Planning for Global Climate Change in Iraq: A Proactive Approach

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Abstract

Global climate change will have a significant negative economic and environmental impact on society in Iraq. The current approach for managing the effects of Global Climate Change on various sectors including natural resources, agriculture and environment is often confined to mitigation works. Hence, the focus is mainly on post-event compensations, repairing damaged infrastructure and clean-up operations. Evidently, there is a need for a planned approach for managing the consequences of Climate Change proactively in all the main sectors at the national level. However, the lack of an effective and reliable information base, a reactive and 'one size fits all' management approach plus the reluctance of decision makers to plan and budget for adaptation are serious challenges.

This paper will examine these issues and advance a proactive national approach for planning and adaptation to global climate change in Iraq. The approach proposes using Geoinformatics to overcome information poverty to examine and understand the impacts of climate change on economy, health and the environment. It will also provide some certainty to persuade and direct decision makers towards establishing the necessary tools for the management and adaptation process such as national emergency priorities and strategies; national hazards inventories and databases as well as developing early warning systems and effective public awareness and education programmes.