



AICBRN Press Release | 28th November 2023

Members of the All Island Climate & Biodiversity Research Network (AICBRN) Secure €41.3 Million Climate+ Co-Centre

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD and Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology Michelle Donelan and Permanent Secretary at Northern Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Katrina Godfrey have today announced funding for a €41.3 million Co-Centre for Climate + Biodiversity and Water.

The Climate+ Co-Centre brings together over 60 leading researchers from the All Island Climate and Biodiversity Research Network (AICBRN), from Ireland and Northern Ireland together with partners from Great Britain, from 14 academic partner institutions. Trinity College Dublin will headquarter the new research centre which will be the home of research, innovation, and policy development across the interlinked challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and water degradation on the islands of Ireland and Britain.

The Climate+ Co-Centre, which will initially be funded over six years by Science Foundation Ireland, Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, and the Environment & Rural Affairs and UK Research & Innovation, will receive more than 30% co-funding from 29 industry partners. The funding was officially announced at 9am this morning. The centre will officially commence operation on 1st January 2024.

Climate+ researchers will work to deliver the transformative change urgently needed to tackle the climate, biodiversity and water crises impacting the two islands – and the wider world.

Yvonne Buckley, Professor of Zoology at Trinity, and Co-Director of Climate+, said:

“We need transformative changes to all sectors of society and the economy to tackle the climate, biodiversity and water crises. Climate+ includes a team of outstanding researchers across 14 different universities and research institutes and we will combine our diverse research skills and knowledge to develop solutions for these important challenges.

“It is clear from the scientific evidence that business as usual is no longer an option, and we are delighted to be working with forward thinking and progressive industry partners who will collaborate with us on research to provide sustainable solutions for their services and products.”

Professor Mark Emmerson, Queen’s University Belfast, and Co-Director of Climate+ said:

“Given the scale of climatic anomalies that we have seen in 2023, we need urgent action to drive transformative change at scale and pace. Climate+ will provide a mix of integrated solutions drawing on expertise from across the natural, social and physical sciences to help mitigate, and adapt to, the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and water quality declines. These are inter-related global challenges and by addressing them together we maximise the co-benefits.”

“We draw on leading experts from across the islands of Ireland and Great Britain to address these inter-related challenges and we welcome the announcement of the funding of the Co-centre today.”

Climate+ research will facilitate fair transitions to Net Zero, reverse biodiversity loss, and restore water quality for a sustainable economy. Climate+ researchers will provide urgently required solutions and pathways for sustainable and just transitions in land use for climate, biodiversity and water, seeking to deliver the solutions needed at individual and systemic levels, as well as providing the evidence-based tools to facilitate positive change.

Climate+ researchers will also work with industry partners to identify and validate the innovations needed to thrive in a climate, nature and water-positive world. Specifically, they will collaborate with industry partners in **1) Sustainable AgriFood Transitions; 2) Sustainable Communities & Livelihoods; 3) Assessing Risks & Opportunities; and 4) Investing in Carbon & Nature**, in forestry, peatlands, grasslands and coastal habitats.

The Climate+ Co-Centre has emerged from collaborations between multiple academic partners in Ireland and Northern Ireland within the All Island Climate & Biodiversity Research Network, funded by the National Parks & Wildlife Service, together with other partners in the UK.

The Climate+ academic partner institutions are: Trinity College Dublin; Maynooth University; University of Galway; University College Cork; Dublin City University; University College Dublin; Atlantic Technological University; University of Limerick; Queen’s University Belfast; Ulster University; Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute; University of Reading; Newcastle University; UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology.