



UK Government

EGS for climate adaptation in the UK water sector

May 13th 2025

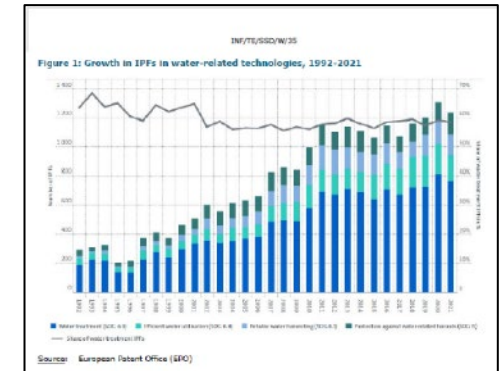
EGS for climate adaptation in the UK water sector

The TESSD meeting in October 2024 focused on identifying key environmental goods and services (EGS) in the water sector that could support climate adaptation goals, in addition to trade bottlenecks. The UK paper aims to dive deeper into this topic by:

- 1) Identifying the opportunities for trade of EGS in the water sector
- 2) Identifying barriers and bottlenecks to trade of EGS in the water sector
- 3) Bringing these opportunities and challenges to life through industry stakeholder case studies
- 4) Identifying the key EGS for climate adaptation in the water sector.

Informed by:

- Desk research of existing resources such as research by the European Patent Office, UNEP, the WTO, and the UNFCCC.
- Interviews with six industry stakeholders, and two industry associations who work in the water sector.



Link: [INF/TE/SSD/W/35](https://www.wto.org/Trade_Environment/TESSD/INF/TE/SSD/W/35)

Industry Engagement

Bentley®



Key Findings

- There is growing interest in the development, adoption and dissemination of key technologies which support water adaptation goals.
- For goods, whilst tariffs were referenced, non-tariff measures were identified by all stakeholders as a key barrier to trade.
- These focussed on standards, regulations and local content requirements.
- Whilst services-related barriers were less referenced, a lack of technical knowledge and trained personnel and transport costs were raised.

“

Varying technical knowledge and capacity for operating advanced monitoring technology presents a challenge, as well as limited availability of trained personnel in certain markets.

Detectronic

“

Standards vary significantly for water treatment equipment internationally. The UK and almost every country in Europe have different standards for water treatment products. Compliance for each country costs anywhere between £25k-£100k, with some of these costs being annual.

Hydrotech



(Canada)



(UK)



(Spain)



(USA)

Water Quality
Sensors



Tom Williams
Enebio Ltd

Water is Climate....

Enebio's perspectives on international
trade in
climate adaptation technologies



(Australia)

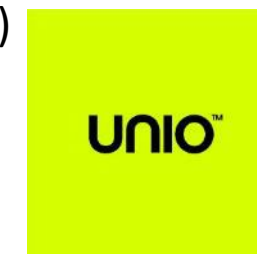


(USA)



(UK)

Drinking & Waste
Water Treatment
Tech



(UK)

Memberships



All Party Parliamentary
Water Group



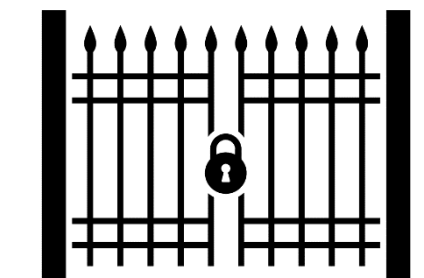


Enebio's perspectives on international trade in climate adaptation technologies

1. Caught in the lobby: regulatory inconsistencies and delays: SDG 6 always 10 years away...waiting for a silver bullet.



2. Regulatory barriers to entry: pay to play...local content requirements for major works, difficult approvals regime...years of piloting, competitions, gatekeepers, incumbents owning markets.



3. Financial constraints: The iPhone fallacy.... markets do not invest in challenging or changing the status quo... SMEs exit to cover losses or run out of money.



Concluding Remarks

- This research aims to provide more detail on the opportunities and barriers to trade for goods and services in the water sector, from a UK industry perspective.
- Given limited publicly available information, engagement with industry stakeholders was key to understand the trade opportunities and barriers affecting this sector.
- Further research, or insights from other Members, would support better collective understanding of where trade barriers exist and where the best interventions could be introduced.



The paper has been published in the TESSD document repository:

INF/TE/SSD/W/35

If you have any further questions, or would be interested in discussing these findings, please contact:

- Lucy Cairns - lucy.cairns@businessandtrade.gov.uk ;
- Charlie Hull - charlie.hull@businessandtrade.gov.uk
- Thomas Holcroft - Thomas.holcroft@businessandtrade.gov.uk