



North American Climate Change and Human Health Working Group Adaptation Bulletin

North American Working Group on Climate Change and Human Health

In 2011, Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention entered into an agreement to establish a **North American Climate Change and Human Health (NACCHH) Working Group**. The Federal Commission for the Protection Against Sanitary Risk in Mexico has recently become a member. The goal of the working group is to foster international relationships and increase adaptive capacity in the area of climate change and health. Four themes have been identified to guide working group activities and include:

- A. Climate change and infectious diseases
- B. Cross-border collaboration on adaptation
- C. Addressing climate change health impacts in the North
- D. Disseminating climate change and health information

The working group leverages expertise and skills through collaborative efforts from participating organizations that are described below.



Federal Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives in Canada

Health Canada is increasing knowledge about how a changing climate can affect human health and is providing tools to support adaptation. It is working to improve heat resiliency across Canada by disseminating resources to public health and emergency management decision makers to help in recognizing, preparing for, and adapting to extreme heat events. <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/climat/index-eng.php>

A Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program for Northern First Nations and Inuit Communities supports community-based

adaptation strategies. The program has supported over 50 community-driven research projects since 2008 throughout Canada's North. <http://climatetelling.ca/>



The Public Health Agency of Canada undertakes activities to address climate change and infectious diseases in Canada through the Preventative Public Health Systems and Adaptation to Climate Change Program. The program focuses on understanding the impacts of climate variability and climate change on infectious diseases through targeted research and risk assessment. It also facilitates the development, validation and refinement of practical adaptation strategies and tools related to climate change and infectious diseases. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/eph-esp/pph-psp-eng.php>

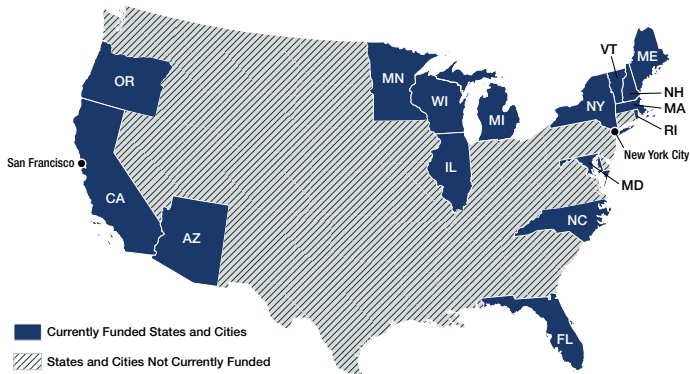
Climate Change and Health Adaptation Action in the United States

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The US CDC's Climate Change Program leads efforts to prevent and adapt to the anticipated health impacts associated with climate change. The program seeks to identify populations most vulnerable to these impacts, anticipate future trends, and support systems that detect and respond to emerging health threats.



The **Climate-Ready States and Cities Initiative** is aimed at increasing the capacity of state and local health agencies to address climate change and health risks. Through the program, sixteen state and two city health departments are addressing priority health effects of climate change.



Many initiatives are underway to address climate change and health in Mexico that align with the General Law on Climate Change (GCCL) objectives. The GCCL defines the obligations of the state authorities and different levels of government and determines the scope and content of the national policy on climate change.

The US CDC has also developed the **‘Building Resilience Against Climate Effects’ (BRACE) Framework** to help jurisdictions develop strategies and programs on climate change. Five steps are included in the framework to assist jurisdictions assess current and future vulnerabilities, identify effective strategies, develop an adaptation plan and evaluate efforts. Information on other climate change and health initiatives underway at the US CDC is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/climate_ready.htm

The GCCL launched the development of the National Strategy on Climate Change and the formulation of a Special Climate Change Program.

Climate Change and Health Adaptation Action in Mexico

The Federal Commission for the Protection Against Sanitary Risk (COFEPRIS) is a decentralized organization within the Ministry of Health in Mexico. The mission of COFEPRIS is to protect the population against sanitary risks which include environmental hazards caused by a changing climate.

The Ministry of Health protects vulnerable populations from the impacts of climate change and has undertaken adaptation actions such as:

- Development of early warning system for specific diseases related to climate change
- Conducted a strategic evaluation of health sector infrastructure with a focus on vulnerability
- Updated the health sector regulatory framework relative to the health risks associated with climate change, among others

Highlights of NACCHH Activities

Extreme Heat and Health Webinar

The North American Climate Change and Human Health Working Group hosted a webinar on October 30th, 2013 entitled *“Adapting to climate change: Actions to reduce heat-health risks in Canada and the United States”*.

Public health officials provided information on heat-health programs currently being implemented in the USA and Canada and activities undertaken *before, during and after* the heat season to reduce heat-health risks. Dr. Kristie Ebi also gave a presentation on adaptation to extreme heat in a changing climate. Over 120 people from the USA, Mexico and Canada participated in the webinar.

For further information or to obtain a recording of the Extreme Heat and Health Webinar, please contact: Climatinfo@hc-sc.gc.ca