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ISIpedia, the open climate-impacts encyclopedia: First activities and future milestones

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Effectively adapting to the long-term challenges posed by future climate changes requires for decision-makers to have access to relevant climate impact assessments, that are based on the best available science and communicated in a clear and consistent manner. The ISIpedia project, which is part of the ERA-NET consortium ERA4CS and kicked off in October 2017, addresses the co-production of climate-impacts knowledge in a collaboration between its potential end-users and scientists involved in the Inter-Sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (www.isimip.org). Its end-product will be an online climate-services portal delivering subcontinental to national-level, state-of-the-art climate impact assessments with broad sector coverage - the ISIpedia. ISIpedia is targeted at climate adaptation planners and practitioners, regional knowledge hubs, trans- and interdisciplinary scientists including climate economists, and regional climate experts from the private sector, such as (re-)insurance copanies.

The project focuses on two regions, Eastern Europe and West Africa. A dedicated stakeholder engagement team shall ensure that existing knowledge gaps and research needs are identified in the two regions and that results of state-of-the-art research are eventually transferred to decision makers in the form of tailored, synthesised climate-impact information. However, the final version of the portal will eventually deliver climate-impact assessments for the whole world, thereby making use of the global coverage of the multi-model climate-impact simulations from ISIMIP.

The stakeholder engagement process started with a kick-off workshop which brought together stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and modellers from ISIMIP. A survey targeted at stakeholders was then launched in March-April 2018, receiving 187 answers from users of climate-impact information around the world. It enabled to identify more quantitatively shortcomings of existing climate services that especially aim at informing climate change adaptation. The respondents have for example communicated their interests for specific functions that climate-impact information websites should provide, such as easy access to underlying data behind a graph. A desire to receive sound information on model reliability and the assumptions used to obtain the delivered information was also strongly expressed. The survey also provided information on the content that should be delivered by the ISIpedia portal in order to fill the existing knowledge gaps.

In this presentation we will present more results from the survey, and the next steps of the stakeholder engagement process will be described. In particular, we will explain how stakeholder feedback will inform the selection of the focus topic for the next modelling round of ISIMIP. We will also outline the plans for upcoming stakeholder workshops in Eastern Europe and Western Africa, in which the co-development of impact indicators will be intensively pursued. Furthermore, we will present ideas for further developing the design, functionalities and assessment content of the ISIpedia portal based on exchange between stakeholders and modellers.