



SCCIP Research Project

Title: Climate Change Tools for Local Authorities

Project Code: CC06

Who this research is intended for: Local Authorities.

Objectives of the Project

The specific objectives of the research were to:

- Identify a comprehensive list of 'greenhouse gas emissions mitigation and adaptation tools, programmes and methodologies' available for use by local authorities;
- Map the strengths, limitations and compatibility of these approaches;
- Map the capacities of these tools and their providers, and to qualify and quantify the nature and amount of work involved, including the costs, time and skills required, in using the tools;
- Review existing research on these mitigation and adaptation approaches, as they relate to the work and processes of local authorities, or associated regimes that could inform/input into climate change work;
- Provide guidance to local authorities on the recommended 'right tool' for the 'right job' in order to inform local authority take up and application of these tools.

19 tools were evaluated as part of the project, using information collated from individuals and organisations involved in developing and managing the tools, using an on-line questionnaire, telephone interviews and desk research. A selection of local authority officers were invited to a round table event in September 2007 to understand their needs, views and experience in using tools for addressing climate change.

Background

Local authorities in Scotland are taking action in support of Scotland's Climate Change Declaration (<http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/climatechange/index.asp?pg=2>) which contains commitments associated with reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. This requires local authorities to assess their contribution to climate change and the impacts of climate change on their services and communities, and to develop strategies to respond.

There is an increasing amount of information, tools, programmes and methodologies available that could help local authorities deliver the commitments in Scotland's Climate Change Declaration. In recognition of this, CAG Consultants, in partnership with the Scottish Institute of Sustainable Technology (SISTech) and MWH were commissioned by the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research (SNIFFER) to evaluate their strengths, limitations, and the compatibility of greenhouse gas emissions mitigation and climate change adaptation tools. The research, which is funded by the Scottish Executive, has produced a *Climate Change Tools Database* and supporting guidance for local authorities on *Choosing the Right Tools for the Right Jobs*.

Key Findings and Recommendations

The main report identifies the strengths and limitations of a range of tools; and evaluates them against their ability to help local authorities meet Scotland's Climate Change Declaration commitments; to perform a variety of jobs; and in meeting the needs and capacities of local authorities. The accompanying database and guidance can be accessed at [<http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/index.asp?tm=11>].

The research highlighted a number of ways in which policy makers, tool providers, researchers and local authorities could strengthen the development of tools to address climate change. In particular, there is a need for:

- (i) Tools which clearly explain how they can help local authorities deliver specific climate change commitments;
- (ii) More feedback from local authorities on the experience of using climate change tools to inform future tool development, including the *Climate Change Tools Database* developed as part of this project;
- (iii) Future evaluation of individual tools and the choice available;
- (iv) Consistent standards and verification of local data used to inform local emissions' baselines;
- (v) Clear and regular advice on the changing national commitments to climate change and the expectations on local authorities to deliver them;
- (vi) Strengthened tools and support for local authorities' 'climate change-proofing' of strategies, plans and programmes;
- (vii) More 'hand-holding' support for local authorities who are embarking on developing climate change strategies and action plans; and using tools to do so;
- (viii) Opportunities and mechanisms for local authorities to share their experience in developing responses to climate change and using tools.

Related Initiatives

For further information on the range of climate change research SCCIP and partners are involved in please see the SCCIP website (www.sccip.org.uk)

Further Information

Copies of the research outputs are available for free download from www.sniffer.org.uk (search on 'Project Code' CC06)

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