Full details

All details held on the selected case study are shown below.

Went live on	Title	Reference
25 Jul 2011	QUEST contributions to the United Nations' 2009 Copenhagen Climate Negotiations	SID0334

Synopsis
QUEST scientists answered questions from government and the media before the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Negotiations, influencing negotiations and public opinion.

Description
NERC's QUEST (Quantifying and Understanding the Earth System) programme made substantial contributions to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Copenhagen in 2009.

One of the largest was the 4 degrees map, produced by the Met Office and drawing heavily on QUEST science - see SID0331. The map reached over 10 million people, both private individuals and policy-makers.

QUEST's QUATERMASS project had been investigating how forests and bioenergy crops might mitigate climate change. In the run up to the Copenhagen negotiations, Jim Penman, government negotiator at the UK's Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and a QUATERMASS steering group member, commissioned a DECC-funded project to extend some of this work.

Two of the QUATERMASS scientists worked on the project, which took a QUATERMASS model, developed by the Forestry Commission, and used it to explore how developed countries might use their landscapes to mitigate climate change, and how different accounting methods and rules might affect the outcomes. The DECC invited QUATERMASS investigator Robert Mathews of the Forestry Commission to speak at a UK side event during the Copenhagen negotiations.

QUEST's Global Scale Impacts project (QUEST GSI) also fast-tracked research to DECC's negotiating team, in particular through the 4 degrees poster (see separate case study) but also through DECC's AVOID programme (led by the Met Office in a consortium with the Walker Institute, Tyndall Centre and Grantham Institute), which synthesized information in preparation for the Copenhagen meetings. And DECC asked QUEST GSI to run a range of models to look at how particular emissions scenarios might affect different sectors of society and the economy.

DECC's AVOID programme also commissioned QUEST's Science and Policy Officer, Jo House, to produce a report on how changes in land use such as deforestation contribute to total emissions. DECC particularly wanted to know how uncertainty about the change in emissions brought about by changing changing land use might affect the feasibility of short term emissions targets.

Several QUEST scientists, models and data were involved in the work of the Global Carbon Project to produce a 'global carbon dioxide budget', estimating the worldwide sources and sinks of carbon dioxide. The 2008 budget, and the change in recent years, was presented in a side event at Copenhagen.

The published study, released just before the climate conference, generated considerable press interest. It showed that despite the global financial crisis, carbon dioxide emissions from human activities rose 2 per cent in 2008 compared to the previous year, reaching an all time high of 1.3 tonnes of carbon per capita per year. (See links section for the published paper and the policy brief prepared to go with it.)

QUEST-FISH also worked closely with international policy makers such as the Food and Agriculture Oranization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), providing qualitative information on how climate change might affect fisheries, and on fisheries' possible role in adapting to climate change. UNEP invited QUEST-FISH to present its research at a Copenhagen side meeting.

QUEST's Jo House dealt with several other direct requests for information from government departments in the lead up to Copenhagen. QUEST had also provided information for the 2008 Eliasch review "Climate Change: Financing Global Forests", commissioned by the UK government to look into the global cost of deforestation. The review informed the government's position ahead of Copenhagen.

References and links

Hyperlinks

1. Bristol University - QUEST, MarQUEST
2. Global Carbon Budget - Policy Brief on budget presented at Copenhagen
3. Global Carbon Project - Trends in the sources and sinks of carbon dioxide. Nature Geoscience
4. Global Carbon Project

	5. www.official-documents.gov.uk - Climate Change: Financing Global Forests (The 2008 Eliasch review)

Impacts	
Impact evidence	NERC's QUEST programme made substantial and broad-ranging contributions to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Copenhagen in 2009. Scientists prepared information at the request of government negotiators, helped take climate change information to over 10 million people worldwide, and worked with international organisations like UNEP to ensure sound science was heard at the negotiations. This case study gives a brief overview.
Key outputs	Policy change - QUEST research contributed to negotiations on the Copenhagen Accord 2009

Research and funding		
Funding type	Research Programme	
Partners	Other public sector - UNEP (0)	
Funding partners	*£ Unknown*	Forestry Commission (UK and devolved)
	£ Unknown	Met Office
	£ Unknown	Department of Energy and Climate Change

Classification	
Science themes	Climate system, Sustainable use of natural resources, Earth systems science
Science areas	Freshwater, Marine, Terrestrial
Policy areas	Agriculture, food and fisheries, Climate/environmental change and impacts, Land use, Natural processes, Natural resources
Keywords	Climate change, Environmental change