Participatory Mapping

A process to gather lived experience of climate change

Adaptation Scotland

supporting climate change resilience

This participatory mapping approach can help you gather and visualise local lived experiences of climate change for your place. Local people are experts on their own places and embedding their knowledge in adaptation planning helps ensure that local adaptation actions are effective.

Participatory mapping – where maps are co-created by local communities – can be a powerful and accessible way to visualise people's knowledge about their place, build understanding about what is important to protect in a changing climate, and help empower them to be involved in decision making.

Who is it for?

Anyone who wants to understand what members of their community think about where and how climate change is experienced in their place, and what makes their place resilient and vulnerable to the impacts of the changing climate. This approach works well when run as part of a community event (local farmers market, community larder, festival, etc.), as this allows views to be gathered from those who might normally be not interested in attending a 'climate change workshop', and can help stimulate conversations between people. It can also work well as a stand-alone display, for example in a library or community hall, where visitors are invited to add their contributions in their own time.

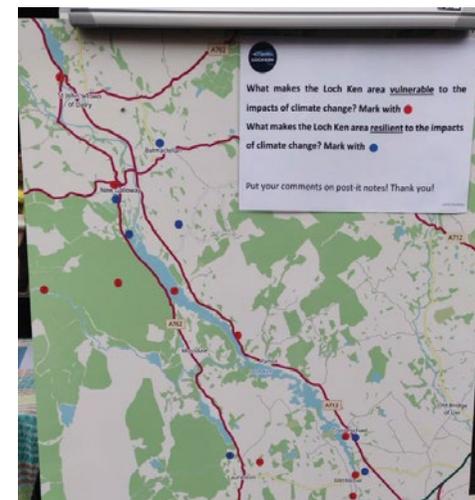## What will you have as a result?

A crowd-sourced list of specific places where people observe and experience the impacts of climate change as well knowledge about what is perceived to make the area resilient or vulnerable to these impacts. You can use the outcomes of this activity to inform your community's approach to climate change adaptation. The process itself is also important, as it requires open and honest dialogue, and ideally a broad and representative section of the community to participate, helping to build awareness and links between people.

How to use it

▶ For an activity

Print out a large image of your place (the bigger it is, the easier it will be to map detail) from a public map provider, such as **OpenStreetMap**.

Example map produced using participatory mapping. For more information, see our case study on working with partners as part of Climate Ready Ken

Lay it on a table or pin up a poster board and place questions next to it, such as:

- Where do you experience the impacts of climate change?

- Which places can cope well with the impacts of climate change? Why?

- Which places aren't coping well with the impacts of climate change? Why?

Place a different kind/colour of sticky dot or pin next to each question and invite people to respond to the questions by adding the appropriate sticky dot to the map. If you are running a digital event, you could use an online whiteboard such as **Miro** to ask people to put points on the map. As people are responding it is helpful to note down the stories people are sharing, as this approach often leads to broader conversation about the place. You could also use a large print out of the **15 Key Consequences of Climate Change for Scotland** infographics to support your conversations.

Example map using climate hazard tags. For more information, see our case study on working with partners to trial this approach in the Outer Hebrides.

▶ For a standalone display

Set the map up as above, but instead of the three questions, print out copies of **these climate hazard tags** (these could also be used in for the activity above too if you prefer). Unlike the activity above, people won't be talking directly to each other, so these can help capture more detailed information. Ask people to:

- Pick a climate hazard symbol (e.g. wind, flooding, drought) and add notes, based on their experience to describe:
  i. Where is this an issue and what was the impact? Specific place names are very helpful!

  ii. When was/is this an issue (such as particular years, months or seasons)?
  iii. What or who is at risk (such as people, groups, natural resources, businesses, transportation or other important elements of your place)?
  iv. Why are they vulnerable (perhaps it is close to the hazard or can't cope with the impact for some reason)?

- Attach their symbol to the map in the location where these impacts are most serious and repeat for other climate hazards.

▶ After the session

Take the information you've captured and write this up to summarise where climate change impacts are being experienced, and which elements of the place are particularly resilient or vulnerable. Make sure you take pictures of your completed maps, and depending on how you want to use them you could perhaps work with a local designer or artist to develop a visual or digital version. Remember though that the *process and conversations required for participatory mapping are just as important as the actual 'product' that is produced!*

Further reading / helpful resources

Case Study: **Mapping Our Place: Using participatory mapping to gather local knowledge of climate impacts, and understand community priorities for climate adaptation in North Uist, Outer Hebrides**

Climate Projections for Scotland summary

15 Key Consequences of Climate Change for Scotland

Stakeholder and Power mapping – workshop outline and template

Adaptation Personas – workshop outline and template

Climate Impact Interviews – question set and recording template

Climate Adaptation Whirlwind – interactive power point presentation to introduce climate change adaptation

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