

# ***Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation***

Presentation to Canadian Water Resources Association Ontario Branch  
2009 Annual Meeting  
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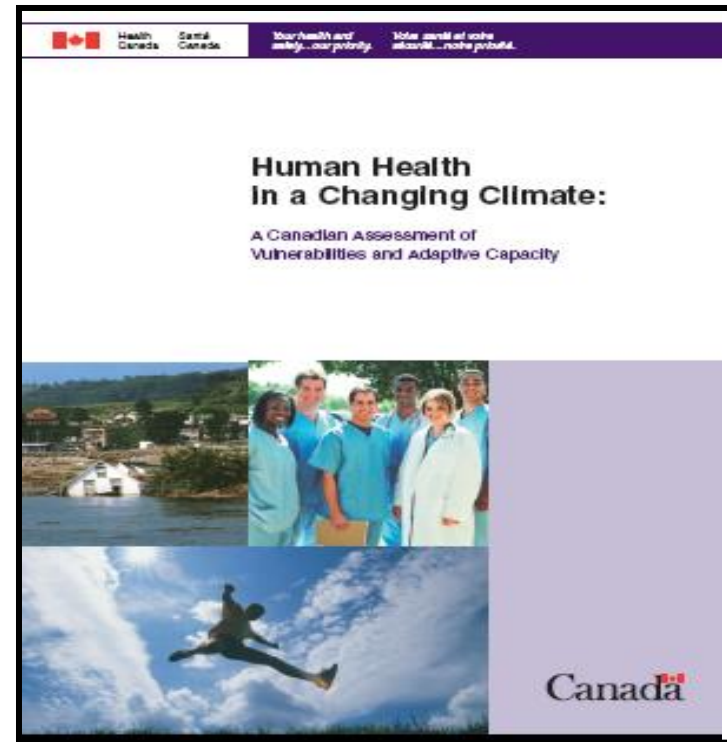
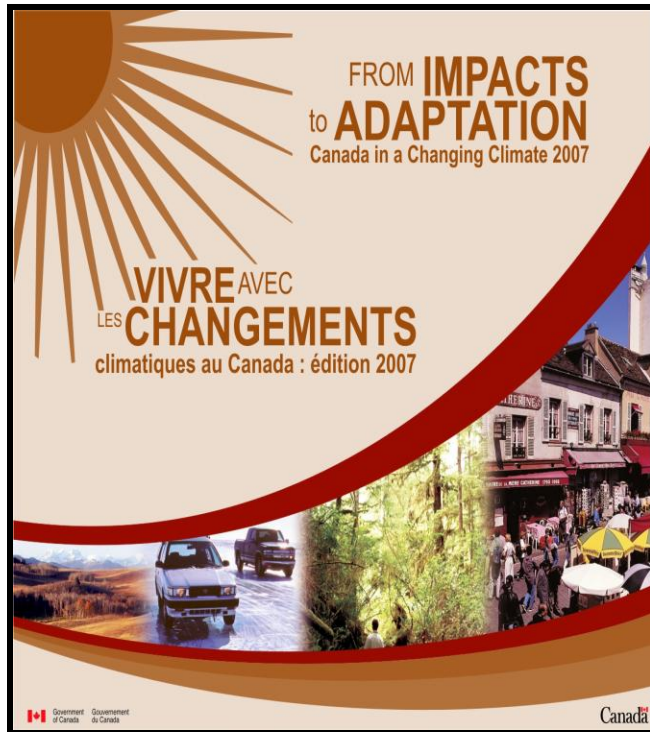
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# Outline

- Why Climate Change Adaptation is Critical to Ontario
- Provincial Actions on Adaptation
- Next Steps

# Reports on Climate Change Adaptation

There has been an increasing number of reports on adaptation, demonstrating how this is an area of growing awareness and concern among governments and others - two recent examples include:



These reports are providing government with a foundation for decision making.

# Moving Towards Adaptation in Ontario

## Ministry of the Environment

- MOE has the lead on the adaptation file for the province.
- It has dedicated staff that are working on adaptation.

## Climate Change Secretariat

- The Government of Ontario has a Climate Change Secretariat that reports directly to the Premier.
- The Secretariat is:
  - Coordinating all the actions the government is taking to address climate change in Ontario;
  - Providing information as the “go to” resource for Ontarians who want to know more and act on climate change.

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

Another important way the province is trying to move the yardstick on adaptation is through supporting organizations like Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources and the Clean Air Partnership who work with communities, cities, municipalities, health units to raise awareness and build adaptation capacity.

- For the past 2 years, the Ministry of the Environment has provided funding to support the Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources (OCCIAR).
- OCCIAR, based out of Laurentian University, is a hub for information and education on mitigation and adaptation in Ontario.
- OCCIAR's objective is to undertake education on adaptation to communities across Ontario to build adaptive capacity (e.g. undertakes vulnerability assessment) and supports a network of researchers and stakeholders to develop and disseminate credible information on climate change.

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

- On a national level the Premier has taken a leadership role on adaptation:



- In 2008, while attending a meeting of the Council of the Federation in Vancouver the Premier, committed to hosting a national summit on climate change adaptation.
- The 2 –day summit was held in Spring 2008 and was entitled **Planning for Today: The Climate Change Adaptation Summit**.
- The summit was aimed at finding adaptive solutions to existing and imminent climate change impacts and was attended by over 100 scientific, technical and policy experts from across Canada, including representatives from every provincial and territorial government.
- The summit’s goal was to solicit practical advice to governments across Canada (e.g. model legislation, best practices, etc.) and to promote an on-going dialogue and community of practice between scientists and policy makers.
- The summit focused on adaptation challenges related to water with three key sub-themes: Infrastructure, Emergency Planning and Preparedness, Water Management.

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

## Outcomes on Water from the Summit

- Water management considerations should be integrated into any policy that affects the flow or availability of water resources.
- Policy measures should include an assessment of how changes in water supply will influence and be influenced by new activities or infrastructure.
- Policy should look at how to strengthen watershed associations, ensure greater conservation, and include economic valuations of water.
- It should also ensure that policies do not provide counter-productive incentives such as compensation to rebuild flooded houses on the same flood plain.

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

- In December 2007 the Minister of the Environment appointed an Expert Panel on Climate Change Adaptation to provide advice on measures to help the province understand how to prepare and plan for climate change impacts in areas such as public health, environment infrastructure and the economy.

## Composition:

- The Panel consists of two co-chairs (Dr. David Pearson, Professor of Earth Sciences at Laurentian University and Dr. Ian Burton, Emeritus Professor at the University of Toronto and Lead Author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 4th Assessment Report) and the nine additional members from a diverse variety of backgrounds and expertise:
  - Grand Council Chief John Beaucage (Anishinabek Nation; Ontario Portfolio for Housing and Infrastructure);
  - Dr. Barry Smit (University of Guelph);
  - Dr. Judith Guernsey (Dalhousie University);
  - Jo-Ellen Parry (International Institute for Sustainable Development);
  - Dr. Quentin Chiotti (Pollution Probe);
  - Eva Ligeti (Clean Air Partnership);
  - David Lapp (Canadian Council of Professional Engineers);
  - Dr. Gordon McBean (University of Western Ontario); and
  - Alain Bourque (Impacts and Adaptation, Ouranos, Quebec).

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

- The Panel has been meeting with senior level management in ministries to provide advice on mainstreaming adaptation considerations into the decision making process (e.g. programs, policies and legislation). The Panel is currently working on its first report to the Minister of the Environment.
- To date, the Panel has met with the following ministries: Environment, Natural Resources, Energy and Infrastructure, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Transportation, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Northern Development and Mines, Aboriginal Affairs, Education, Research and Innovation, Economic Development, Finance, Health and Long Term Care, Tourism, Community Safety and Correctional Services (Emergency Management Ontario) and Cabinet Office.
- **The Panel observed that there is a range of knowledge and understanding of adaptation among ministries.**

# Provincial Actions on Adaptation

Examples of Water Programs/Policies considered by the Expert Panel include:

- Permit to Take Water
- Water Conservation and Efficiency
- ON Low Water Response Program
- Conservation Authorities
- Water Monitoring
- Great Lakes
- Fisheries
- Other key initiatives that support adaptation include:
  - Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act – Implementing a ban on water diversions;
  - The Clean Water Act
  - Lake Simcoe Protection Act

# Climate Considerations for Lake Simcoe

- Lake Simcoe Protection Plan to be established in accordance with the proposed Lake Simcoe Protection Act (Passed Dec. 10, 2008)
- Public consultation on Plan completed March 13, 2009. Requirement of CCA strategy within two years of the date the Plan comes into effect.
- MOE, in collaboration with the MNR, the OMAFRA, the First Nation and Métis communities, the LSRCA and municipalities will develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the Lake Simcoe watershed.
- The strategy will identify key recommended adaptation actions needed to increase the resiliency of the Lake Simcoe Watershed to the impacts of climate change.

