ECCA2023 Special Edition Newsletter, June 2023

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ECCA2023 conference convenes global experts in Dublin to advance climate adaptation solutions

Over three days, more than 485 in person and more than 2,000 online viewers participated in nearly 70 parallel sessions across three landmark venues in Dublin, Ireland, at the 6th European Climate Change Adaptation (ECCA2023) conference.
From as far afield as Taiwan and all over Europe, delegates, presenters and speakers exchanged climate adaptation expertise, shared successes and 'learning experiences' as the ECCA2023 conference brought together policy and decision-makers, funders, researchers, practitioners and even artists to progress action to meet the challenges of climate change.

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Early ECCA2023 key messages gathered by theme leaders

Early key messages gathered by the conference theme leaders were captured from the almost 70 sessions, reflecting the broad range of topics and diversity of content, covering collaboration, creativity, equality, implementation, tools, narratives, politics, finance, communities and much more. These key messages will be developed into cohesive guidance for advancing adaptation. A comprehensive compilation of key messages derived from the six thematic topics presented at ECCA2023 will be published soon.
The six thematic topics at ECCA2023 were: 1) Stepping up climate action: Support through climate platforms and services; 2) Adaptation responses to sea level rise and coastal change; 3) Nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation; 4) Preparing for more frequent and severe climate extremes; 5) Reframing societal transformation by challenging underlying assumptions and 6) Climate and social resilience of future energy infrastructure and systems.

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Fostering collaboration and enhancing impact: Climate knowledge platforms and services at ECCA2023

With the increase of data and knowledge on climate change and adaptation, challenges to organise and share relevant information on platforms or tools to achieve impact with target audiences and on different scales, also escalate. Climate service developers are seeking collaboration to complement each other's knowledge provision and knowledge transfer and look towards more participatory design by including also non-scientists' knowledge and perspectives.
Likewise, boundary organisations, aiming to enhance the use of information for decision-making and engaging stakeholders, look to build a global network to increase impact and accelerate adaptation. The lively interactions between participants at ECCA2023 were a clear indicator of the intended collaboration for successful knowledge transfer.

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Sea level rise at ECCA2023: Insights, considerations, and calls to action

As one of the most pressing issues related to climate change, Sea Level Rise was one of the main themes at ECCA2023.
The topics, ideas and issues touched upon within the theme stream showed once more how much Sea Level Rise affects society, the environment and economics. We got further confirmation that there is still much work to do – while time is not as generous.

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Nature-based solutions are vital for climate adaptation

Nature-based solutions have emerged as a critical tool in the fight against climate change, providing effective and sustainable strategies for adaptation. As the world struggles with escalating climate challenges, the relevance of nature-based solutions in climate change adaptation has become increasingly evident.
During the ECCA2023 conference, the scientific community, practitioners, policymakers, NGOs and a wide array of climate change actors talked about the power of nature to address climate impacts. The discussion encompassed a range of strategies such as reforestation, ecosystem restoration, green infrastructure and sustainable land management -to mention a few!

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How are climate extremes in Europe changing and what are the implications for climate adaptation?

The launch of the WMO report 'State of the Climate in Europe 2022' - revealing that Europe is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world - on the eve of ECCA2023, put climate extremes front and centre of the conference topics. Flooding, heatwaves, drought and storms featured in sessions across the conference, from a wide range of projects and countries, drawing on examples of devastating impacts across Europe.

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Challenging underlying assumptions: Inspiring climate actions and exploring societal transformation at ECCA2023

Sessions on "Reframing Societal Transformation by Challenging Underlying Assumptions" addressed the underlying assumptions that shape our society and the global system and lead to our destructive behaviour towards our living environment. What needs to be reframed to be able to act differently? Several approaches and perspectives were explored, such as eco-philosophy and 'transformative realism'. Practical examples indicated that gender equality and a decent livelihood are prerequisites for successful climate action.
Techniques to support creative future visioning to go beyond considering only probable outcomes were presented, such as the use of narratives in creative story-telling workshops and writing poetry. These techniques may help to reach and engage for instance youth and children and empower them to become change makers for a climate-resilient future in their schools and broader social systems.

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Europe's energy sector is transitioning to a climate resilient future

Europe's energy sector is facing a pressing need to adapt to climate change. A resilient energy sector is essential to mitigate climate risks, ensure energy security and pave the way for a sustainable future. With climate change leading to more frequent and intense extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, storms, and floods, traditional energy infrastructure faces significant vulnerabilities. Adapting to the energy sector will involve transitioning to renewable energy sources, improving grid resilience and implementing innovative technologies.

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ECCA2023 host country: Ireland

As the host country, Ireland's climate experts and Government did more than provide a traditionally warm and generous welcome to ECCA2023, they shared the island's unique adaptation challenges, their scientific and practical expertise and responses to the climate challenge..

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The voice of youth at ECCA2023

ECCA2023 organisers are rightfully proud of the range of this year's programme and the many platforms provided for diverse voices. From school children who had been involved in adaptation projects and youths upwards, engagement, dialogue and communications for every generation were shared.

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Climate finance and innovation supporting climate change adaptation efforts

The role of climate finance in supporting adaptation measures has taken a central role. Climate finance, dedicated funding for climate-related initiatives, has become a crucial resource for European countries striving to adapt to a changing climate. Climate finance enables nations, regions and local communities to implement robust adaptation strategies and build resilience against climate impacts. It facilitates the development and implementation of innovative solutions, such as early warning systems, climate-resilient infrastructure, and capacity-building programs. Moreover, climate finance empowers communities to protect ecosystems, restore natural habitats, and promote sustainable agriculture practices.

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European policy must embrace climate change adaptation for a sustainable future

In an era of escalating climate crisis, European policymakers are acknowledging the urgent need to embed climate change adaptation measures within their policies. With mounting evidence of devastating consequences from extreme weather events, it has become clear that adaptation strategies are crucial to safeguarding the continent's future.
During ECCA2023, it was discussed by scientists, practitioners and policymakers how Europe's diverse ecosystems and vulnerable communities are increasingly under threat from rising temperatures, sea-level rise and erratic weather patterns. The integration of climate change adaptation into European policy is vital to mitigate these risks and build resilience. By prioritising adaptation measures, Europe can enhance disaster preparedness, protect critical infrastructure and preserve biodiversity.

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ECCA2023 Side events

Six side events added to the ECCA2023 programme during the three days of the conference. The side events on Monday 19th June were the 'AXIS research programme's final event: Highlights from holistic climate impacts, economics and pathway research' and the 'World Meteorological Organization and Copernicus Climate Change Service: Launch of the State of the Climate in Europe 2022 Report'.

On Tuesday 20th June, the side events were the 'Nordic Climate Change Adaptation Conference: Stronger together for a climate-resilient North (NOCCA)' and the 'Policy Brief Workshop on Social Sciences and Humanities'.
On Wednesday 21st June, the side events were 'Climate Extremes: How are climate extremes in Europe changing? And what are the implications for climate adaptation?' as well as 'Forging a climate-resilient Europe: Learning from community-based adaptation practitioners outside Europe.'.
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ECCA2023 explores earth observation and space data for climate adaptation

The ECCA2023 Closing Session started with a dialogue 'What we see from space - observing the Earth/adaptation on the ground', between Susanne Mecklenburg (European Space Agency, one of the sponsors of ECCA2023) and Frank McGovern (the Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland and chair of JPI Climate).

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Spotlight on Ukraine at ECCA2023

It was humbling, frightening and inspiring in equal measure to welcome a strong delegation from Ukraine to the conference.
The war-torn country's scientific and policy speakers set out the sobering impact of the illegal invasion by Russia in terms of the human cost and the legacy of financial impacts, disrupted supplies of food, energy and water, desperate living conditions and infrastructure reduced to rubble. Little of it can be cleared away because bulldozers and diggers are among the equipment damaged beyond repair or in short supply.
The war has highlighted the importance of resilient energy systems amid climate conditions and socio-economic changes. The transition to a clean and resilient energy system is, however, costly and time-consuming, with interlinked socio-economic implications.

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ECCA2023: Piazza, posters, cinema and creative arts

At ECCA2023, the Piazza, cinema and digital posters were used as a a space to present and to communicate climate adaptation science and innovation. It facilitated knowledge exchange and enabled the dissemination of cutting-edge research, ideas, and solutions to address the urgent challenges of climate change adaptation.
As well, ECCA2023 gave room to creative arts as they have a profound impact on raising awareness about climate change due to their unique ability to engage emotions, provoke thought, and inspire action. Artistic expressions provided a visual and sensory experience that captivated the public and created a connection with the climate crisis on a personal level. Through creative interpretations at different locations in the Dublin castle, art bypassed language barriers and stimulated interesting dialogs among participants, with the aim to mobilize collective efforts towards a sustainable future.

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Thank you everyone involved at ECCA2023 and see you again at the next ECCA2025 in Italy!

ECCA2023 organisers JPI Climate, with the EC Horizon-funded MAGICA project, our hosts and co-organisers University College Cork and MaREI, the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine, would like to thank all the delegates who came in person or joined online, all the speakers, presenters, poster authors and artists.
Our grateful thanks go to our sponsors the Government of Ireland, Dublin City Council, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency Ireland), the European Space Agency (ESA) and CARO – Ireland's Climate Action Regional Offices.

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ECCA2023 Conference Teaser

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The MAGICA & JPI Climate websites feature news and events listings for ECCA2023 at:
https://magica-project.eu/
https://jpi-climate.eu/
https://www.ecca2023.eu/

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