

Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) 2017 Northern Ireland - Natural Environment



The UK CCRA 2017 identifies a number of areas where stronger action and further research are needed for Northern Ireland in the next five years.

Northern Ireland’s biodiversity is internationally important with some 20,000 species found in its terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine habitats. Climate change poses risks to Northern Ireland’s soils, farming, freshwater resources, natural carbon stores, marine ecosystems, wildlife and habitats. More action is needed to build resilience to these risks. More evidence is also needed to fully understand other climate change risks that are likely to be important for Northern Ireland’s natural environment.

The [Northern Ireland Evidence Report](#) from the UK Committee on Climate Change breaks these risks down in greater detail:

Risk/Opportunity	Urgency Score
Risks to species and habitats due to inability to respond to changing climatic conditions	More action needed
Opportunities from new species colonisations	
Risks to soils from increased seasonal aridity and wetness	
Risks to natural carbon stores and carbon sequestration	
Risks to agriculture and wildlife from drought and flooding	
Risks of land management practices exacerbating flood risk	
Risks to habitats and heritage in the coastal zone from sea-level rise; and loss of natural flood protection	Research priority
Risks and opportunities from changes in agricultural and forestry productivity and land suitability	
Risks to freshwater species from higher water temperatures	
Risks to and opportunities for marine species, fisheries and marine heritage from ocean acidification and higher water temperatures	
Risks and opportunities from long-term, climate-related changes in global food production	

Next steps

See [here](#) for further information on the evidence report and [here](#) for the government response.

The evidence outlined above will be a basis for further evidence gathering for development of the second Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme, to be published in 2019.

If you would like to discuss the findings of this report, please email stephenjones@climatenorthernireland.org.uk.