



The role of research in mainstreaming and updating adaptation strategy in Finland

R. Ruuhela and S. Luhtala

Finnish Meteorological Institute, Helsinki, Finland (reija.ruuhela@fmi.fi)

Finnish national adaptation strategy is to be updated by 2013 parallel to the preparation of EU adaptation strategy. For both purposes there was a need for a comprehensive synthesis of adaptation research in different sectors in Finland which was conducted in 2011-12 in collaboration of tens of researchers from various disciplines.

The aim of the overview of adaptation research was also to make a cross-disciplinary analysis of vulnerabilities, adaptive capacity and economic assessments. However, the phase of adaptation research in different sectors varies a lot, and studies are not fully comparable. The most advanced sectors in adaptation research are agriculture, forestry and water resources, while in some other sectors weather and climate dependence is not well known even in the present climate. Yet, according to the researchers, the outcomes of adaptation research can be applied in practical adaptation measures despite of the uncertainties regarding climate change scenarios and impacts.

Finland launched the first national adaptation strategy in 2005 and a mid-term evaluation of implementation of the strategy was conducted a few years later. In that context a simple indicator was developed to assess the level of adaptation in different sectors. The indicator is suitable for self-evaluation and it describes climate change awareness and recognition for need to adapt among decision-makers, the level of adaptation research and the extent of adaptation measures launched in the sector. Cross-sectoral collaboration and mainstreaming of adaptation in decision-making are also expected to take place at the most advanced levels in the indicator. The best indicator values were obtained in the same sectors where adaptation research is the most advanced. Thus, sectoral adaptation research seems to be a precondition for adaptation in practice and communicating outcomes of adaptation research for decision-makers and general public is essential. The synthesis of adaptation research is serving this purpose well.