

# Canada's National Adaptation Strategy: Vision Forum

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

June 2 and 3, 2021 (Virtual)



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## Executive Summary

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) hosted Canada's National Adaptation Strategy Visioning Forum on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. The forum launched engagement on developing the first National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) for Canada, a key commitment from the Canada's strengthened climate plan [\*A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy\*](#) released in December 2020.

The Forum was organized with the purpose of engaging a diversity of partners and stakeholders, who represent a wide range of Canadians affected by climate change. Over 60 participants were engaged and active in discussions throughout the Forum. Participants included representatives from all the provinces and territories, two National Indigenous Organizations, professional and industry associations, youth organizations, climate service providers, research institutes, municipal and local community networks and other NGOs. The discussions and comments were constructive among partners and stakeholders.

The objective of the forum was to collectively identify expectations and potential components of a National Adaptation Strategy for Canada, including areas of focus for near-term work through thematic tables. ECCC developed a Discussion Paper in advance of the Forum to help guide the discussion.

Overall, participants agreed with the proposed areas of focus identified by the federal government: Human health and Well-being, Governance, Built Environment, Climate and Security, Environment, and Economy. However, participants raised that the proposed thematic areas should effectively capture additional and cross-cutting considerations to reflect the whole Canadian context.

Regarding the potential components of a National Adaptation Strategy, we heard that:

- A National Adaptation Strategy for Canada needs to be comprehensive, inclusive, and systematic in order to drive real action;
- A National Adaptation Strategy needs clear objectives and indicators to measure progress;
- The framing of a National Adaptation Strategy is important, and should include a matrix approach that integrates different themes, perspectives and solutions;
- A National Adaptation Strategy should be iterative: renewed at regular intervals, informed by new climate data, regular risk and impact assessments, and effective monitoring and evaluation; and
- Adaptation action in Canada is urgently needed; need to continue to act while the Strategy is developed.

# 1. Introduction

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Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) hosted Canada's National Adaptation Strategy Visioning Forum on June 2 and 3, 2021. The forum launched engagement on developing the National Adaptation Strategy for Canada, a key commitment from the Canada's strengthened climate plan [A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy](#) released in December 2020. As part of this process, ECCC acquired the consulting services of Intersol Group. With over 30 years' experience, it is committed to exemplifying community leadership with its proven stakeholder engagement approach, focused on offering facilitation services, and planning processes with a specialty in managing online multi-stakeholder initiatives.

In total, an estimated 60 partners and stakeholders participated in the Forum over the two days. The Forum provided the opportunity for a variety of climate change practitioners and researchers; government representatives; Indigenous representatives; community, professional, and industry actors; and other advocates working in climate change related or impacted areas to convene and initiate discussion on the adaptation challenges and opportunities that could inform a National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). Through open and collaborative dialogue, the Forum supported the identification of shared expectations and set the stage for the collective development of Canada's NAS.

The engagement level of participants during the two days was high; numerous participants reaffirmed the importance of adopting a proactive approach as adaptation actions in Canada are urgently needed and requested that the ECCC continue to demonstrate leadership in inclusive engagement practices around climate change adaptation.

This report includes an executive summary, and introduction, scene setting by the federal government of the NAS process, participants' expectations of the NAS, participant's inputs on adaptation themes proposed, building blocks for adaptation action and solutions, and NAS preferred future exercise sections.

## Background.

Climate change is causing various impacts across Canada and throughout its society, economy, and environment. Canadians are increasingly experiencing the impacts of a changing climate. The science shows that climate change is causing disproportionate warming in Canada, with average temperatures increasing two times faster than the global average and three times faster in Canada's North<sup>1</sup>. The negative impacts and costs of climate change continue to increase in Canada and might outpace our current adaptation efforts.

As part of the Government of Canada's commitment to reduce these impacts and the critical need to adapt to current and future climate change in Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), with the support of Public Safety Canada, Infrastructure Canada and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), is bringing together key stakeholders from across the country to seek feedback on the development of Canada's first-ever National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). The purpose of the NAS is to establish a shared vision for climate resilience in Canada, identify key priorities for increased collaboration and establish a framework for measuring progress at the national level. The NAS will help Canada respond to the shared reality of climate change by bringing together and building upon the resources, knowledge, and expertise of all partners and stakeholders, and is an opportunity to adopt a whole-of-society approach to climate change adaptation that unites all Canadians, including governments, Indigenous Peoples, municipalities, private companies, academia, civil society, and youth.

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<sup>1</sup> Discussion Paper for the National Adaptation Strategy Forum June 2-3, 2021

## Objectives of the Forum.

The Forum set out to achieve the following four high-level objectives:

- Bring together key partners for early discussions on collaboratively developing a NAS for Canada;
- Provide an opportunity for partners to articulate expectations for a NAS for Canada;
- Collectively identify some components of a NAS, including areas of focus for near-term work through thematic tables;
- Develop a shared understanding of the next steps.

## Methodology used.

Intersol employed various methodologies, including individual input into an online engagement software (Facilitate Pro), facilitated group discussions or self-organized breakout sessions, and plenary deliberations. Through proven strategic planning methodology, the Forum followed a series of progressive steps to seek engagement from participants:

- Introduction, information sharing and scene-setting of NAS initiative, engagement strategy, and timeline.
- Key expectations of stakeholders and partners;
- Thematic planning discussions around the level of acceptance, issues, concerns, gaps and opportunities with the proposed NAS themes;
- Discussion on the building blocks for adaptation action and solutions, including barriers, issues, concerns, gaps or opportunities, value-added to collaboration, information, skills, policies and other support required to strengthen the NAS;
- Futuring exercise: In 10 years, following the release and early implementation of the NAS for Canada, what outcomes have we achieved as a result of this work?;
- Closing remarks and next steps.

In the scope of this report, we have retained the term National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) to define the current engagement work being done by ECCC on climate change adaptation.

For additional information, please consult Agenda found in [Appendix A](#).

## Participant engagement.

The Forum was designed as a first opportunity for a diversity of partners and stakeholders to come together to discuss development of a NAS for Canada. In order to meet the scope of the challenge that climate change presents, a successful NAS will need to bring together voices from various organizations, prioritize having multiple perspectives at the table, and focus on developing solutions through the participation of the diversity of Canadian society. Following this principle, a diverse range of participants were invited to the NAS Forum based on their climate change expertise, leadership, and lived experiences. Importantly, ECCC recognizes that additional public engagement is required to ensure that many Canadian voices can contribute to the NAS conversation and ultimately lead to adaptation solutions that best suit Canadians in all their diversity.

As noted in the discussion paper shared with forum participants before the Forum, the NAS will aim to support adaptation actions that are holistic, link to other social, economic, and environmental priorities in Canada, avoid duplication and rather build upon and enhance existing local and regional adaptation strategies, perspectives, and efforts.

For further information on upcoming engagement opportunities with ECCC on the NAS, please contact Laniel Bateman ([laniel.bateman@ec.gc.ca](mailto:laniel.bateman@ec.gc.ca)), Director of Climate Adaptation Policy at Environment and Climate Change

Canada. Please also include in your email Julie Lax ([julie.lax@ec.gc.ca](mailto:julie.lax@ec.gc.ca)) and Vincent Loiselle ([vincent.loiselle@ec.gc.ca](mailto:vincent.loiselle@ec.gc.ca)).

## 2. Scene setting by the federal government – NAS process

### Introduction.

Jeff MacDonald, Director General of Climate Change Adaptation, ECCC and Rory Gilsean, Director General of Hazards, Adaptation and Operations, NRCan, opened the session by sharing information on the purpose of the NAS, the commitment and the proposed guiding principles for developing a NAS in Canada, and an overview of the [National Issues Report](#) findings.

The NAS Forum was the first public engagement opportunity within a multi-faceted NAS development process that will take place over approximately the next year and a half. Phase one (Spring 2021-Fall 2021) will focus on establishing the broad parameters and contents of an initial NAS Framework. From Fall 2021 to Fall 2022, Phase 2 efforts will further develop the NAS and elaborate on the parameters and priority areas identified in Phase 1.



### Key messages from the federal government<sup>2</sup>

**Canada's geographic diversity results in a great variety of climate risks and impacts from coast to coast.** As a result, the type of climate change impact and adaptation are location-specific. It varies greatly between one region to another, i.e. coastal erosion or coastal flooding; drought conditions or changing growing seasons across the country; permafrost degradation or changing sea ice conditions in the northern regions; and storms and wildfires in the Pacific. Therefore, adaptation solutions across Canada are best understood through an integrated, pan-national perspective that respects the distinct challenges, priorities, and solutions proposed by local communities.

**Canadian leadership is currently collaborating and advancing substantial results on climate change adaptation, but more actions are needed to effectively address increasing impacts.** Although leaders in Canada (federal, provincial, municipal, territorial, and Indigenous) are increasingly acknowledging the

<sup>2</sup> These key messages are included in the discussion paper that was shared with forum participants before the Forum.

importance of addressing climate change adaptation, the current impacts of climate change are growing in frequency and severity, causing increasing economic and social costs. At this rate, our need for climate change adaptation will outpace our current preparedness, investment, and action.

**Successful NAS requires a holistic approach and consideration of the following guiding principles:**

- Build on plans, strategies, and action being advanced by all orders of government and by Indigenous Peoples and leadership;
- Contribute to the evolution of equity and justice and resilience, and use inclusive processes that empower and enable all Canadians to participate, specifically youth, under-represented and overly affected members of the population;
- Contribute to advancing reconciliation, and support Indigenous climate leadership;
- Aim to generate jobs and support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and future emergencies and climate disasters.

For additional resources on climate change impacts and adaptation in Canada, please consult [Appendix B](#).

## 3. Participants' Expectations - National Adaptation Strategy

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### Introduction.

As a starting point of the Forum discussion, participants shared their expectations for the NAS through an individual exercise using the online Facilitate Pro engagement software, through small breakout group discussion where they identified common themes, and through broader sharing in a plenary discussion.

The questions that guided these discussions were:

- *What are your (or your organization's) expectations of a National Adaptation Strategy?*
- *How could a national strategy advance your (or your organization's) work?*

In summary: the main expectations of participants for a NAS focused on establishing clear roles and responsibilities for adaptation, including governance and accountability mechanisms, outcomes and goals, metrics and benchmarks, and financing/funding that fosters collaboration for adaptation.

### Key findings.

#### A) Expectations of a NAS

Participants shared their thoughts around their expected NAS; their feedback was summarized into the following key priorities:

1. **Establish a clear action-oriented and forward looking strategy** by identifying the core adaptation action required, clarifying the roles and responsibilities for that adaptation action, and removing barriers to action, which could include establishing clear outcomes and goals; creating and mainstreaming codes and standards; developing governance and accountability mechanisms; creating metrics and benchmarks, and providing financing/funding.
2. **Provide a unifying strategy that encourages cross-cutting actions that align with other adaptation strategies** (e.g., provincial, territorial and Indigenous adaptation strategies, United Nation's Sustainable

Development goals) and aim to increase resilience of Canada's communities, ecosystems, economy and society to the impacts of climate change.

3. **Be centered on community well-being and capacity**, especially for Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit), northern communities, and populations of youth, women, elderly, homeless people, and climate migrants. The NAS should come with increased support (i.e. funding, decision-enabling data) to build and deploy capacity at the community level.
4. **Be developed through diverse engagement**, incorporating the perspectives of distinct communities, community organizations representing urban, rural and coastal perspectives, academia, the private sector, municipalities, provincial and territorial institutions, and federal partners.
5. **Be guided by a rights-based and inclusive approach**. The NAS will mainstream Indigenous knowledge and decolonization efforts, and advance Indigenous rights and priorities; promote a whole-person approach, including physical and mental health impacts; and build and advance justice, inclusion, diversity and equality.
6. **Address and advance ecosystem sustainability for all species – not just humans**. The NAS needs to build the resilience and survival of non-human species, and advance the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems (forests, wetlands, grasslands) and protects species at risk.
7. **Foster and enable collaboration**, coordination and communities of practice around adaptation initiatives with cross-sector/multi-stakeholders across jurisdictions disproportionately affected by climate change.
8. **Promote public awareness of adaptation through effective communication strategies**. The NAS should raise the profile and awareness of Canadians to understand climate change adaptation and reinforce key messages, common understanding and communication of priorities and solutions around adaptation.
9. **Foster strong linkages with emergency management and disaster risk reduction efforts and approaches**.

## B) Expectations for how a NAS could advance work on adaptation and climate resilience

Participants shared their thoughts around how the NAS could facilitate their current work; their feedback was summarized into the following key priorities:

1. **Enriches the Business Case for Adaptation**. A NAS could help craft a detailed business case for adaptation by establishing evidence-informed benchmarks, outcomes and targets.
2. **Prioritizes Issues**. By establishing national priorities for climate change adaptation, a NAS could help organizations and partners maintain focus, transparency in action, and accountability for climate change; and development of policy, regulation, and governance systems could increase alignment across regions and jurisdictions.
3. **Enhances capacity-building and funding opportunities**. NAS identifies key issues and provides clear connections between effective and efficient funding, foundation investments, and financial arrangements that allow stakeholders to continue their work aligned with the NAS.

4. **Recognizes and aligns with the Leadership of Indigenous peoples.**  
The NAS would integrate Indigenous knowledge and non-western adaptation decision-making frameworks.
5. **Advances a Just Resilience lens** that prioritizes community well-being and equity, and enables action and leadership from many communities, populations, and demographics, including youth.

## 4. Participant's Inputs on Adaptation Themes

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### Introduction.

Participants engaged in reviewing the list of proposed themes for the NAS in working group and plenary discussions. The themes include:

- **Human health and Wellness**
  - Health system resilience
  - Addressing specific health impacts of climate change (e.g., heat, mental health)
  - Determinants of health resilience (e.g., food security, poverty, homelessness)
- **Governance**
  - Climate risk management by governments
  - Indigenous climate leadership
- **Built Environment**
  - Infrastructure (e.g., air, road, rail, water, energy, natural)
  - Built elements of social infrastructure (e.g., parks, community buildings)
  - Housing
  - Infrastructure deficits on reserve
- **Climate and Security**
  - Conflict and migration
  - Trade
- **Environment**
  - Ecosystems
  - Water systems and supplies
- **Economy**
  - Sustainable finance
  - Business opportunities, competitiveness, innovation
  - Specific sectoral issues (energy, mining, forestry, fisheries, etc.)
  - Agriculture and food systems

The questions that guided these discussions were:

- *What do you agree with/what resonates with you and the work you do (or the work your organization or jurisdiction does)?*
- *Are there any issues, concerns, gaps or opportunities to improve on the areas listed?*
- *What changes would you suggest we make to address the issues, concerns, gaps or opportunities to improve the focus area?*

In Summary: Overall, the participants agreed with the proposed themes identified, but raised that the current thematic approach does not effectively capture the cross-cutting considerations that must be included to develop adaptation measures that reflect the Canadian context.

Some participants recommended that the NAS to focus on themes that Canada is already showing leadership in both nationally and internationally, such as the economic considerations around significant costs associated to climate change (e.g., flooding and wildland fire/drought response). However, other participants expressed caution around limiting the NAS themes to those with primarily economic indicators. Some participants strongly voiced their concerns around limiting climate change adaptation conversation to those with human-centric and monetary loss components, and recommended that NAS priorities should center around the Government of Canada's commitment to inclusiveness, environmental stewardship, and the reconciliation process.

For additional information on the issues, concerns, gaps and opportunities raised by participants on the proposed thematic structure for the NAS, please consult the table provided in [Appendix C](#).

## Key Findings.

### A) Additional elements of consideration.

Participants highlighted the following additional elements of consideration as being critical to advance the NAS:

1. Build resilience in energy systems for extreme events;
2. Support local-level and PT-level leadership;
3. Support community efforts and response in disaster risk reduction;
4. Advance international climate finance;
5. Added cumulative events and slow impacts;
6. Enhance education and awareness (i.e. environmental education for youth in schools);
7. Include community/neighbourhood-level/voluntary sectors and professional sectors;
8. Improve data capacity, data management and decision-making.

### B) Cross-cutting considerations.

Participants felt that the below elements should be mainstreamed throughout the NAS as cross-cutting considerations:

1. **A clear pathway to implementation**—linkages to funding and policy at many scales;
2. **Cross-cutting principles**—inclusiveness, intersectionality, geography (urban, rural and coastal), multi-perspective and holistic lens, non-human-centric approach, Indigenous and youth leadership;
3. **The impact of climate on Indigenous Rights**;
4. **Important social issues**— Where possible and relevant to adaptation action, the NAS should support human health, increase food security for Canadians and reduce poverty and homelessness;
5. **Overarching goal of the NAS**—to build adaptive capacity and resilience for Canadians;
6. **Federal leadership**— A NAS should clearly convey how the federal government will play a leadership role in adaptation.

## 5. Building Blocks for Adaptation Action and Solutions

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### Introduction.

Participants shared their thoughts around barriers to adaptation action and potential solutions in a working group and plenary discussions. Potential solutions in the discussion paper included:

- Advancing, applying, and sharing science, data and knowledge
- Creating tools

- Building capacity
- Climate-informed codes, standards, and guidelines
- Economic levers
- Social levers (e.g., behaviours, culture, social practices, community connection)
- Nature-based solutions
- Indigenous climate leadership
- Youth leadership
- Leadership
- Climate-resilient labour force
- Communications

Questions that guided the discussions included:

- *What are your barriers to adaptation action currently?*
- *Do we have the right roster of solutions to advance adaptation?*
  - *What do you agree with/what resonates with you and the work you do (or the work your organization or jurisdiction does)?*
  - *Are there any issues, concerns, gaps or opportunities to improve on the solutions listed?*
  - *How would you suggest we address the issues, concerns or gaps*
- *What would be the value-added for collaborative action on these solutions?*
- *What information, skills, policies and other support do you (or your organization) need to advance adaptation action?*

In Summary: Overall, participants identified that the success of the NAS should prioritize solutions that consider social, environmental and governance levels, ensuring that a horizontal and holistic adaptation planning processes are mainstreamed to engage various distinct populations with different needs. Problem identification and solution development are connected to mainstreaming a climate lens, but also require a keen understanding of Canadians' capacity to change behaviours to embrace a different way of life that includes creative innovation and adaptation, as well as incremental and transformative change.

The NAS should emphasize the need for adaptation solutions that account for the intersectional and distinct nature of the lived experiences. Particular emphasis should be on developing solutions that incorporate the particular lived experience of under-represented communities, including Indigenous Peoples, youth and racialized Canadians. The NAS should find the balance in "Keeping it simple while acknowledging the complexity." Participants also discussed the need for innovation and testing of new solutions.

## Key Findings.

### Current barriers to adaptation action

Participants identified the following barriers, issues, concerns, gaps or opportunities to adaptation actions:

1. **Capacity gaps were identified as a current barrier.**  
Stakeholders need more capacity to implement adaptation solutions. For example, the lack of financial capacity, tools and guidance, expertise, readily available and actionable data for local communities were identified as key barriers.

- 2. Communication strategies that build adaptation awareness were highlighted as an opportunity.**  
There is a need for prompt and clear communication explaining the imperative for adaptation to Canadians, particularly focusing on local communities, youth, households, farms throughout the chain of production, and other impacted industries. All communication products should be developed to take key scientific principles that address the urgency of change and transform them into digestible messages that promote changes in behaviours. A current barrier is the lack of awareness of economic and existential threats of not adapting amongst the general population and government departments. Communications should raise the profile of adaptation in relation to mitigation, which dominates climate change messaging.
- 3. Municipal initiatives were stated as an opportunity to increase local adaptation.**  
Municipalities need more support to understand adaptation impacts on local and natural ecosystems and support services to address these issues. In addition, smaller municipalities require additional support if they wish to take on new leadership roles on climate adaptation and support the empowerment of the community through adaptation actions.
- 4. The legacies of colonialism reduce the adaptive capacity of Indigenous Peoples.**  
The legacy of colonialism on Indigenous communities in Canada, including the underfunding of infrastructure/housing/water, and the structural racism facing Indigenous Peoples – multiplies the impact of climate change and makes adaptation more difficult. Indigenous knowledge and adaptation best-practices from First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities should be respectfully considered and interweaved with mainstream knowledge. Language needs were identified as a priority to recognize the adaptive capacity of Indigenous persons. Concerns were raised around the situation that Indigenous climate leadership is not equitable between the three Indigenous peoples of Canada. Métis Nations have only been involved in conversations on adaptation with the federal government since 2016 and has limited access to resources; there is a serious need for targeted engagement with Métis leadership. Attention is required to address the current lack of capacity within Indigenous communities to address climate change alongside all the other priorities.
- 5. Youth initiatives were considered as a critical issue in climate change adaptation.**  
Current barriers to youth initiatives and participation in adaptation action are related to the high turnover as students graduate and enter the workplace. This trend is accompanied by a lack of funding to pay students in student-run organizations, federal working groups and grassroots projects and a lack of professional mentorship and support in climate change adaptation. Participants also identified that limited funding impacts schools and teacher's capacity to develop adaptation initiatives. These barriers are amplified by the rural and urban divide, creating a lack of coordination/ knowledge of needs and a difference in knowledge about climate change and adaptation strategies. There is currently a gap between youth-led initiatives and federal action; additional mechanisms need to bridge youth activism at all levels of government, i.e. councils and working groups.
- 6. The lack of support for innovation was identified by a few participants as being a critical barrier to climate change adaptation.**  
There is a current need to think about our systems differently, to explore the contributions of innovative thinking and share this innovation across all sectors. Traditional knowledge should be recognized as central to the approach, and innovation and youth leadership are pivotal in the creation of solutions. There is currently insufficient funding and support for creative and innovative initiatives.

7. **New Canadians initiatives were mentioned as an opportunity to learn from lived-experience.**

A couple of participants shared the fact that Canadian newcomers, specifically those who have lived-experience as climate change migrants, are not usually at the table. We currently do not have efficient mechanisms to engage with the wealth of expertise out there.

### Additional Solutions

The additional solutions identified by participants include the development of:

1. **Relevant, appropriate and strategic tools**, specifically paying attention to the support of appropriate tools for Indigenous communities. A well-articulated adaptation strategy is required that speaks to the many different stakeholders and partners.
2. **Local climate change and land management plans developed in partnership with the municipality and Indigenous leadership**, which rethink zoning, transit, suburb, nature-based solutions, and other key adaptation considerations at the municipal, local ecosystems and watershed level.
3. **Communication plans** ought to be tailored to the level at which partners and stakeholders are planning or implementing. The Federal government needs to take a leadership role in communicating with Canadians about the importance of immediate action on adaptation. Once the message is widely accepted, all interested partners and stakeholders can focus on actions.
4. **Inclusive and holistic policies** that address the other immediate systemic barriers and needs faced by Canadians (e.g. overly affected populations, inequities, food insecurity, housing instability, etc.) or that limit their ability to consider adaptation action to future challenges.
5. **Consistent and distinct funding envelopes and resources** provide short and long-term information sharing and initiatives in adaptation.
6. **A policy and regulatory environment** that creates accountability and supports cohesive and mainstreamed approaches across regions, jurisdictions, and policy domains.

### Value-added for collaborative action.

Participants described the added value for collaborative action as supporting:

1. **The leadership of the federal government** to frame the NAS and support momentum in nationally;
2. **Municipalities to interconnect their ongoing work** in a way that avoids gaps in initiatives;
3. The acceleration of **information sharing and knowledge**, the credibility of collaboration outputs, learning by doing, and hopefully speed up the NAS implementation.

## 6. NAS preferred Future Exercise

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### Introduction.

Participants divided into breakout group discussions and were asked to reflect on the following futuring exercise question:

Question that guided the discussion:

- *In 10 years, following the release and early implementation of the NAS for Canada, what outcomes have we achieved as a result of this work?*

## Key Findings.

Participants shared their preferred future by identifying short to medium-term requirements in developing the NAS, the outcome of a NAS and cross-cutting considerations that support adaptation across Canada.

### Short to medium-term requirements in the development of the NAS.

Participants identified that certain best practices would need to be developed to envision a society with an effective and appropriate NAS. In summary, participants identified that in 10 years from 2021 a successful NAS will have included the following key requirements:

#### 1. Strong performance measurements

Monitoring and evaluation of the NAS process have been integrated into the design and delivery of the NAS program. The NAS includes tangible, measurable and progressive performance measurements that feed into decision making and accountability. The NAS has also established a measurement and monitoring program for resilience results.

#### 2. Clear issues, solutions and definitions

The NAS defines clearly the adaptation issues and clarifies what is meant by adaptation; while creating spaces to reach consensus around social determinates of climate change adaptation in Canada. The solutions and challenges are clarified through diverse and inclusive stakeholder engagement.

#### 3. Efficient Funding programs to support communities

The federal government and its partners spend the required time addressing the adaptation funding structures and support Communities have the ability to self-determine their own practices to adapt.

#### 4. Implementation of an intersectional lens

The NAS integrates and personifies a holistic approach that embraces decolonization, equity, inclusion, and collaboration. An intersectional lens has been applied to the Strategy and guides all work moving forward that factor in existing inequities and addresses structural inequities (such as funding and capacity building). It has resulted in meaningful involvement of affected parties (designed by and for the people, including those who are disproportionately affected).

### Cross-cutting achievements of the NAS.

#### 1. Collaboration has resulted in reduced vulnerability and increased resilience.

An inclusive and dynamic ecosystem of skilled actors have accelerated meaningful and collaborative initiatives that have resulted in many tangible (and often measurable) improvements at all scales in reducing social, environmental and economic vulnerabilities and increasing resilience across sectors. For example, this may include results such as reduced supply chain disruptions, augmented dynamic ecosystems, opportunities in the circular economy, increased self-sufficiency, and better coordination and alignment of actions at the system-level.

#### 2. Federal leadership and governance are prominently seen throughout the climate change adaptation community.

The government acts as a leader and convenor, offering guidance and engagement opportunities to develop real solutions to climate change adaptation. For example, federal leadership could involve implementing a climate change lens in its procurement opportunities and with its services providers in the private sector. For its role in NAS development, federal guidance, direction and support is recognized as key to climate change adaptation, at the municipal, provincial, and territorial levels, as well as with Indigenous leadership

### **3. Increased acknowledgement of the importance of climate change adaptation by Canadians**

There is an increased acknowledgement of how climate change adaptation contributes to the well-being of Canadian society and economy. Financial investment (funding and resource allocations) is provided to share Canadian stories as part of a larger awareness campaign that illustrates the link between climate change adaptation and a healthy and prosperous Canada. Governments continue to explore ways to include adaptation in the legal framework.

## **7. Next Steps**

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Following the conclusion of the NAS Forum and associated work session, ECCC has identified the following next steps in its NAS engagement:

1. A draft report will be shared with DGs to discuss the NAS Forum outcomes and the next steps in establishing NAS Advisory Tables;
2. A summary report of the Forum will be shared with participants of the NAS Forum for feedback and validations. Further engagement opportunities will be shared with participants, and a wider consultation opportunity will be conveyed to the Canadian public;
3. The NAS Advisory Tables and other key partners and stakeholders involved in NAS will make recommendations for the next steps in the design, development and delivery of the NAS.

# Appendix A – Agenda

## CANADA'S NAS: VISIONING FORUM

**Dates:** June 2 & 3, 2021

**Format:** Virtual meeting (Zoom); 4-hour sessions per day over 2 days

**Languages:** French and English interpretation

**Objective:** The Forum will launch engagement on developing a NAS (NAS) for Canada. The purpose of the Forum will be to establish a shared understanding of climate change impacts and action in Canada, including gaps, challenges, and potential opportunities and solutions, and begin to identify shared priorities for collaborative action.

### **DAY ONE: *Establishing a shared understanding of adaptation in Canada***

**Wednesday, June 2, 2021**

Timing	Topic
15 minutes	Welcome and Forum Objectives
15 minutes	Participant Expectations
60 minutes	Scene Setting - Overview Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is NAS needed</li> <li>• Current context/environment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How the NAS is different</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Q&amp;A to clarify understanding</li> </ul>
15 minutes	Break
30 minutes	Expectations of a NAS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual exercise – Informed by the previous discussion, what are your expectations of a NAS?</li> </ul>
90 minutes	Key Areas of Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakout group discussions to provide on the identified areas of focus:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What do you agree with/what resonates with you and the work you do?</li> <li>○ What concerns or gaps are there?</li> <li>○ What suggestions do you have to address the concerns or gaps and to improve the focus area?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Plenary to share results and to identify any new emerging Key Areas of Focus or significant gaps</li> </ul>
15 minutes	Wrap up day 1

**DAY TWO: *Discussing shared priorities for climate change resilience and the NAS***  
**Thursday, June 3, 2021**

**Opportunities and Solutions for Collaboration**

Timing	Topic
<b>15 minutes</b>	Recap of day 1 and Review of Agenda
<b>90 minutes</b>	Potential Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview presentation</li> <li>• Q&amp;A to clarify understanding</li> <li>• Breakout group discussion to identify gaps and other opportunities for transformative action</li> <li>• Plenary to share results</li> </ul>
<b>15 minutes</b>	Break
<b>60 Minutes</b>	Potential Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakout groups each focusing on a potential solution (could self select based on the solution of interest)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarify understanding of the proposed solution</li> <li>○ Describe the preferred future or end state.</li> <li>○ What will enable us to achieve the end state?</li> <li>○ What barriers or challenges must be overcome?</li> <li>○ What will we need in order to achieve the end state?</li> <li>○ What will we need to start, stop or do differently?</li> <li>○ What would be the value-added for collaborative action on these solutions</li> <li>○ Identification of the top 2 recommendations for action and collaboration to move forward</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>45 minutes</b>	Potential Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plenary to share results</li> </ul>
<b>15 minutes</b>	Next steps for Developing the NAS

# Appendix B - Additional Resources

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- [Canada's Changing Climate](#)
- [Report on the costs of climate change](#)
- [National assessments reports](#)
- [Canada's Top Climate Change Risks](#)
- [Canada in a Changing Climate: Advancing our Knowledge for Action](#)
- [Climate Science 2050: Advancing Science and Knowledge on Climate Change](#)
- [Report series on the costs of climate change](#)
- [Assembly of First Nations National Climate Gathering Report](#)

# Appendix C – Proposed Themes

<p><b>General acceptance, issues, concerns, gaps and opportunities with the thematic approach.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 out of 6 groups expressed no significant disagreement with the high-level themes but many of those groups raised concerns regarding their utility for structuring conversations going forward (i.e., increased potential for siloed conversations).</li> <li>- The current structure is aligned with provincial and territorial Adaptation Strategies</li> <li>- The discussion paper was helpful to set the context</li> <li>- Priority must be to develop practical and operational tools</li> <li>- The proposed theme structure is weak in providing an equity lens, and will strongly impact the "disproportionately affected". . . In plenary discussions, the term “disproportionately affected” was identified as preferred instead of “vulnerable populations”</li> <li>- Important to avoid silos in these themes</li> <li>- Lack of cross-cutting analysis, interconnectivity and innovative dialogue</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Suggested Alternative Approach</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structure as components instead of themes. Another way to package is through "components" of transversal contribution to solutions (data, capacity, governance, land-use planning, with governance and sustainable finance already mentioned are fewer issues and more solutions)</li> <li>- Structure-based on the problem; then identify a solution</li> <li>- Structure with a matrix approach – no additional information was provided.</li> <li>- Consideration of non-monetary cost and impacts</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Themes</b></p>	<p><b>Suggested Additions</b></p>	<p><b>Issues, concerns, gaps and opportunities.</b></p>
<p><b>Human health and wellness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health system resilience</li> <li>- Addressing specific health impacts of climate change (e.g., heat, mental health)</li> <li>- Determinants of health resilience (e.g., food security, poverty, homelessness)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure</li> <li>- Governance</li> <li>- Built Env't</li> <li>- Environment (need to include Air Quality)</li> <li>- Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some participants feel that human health is a more cross-cutting issue</li> <li>- Others suggest that it should remain as its own distinct theme</li> </ul>
<p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate risk management by governments</li> <li>• Indigenous climate leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement action to manage the climate risks that have been identified and continually improve climate risk</li> <li>- Address silos with climate mitigation</li> <li>- Decolonization process</li> <li>- Multi-jurisdictional relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some participants felt that the theme of governance was well-placed as a stand-alone theme</li> <li>- Needs to unpack roles and responsibilities</li> <li>- Provide a more specific assessment, where necessary, to climate risk management.</li> <li>- Expand on the Indigenous climate leadership</li> </ul>
<p><b>Climate and security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict and migration</li> <li>• Trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No additions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some participants felt that the theme of climate and security should be a cross-cutting theme</li> </ul>

<p><b>Built Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure (e.g., air, road, rail, water, energy, natural)</li> <li>- Social infrastructure (e.g., parks, community buildings)</li> <li>- Housing</li> <li>- Infrastructure deficits on reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include energy systems;</li> <li>- Add nature-based solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some participants felt that the theme of "Built Environment" was well-placed.</li> <li>- Must create spaces for blue and green infrastructure</li> <li>- Value in separating built and natural environment</li> <li>- The built environment should not be framed in a way that excludes the natural environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ecosystems</li> <li>- Water systems and supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No additions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The focus should shift from impacts on infrastructure to impacts on people and those without voice (e.g., ecosystems)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable finance</li> <li>- Business opportunities, competitiveness, innovation</li> <li>- Specific sectoral issues (energy, mining, forestry, fisheries, etc.)</li> <li>- Agriculture and food systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change to "economy and finance."</li> <li>- Under economy and finance - add subcategory on financial security</li> <li>- Add access to adequate insurance</li> <li>- Focus on removing disincentives for adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An economy focus area is critical</li> <li>- Include labour and employment aspects (analogous to Just Transition) of climate change; employment conditions for some livelihoods will change</li> <li>- Focus is mostly on the resource industry; rather, it should prioritize supply chain disruption</li> <li>- It needs to include a broader conversation about the economy</li> </ul>

# Appendix D – Intersol's guiding principles and best practices

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Building trust and accountability is critical to developing and maintain working relations with the Canadian public. Those who engage on developing the NAS should feel that their perspectives are valued and that their contributions or concerns are heard. However, ensuring that these perspectives are nurtured and incorporated into practice can be challenging with competing interest groups and ministerial priorities. Engagement sessions on the NAS should provide opportunities for all Canadians to voice their concerns, and participants will expect that those perspectives find their way into decision-making and programming. Therefore, building trust and accountability in the engagement process will be critical. The following Intersol's best practices focus on the inclusive design of engagement sessions and can be used to guide the NAS development process.

## **Inclusive Open Government.**

An [inclusive and open government](#) recognizes that there are barriers to public participation in traditional government structures. These barriers can prevent segments of the population from participating in or benefiting from government initiatives. In response to this exclusion, the federal government can adopt behaviour changes that support reaching out to as many voices as possible, drawing from a greater diversity of knowledge, when making decisions or providing services. The principle of inclusive and open government promotes the co-creation of strategic frameworks alongside representatives from diverse communities and distinct populations. For example, the feedback from participants during the Forum has clearly indicated a need to work with Indigenous leadership. Engagement with Indigenous leaders (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) early and often to review possible barriers to participation and develop tailored communication strategies to respond to climate change adaptation is needed. In addition, it is important to explore the protocols associated with engaging with the community, such as the expected traditions and offerings, hunting season and other culturally relevant events, with planning appropriate meeting options (timing and safe spaces) for any working sessions.

## **Inclusive communication strategy.**

An [inclusive communication strategy provides](#) opportunities for federal partners, Indigenous leadership, and diverse partners and stakeholders, such as youth, racialized communities, women, climate migrants, rural/urban/coastal communities, to participate in engagement channels. These opportunities include but are not limited to working groups, councils and other internal government decision-making mechanisms to ensure that diversity in perspectives is included throughout the public-facing communication. The promotion of diversity in demographic representation helps identify gaps in current engagement efforts, seeks collaboration with civil society organizations working in these areas, develops communication strategies to address these gaps, and regularly monitors communication products for inclusivity. A best practice in requesting ongoing engagement is to offer financial compensation for time spent by participants for sharing lived experiences. Otherwise, many groups, such as working single mothers and other communities struggling with poverty and income disparity, cannot participate equally.

Another recommendation shared during the Forum was the importance of information-sharing products that sensitize NAS to the Canadian public. Different stakeholders will interact differently with the same product, which may be appropriate for some audiences, and cause exclusion and barriers for others. Let's take an online interactive tool as an example. This tool can be an effective way to offer a dynamic interactive engagement for youth climate change leaders and networks. On the other hand, rural communities with limited internet access, such as Northern indigenous communities, may experience barriers to participation. Visually stimulating information materials may also exclude stakeholders from disability communities, i.e. people with visual

impairment or with physical disabilities with limited capacity to negotiate online technology. An inclusive communication strategy will undertake a Gender-Based Analysis+ assessment (GBA+) and design many products to serve varied stakeholders with various barriers to information communication.

**Confronting bias and promoting culture change in government.**

The NAS will not function within a cultural vacuum; it relies heavily on the continued challenging of institutional cultures, norms and biases that value one narrative over another. Too often, the most powerful and resource-intensive discourse is heard. Challenging this situation remains key in shifting the status quo towards a Canadian society and economy that values and protects the ecosystem and views long-term sustainability as key to Canada's success. It is also critical to confront purely monetary considerations and engrained privilege that may impact the development of an effective NAS. Public servants are key in this transition and need to find support in a work environment that values diversity, inclusion, fairness and equality. They can act as the conduits to change, confronting exclusion in the NAS development. An example of best practice in integrating culture changes is to have diversity, inclusion and equality considerations written into each level of performance evaluations from stakeholder outreach officers, management, direction and senior management. These performance criteria should be aligned with specific milestones and deliverables that are monitored and evaluated frequently. For example, performance bonuses, advancement criteria and promotions must be strictly evaluated against priorities identified through public consultations. Another best practice is already being done by the [Treasury Board of Canada](#), where project funding is linked to a concrete GBA+ assessment, and that project funding renewal is contingent on providing measured impacts and capacity building support in diversity, inclusion and equality, more specifically, the integration of barriers and concerns raised through the stakeholder engagement process.

By developing innovative solutions that address fundamental inequality and injustice, Canada and its public service will ensure that the NAS is representative and impactful. This dual approach will allow Canada to be at the forefront of climate change adaptation success that represents all Canadians, not just the few and powerful.