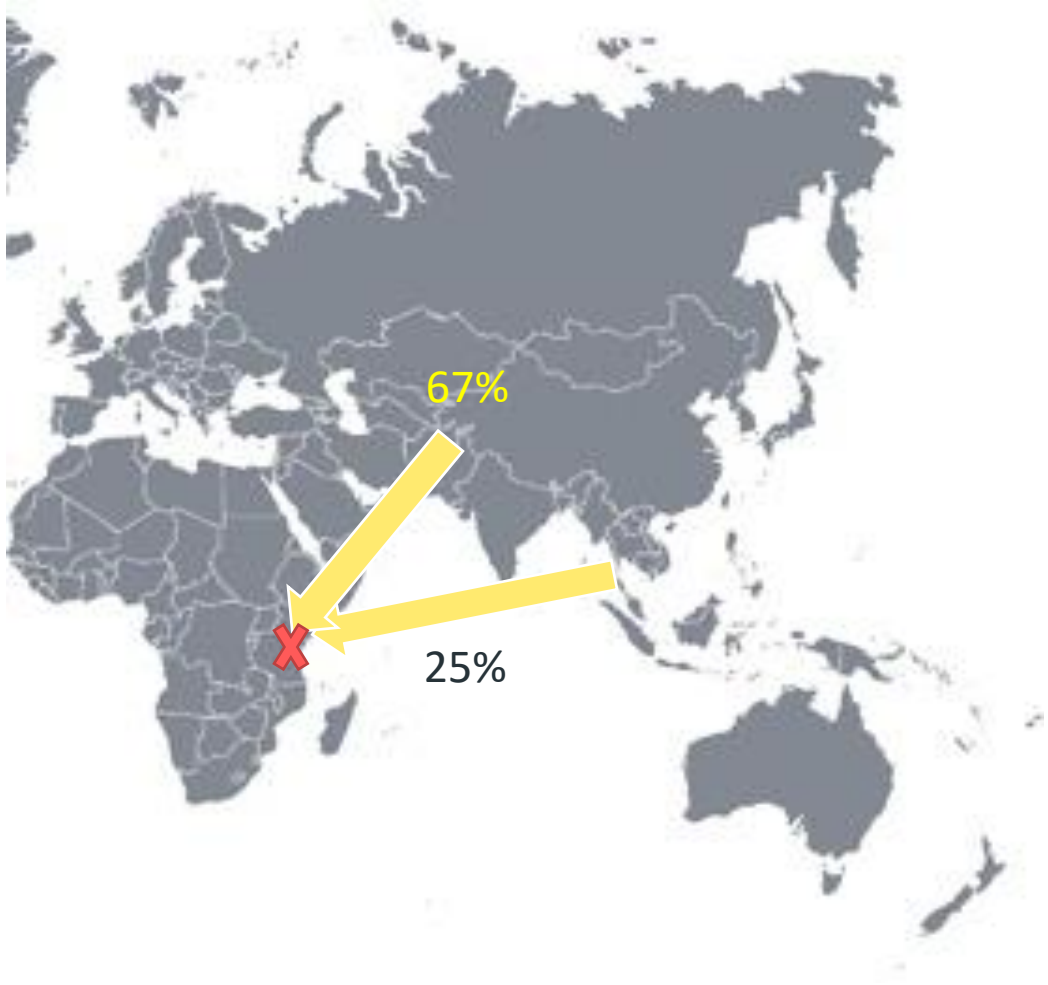


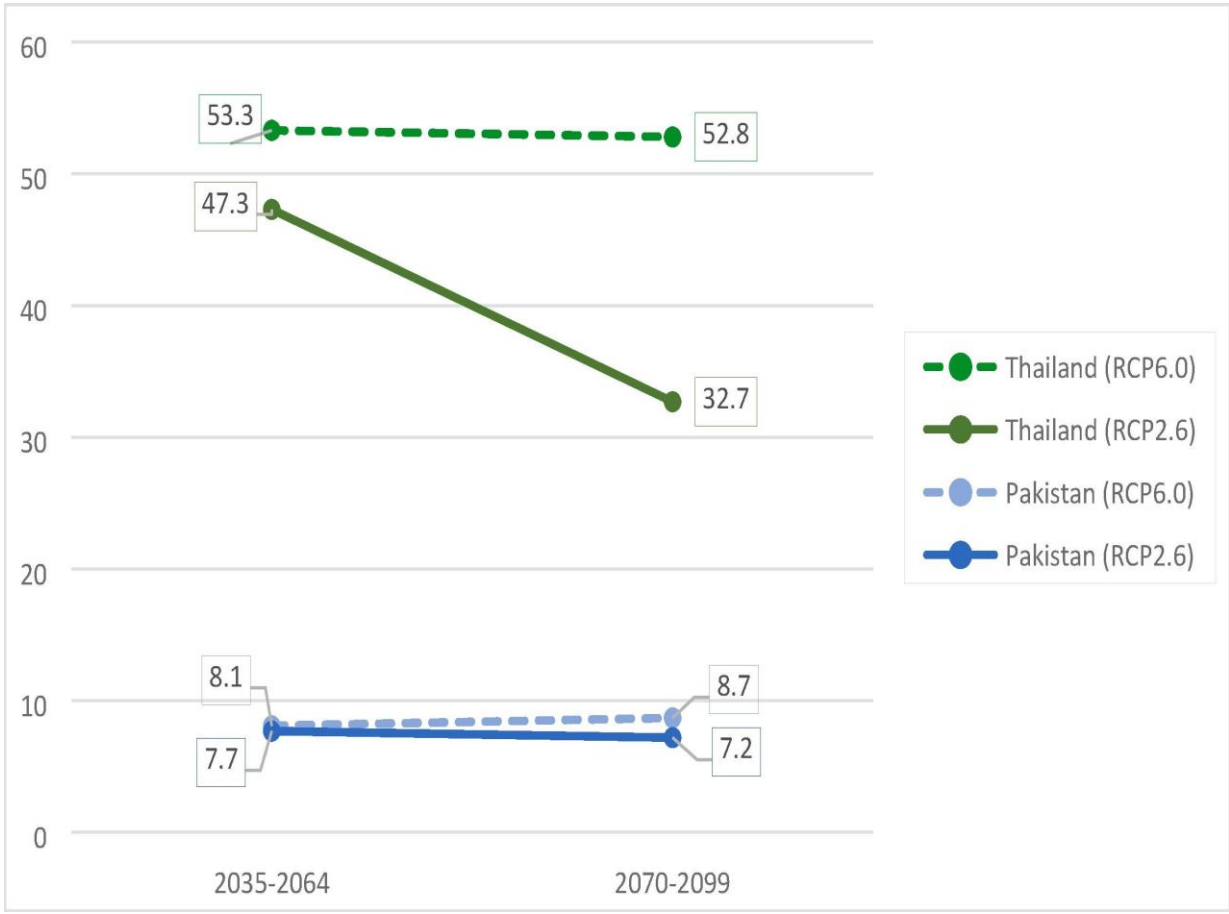
Climate vulnerability of link country



Source: UN comtrade & Schletz (2014).

Rice imports in Kenya (19%)





Talebian et. al (2021). Assessing future cross-border climate impacts using shared socioeconomic pathways. Climate Risk Management . 32: 100311

We need to reimagine adaptation

While mitigation has been considered a global problem, adaptation has been considered a local one.

Photo credit: Flickr/Josep Castell

Just as climate risks can cascade, so too can adaptation responses, creating winners and losers.

Adaptation is a global challenge

Climate impacts in one country may spillover into others

Adaptation in one country may redistribute or increase vulnerability in others

Adaptation in one country may provide benefits to others

Policy-making on climate change adaptation should thus consider global interconnections between countries.

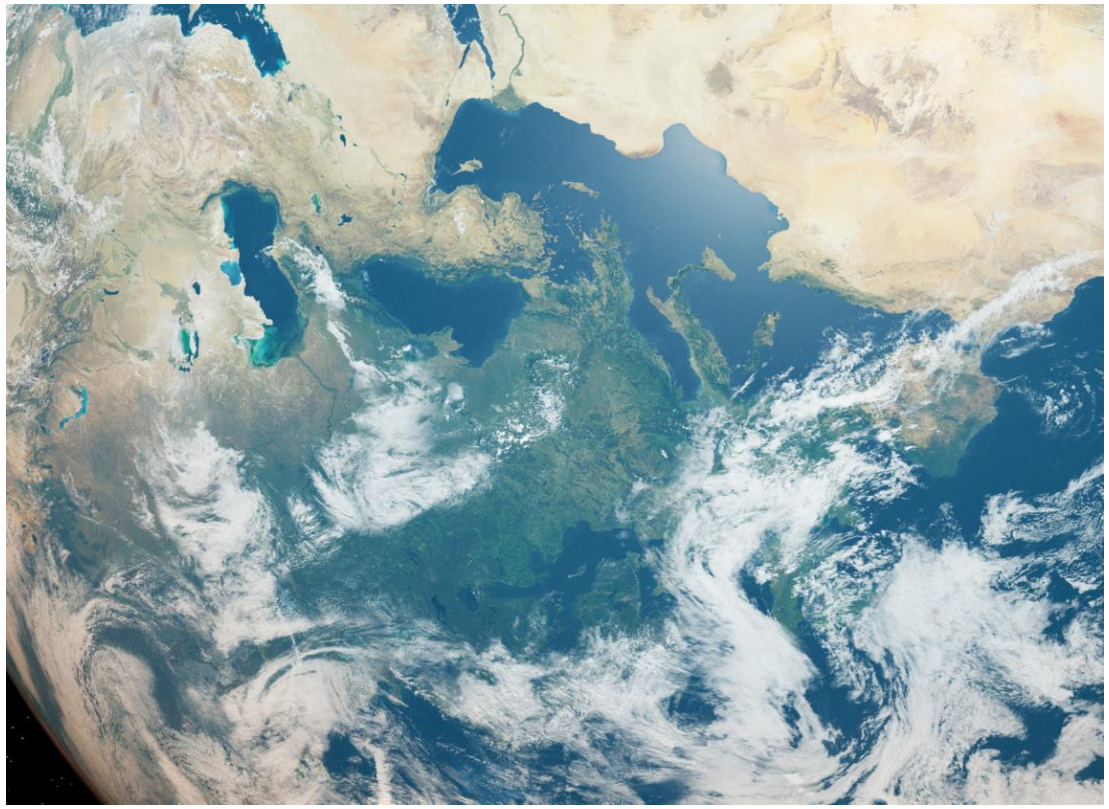
We need to acknowledge that stronger international cooperation lies at the heart of enhanced global resilience to the impacts of climate change.

We need adaptation at greater scale and at all scales;

- through investments in local and national resilience-building
- through regional trade agreements and economic partnership agreements
- through new coalitions and alliances built on mutual interests in tackling shared risks
- through investments in global policy processes such as the UNFCCC's Global Goal on Adaptation.

Adaptation Without Borders

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



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, spurring social unrest

- Such risks will become a defining issue for **climate diplomacy** in the years ahead – there are opportunities to harness if we increase our early understanding of them

- 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

How does Adaptation Without Borders meet this need?

Our global partnership brings together organisations from across four continents to:

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

The AWB global partnership:

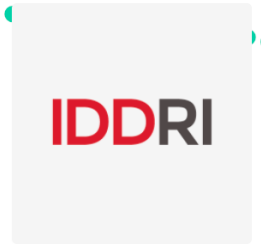
Three (3) managing partners: world-leading research institutes on climate risk and resilience - Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and IDDRI

Our growing number of partners:

- Provide extensive **regional expertise** on West and Central Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean and the Hindu-Kush Himalaya
- Enable us to harness **on-the-ground implementation experience in adaptation programming**, with a particular focus on the Global South
- **Build dialogues and share information** across the public-private divide (via a global network of more than 250 member companies and partners)
- Bring to bear **legal and regulatory expertise**
- Facilitate sensitive dialogues to **build trust and forge new alliances**


ODI


SEI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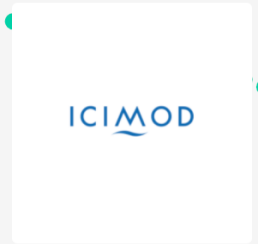
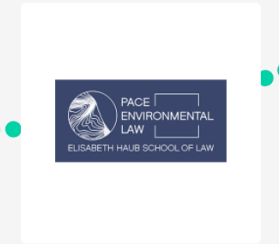

ICIMOD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Mediators
Beyond Borders
INTERNATIONAL


THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES


WINROCK
INTERNATIONAL


BSR


IGES
Institute for Global
Environmental Strategies


PlanAdapt
Creating a Climate for Change

AWB Partnership Plan

PATHWAYS OF RISK

This workstream aims to equip decision-makers with the evidence-based global outlooks they need to implement effective adaptation across scales

POLICY ENGAGEMENT

This workstream aims to draw out the implications of cross-border climate risks with and for policy-makers, spur greater dialogue and collaboration on adaptation, and raise cross-border climate risk up the UNFCCC policy agenda

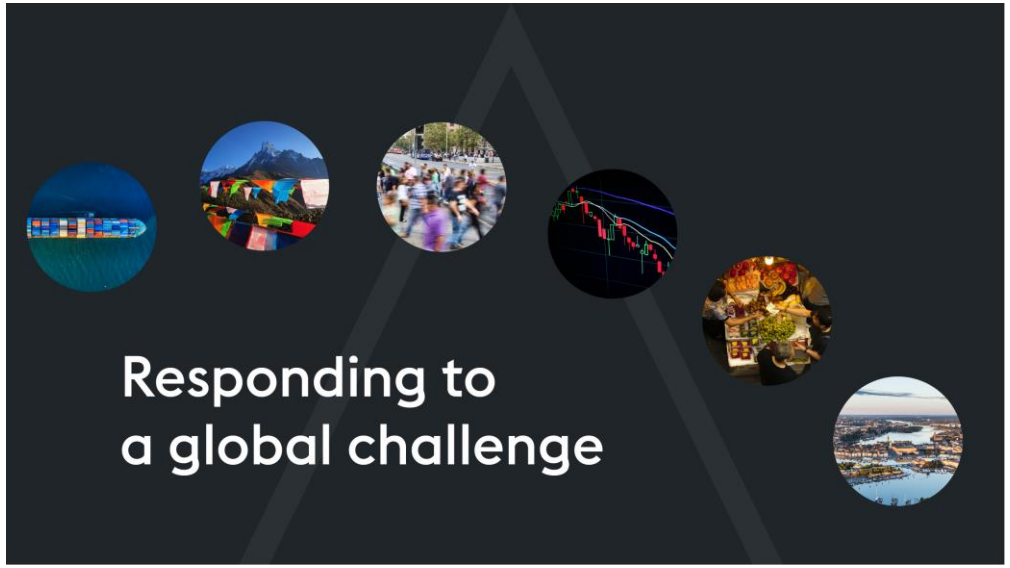
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This workstream aims to empower and equip national and regional adaptation planners – including in targeted LDCs – to manage cross-border climate risks and the impacts of their adaptation actions on others

Activities and deliverables (2022-23)

Workstream 1: Pathways of risk

A Global Risk Report: A Global Risk Report report will be the first in a series of flagship analyses that provide influential decision-makers with an overview of some of the most significant cross-border and cascading climate risks that warrant their attention, how they could impact our economies, ecosystems and societies, and ways to address them across multiple policy scales.



Activities and deliverables (2022-23)

Workstream 2: Policy engagement

5x policy tracks:

1) UNFCCC Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA): Support the two-year Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the **GGA**, distilling options and recommendations to strengthen its outcomes as well as ensure issues relevant to AWB's mandate (on strengthening cooperation on adaptation and managing systemic and cascading global risk).

2) UNFCCC Global Stocktake (GST): Support the **GST** to account for the needs, challenges and opportunities of assessing levels of progress towards resilience to systemic, cascading and cross-border climate risks.

3) Africa: Distil the next steps to take forward a key action in the implementation matrix of the Africa Climate Change Strategy 2022–2032 to 'enhance coordination between the regional economic communities and Member States in addressing and managing transboundary and cascading climate risks'.

Activities and deliverables (2022-23)

Workstream 2: Policy engagement (cont.)

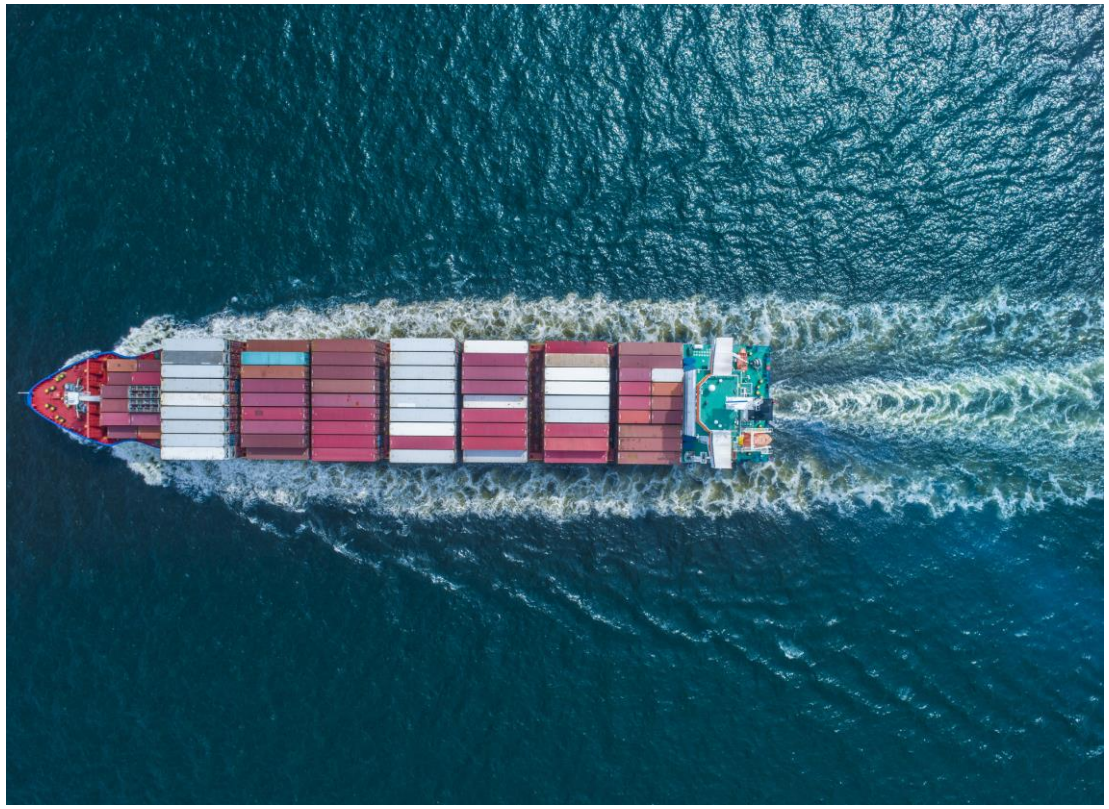
4) Hindu Kush Himalaya: convene activities that bring together key constituents and representatives of ICIMOD's eight regional member countries to explore answers to a series of questions.

5) Climate and trade: will assess the state of recognition among private-sector actors (across identified sectors) of cross-border and cascading climate risks as well as the actions and appetite for solutions to manage these risks.

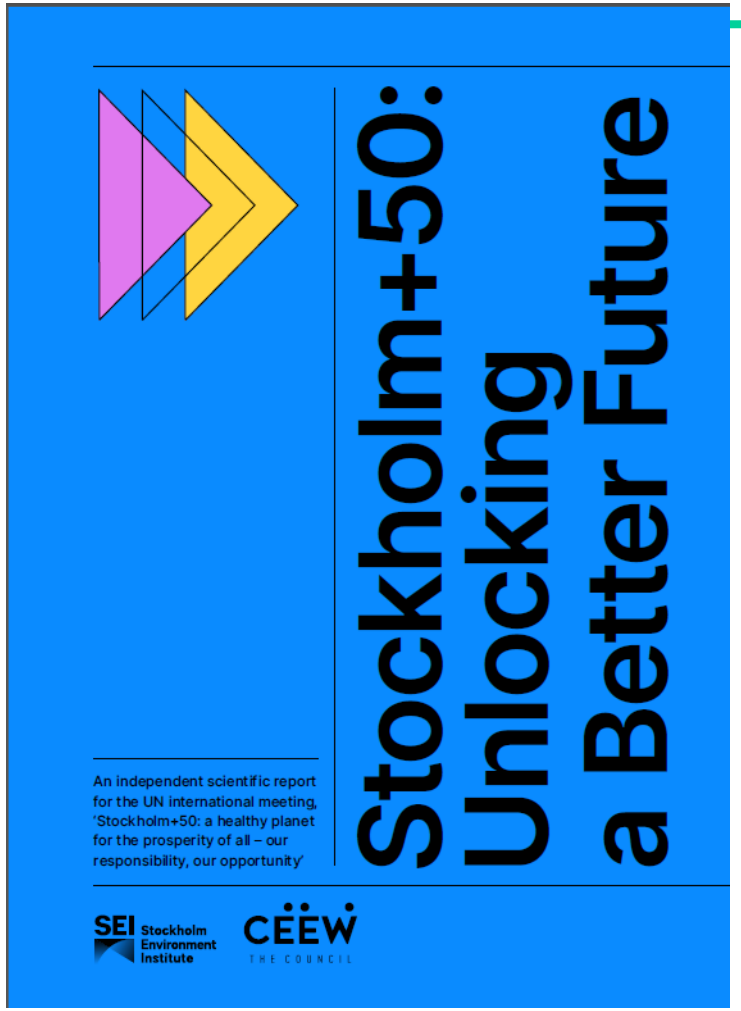
Activities and deliverables (2022-23)

Workstream 3: Planning and implementation

Prototype guidance on cross-border climate risk for NAPs: The co-design of a guidance template (to be developed into a workable prototype) for National Adaptation Planners on how to identify, assess and manage adaptation to cross-border climate risks.



Stronger commitment to multilateralism



"**The conditions for change must improve**. The institutions and governance system that solved the challenges of the past may have contributed to creating the challenges of the present. There are ample opportunities for leaders to tackle structural barriers that hold back effective action, by improving policy coherence and ensuring strong and consistent incentives for action; renewing multilateralism by rebuilding solidarity for the common challenges we face; and by creating a culture of accountable promises"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