



**Scottish Alliance for Geosciences, Environment and Society (SAGES)**

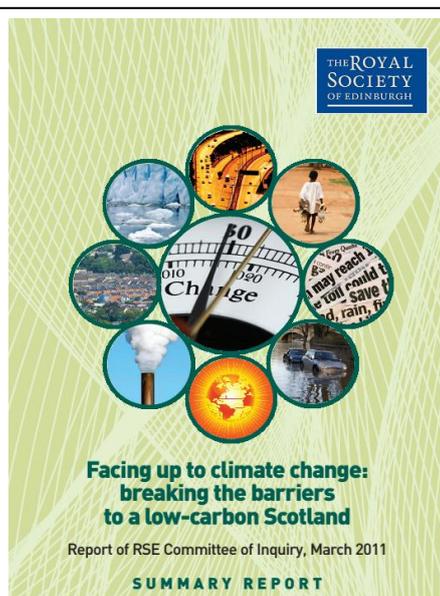
**SRDG Investment (HR05006) Final Report 2006-13**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SAGES is an Alliance of nine Scottish Higher Education Institutions and the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) with complementary strengths in environmental and geosciences. Members are the Universities of Aberdeen, Abertay Dundee, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews, Stirling, Highlands and Islands (UHI, through the Scottish Marine Institute, SAMS) and West of Scotland. SAGES seeks to:

- To promote the pursuit of internationally competitive research at the highest level in geoscience and environmental science by combining complementary research activities and technical infrastructure between institutions with outstanding capacity and potential
- To secure enhanced funding for research
- To attract senior academics of international stature and excellent postdoctoral fellows and postgraduates
- To generate new opportunities for knowledge transfer

Since 2007, SAGES appointed staff have produced over 450 papers and SAGES members, including appointees, more than 3300 papers including over 50 in *Nature/Science*. SAGES appointees have generated £28M in new funding since 2006, and the total SAGES membership has earned £79M. The total value of new awards from all sources in 2012-13 was £13.5M. SAGES appointed staff were recruited internationally (48%), had excellent track records and their performance shows their outstanding quality. SAGES early-career researchers and post-graduate students have generated outstanding publications and grants, and have gone onto established posts in the UK and internationally. SFC support for SAGES funded over 30 new staff posts, and currently has 250 members, 25% of whom are post-graduate students. Subsequent



**Box 1:** 'Facing up to climate change'. A major Royal Society of Edinburgh inquiry 2009-11 was chaired by Prof David Sugden (Edinburgh), a founding member of SAGES, with SAGES Director Dr Andrew Kerr (Edinburgh) and theme leader Prof Alan Werritty (Dundee) as committee members. The Inquiry Report, launched on 1 March 2011, made recommendations to help to produce policy that overcomes the barriers to establishing a low-carbon economy. The report proposed embedding of low-carbon policies and greater engagement between people, civil society, market and state.

to the initial SAGES investment by SFC, partner HEIs have recruited over 30 additional staff at levels from Lecturer to Professor. The SAGES graduate school has produced 21 graduates and has 37 affiliated members. Consortia involving SAGES partners have secured two Doctoral Training Partnerships from NERC.

SAGES had three research themes at the outset, landscape dynamics, the terrestrial carbon cycle and atmosphere, oceans and climate. These are all supported by the Centre for Earth System dynamics, a high-level computer modelling resource located in Edinburgh. As SAGES developed, an expanded commitment was made to societal research and to knowledge transfer, and a fourth research theme 'Society' was formally established. SAGES has had a major influence on the Scottish government and the wider economy (see box), but also has exerted increased influence in the UK, EU and beyond. Knowledge Transfer activities are highlighted by the formation of the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI).

The research themes have delivered high quality science and major new collaborations across the pool. External funding, from RCUK (£32M), EU (£14M), other public sources (£18M), Charities (£10M) and Industry (£4M) supports this research and illustrates the international significance of SAGES.

SFC provided £6.5M of new investment for SAGES. Partner HEIs have directly invested a further £17.4M and have supported over 30 new academic posts and further infrastructure and equipment of benefit to the SAGES community. Much of this is new investment that has been secured as a consequence of the success of SAGES staff and facilities.

SAGES has proved to be sustainable and there is strong institutional support for a shared vision of the future of the Alliance, SAGES+. The opportunities afforded by pooling and by links between pools and with Innovation Centres, Scottish government Centres of Excellence and other organisations will continue to be realised through a structure that offers much more than does any single institution.

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