

# Alberta PRAC Meeting Minutes

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Boardroom 14A Baker Center

### **Attendance**

Barry Anderson – Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Nicole Spears – Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Kendra Isaac – Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Tom Goddard – Agriculture and Rural Development

Kevin Appleby – Municipal Affairs

Terry Duguid – PRAC Administrator

Jo-Ellen Parry – International Institute for Sustainable Development

Ian Dyson – Environment and Sustainable Development

Ken Greenway – Environment and Sustainable Development

Zahidul Islam – Environment and Sustainable Development

Justin Wheeler – Environment and Sustainable Development

Ray Luchnow – Climate Change Emissions Management Corporation

<b>Item</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. Opening Remarks	On behalf of the PRAC, Kendra welcomed all of the attendees and thanked them for dedicating their time to providing some direction to PRAC on its future adaptation work.
2. Introductions and Purpose of the meeting	<p>All attendees introduced themselves and described their previous involvement with PRAC. There was a variety of levels of experience with PRAC from inception to newly introduced.</p> <p>Terry outlined the purpose of several PRAC meetings being held in March including one in each of the prairie provinces to have some discussion of provincial adaptation activities, priorities, and planned initiatives. Subsequently, an interprovincial meeting will be held to develop a shared vision for advancing adaptation across the prairies. The aim of the interprovincial meeting will be to identify priority areas for strategic and targeted work to be undertaken within the next PRAC funding cycle (2014-2016). The anticipated delivery from this meeting includes an initial plan for managing this work.</p>
3. PRAC Foundation Paper	Jo-Ellen provided an overview of the PRAC Foundation paper she co-wrote with Jeremy Pittman. The paper reviewed the history of the PRAC, NRCan's Adaptation Platform, the existing directive for PRAC, potential future activities, and some options for consideration. Currently, the goal is to increase adaptive capacity in the Prairies through stronger partnerships with decision-makers in priority sectors, increase understanding of risks and emerging opportunities and facilitated mainstreaming of adaptation

	<p>into regional policies, plans and programs. Possible future activities include stakeholder engagement and network strengthening, prairie-wide communications strategy, annual interprovincial forums and other workshops, and developing guidance tools.</p> <p>Clarification was sought around NRCan’s role in PRAC. This role is primarily administrative providing resources, some expertise, and supporting collaboration by others. For example, they provided \$3.4 million in their last call for research. It was noted that Alberta has only three projects under the current platform, much less than other prairie provinces. One participant suggested that this may be because NRCan has a reputation for having very burdensome reporting requirements and timelines.</p>
<p>4. Overview of Alberta’s current adaptation initiatives, priorities and needs</p>	<p>Nicole outlined some of the GOA’s history with adaptation including commitments made in the 2002 and 2008 climate change strategies. She spoke to the creation of ACCAT, its objectives, and membership. The recently-completed government-wide climate change risks assessment was also discussed. Next steps will include renewal of the climate change strategy, development of a provincial adaptation strategy, collaboration on adaptation including through PRAC, ministry-specific adaptation work and targeted adaptation research.</p> <p>A question for consideration by ACCAT is how this group could or should collaborate and work with other jurisdictions including other prairie provinces.</p>
<p>5. Discussion of key questions</p>	<p>Terry introduced a few key questions for participants to consider in the discussion. Conversation acknowledged a few stakeholders of primary concern; municipalities, industry, senior government official (ADMs, DMs, etc.) as well as some areas and sectors that have particular information or data requirements; climate impacts on water in Athabasca.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that PRAC could help to fill some operational data needs for flood management for example or modeling ability to explore different water management options in a specific basin. However, given the short time frame (2 years) and limited funding available (\$100,000/year) there was a sense that research may not be the best use of resources.</p> <p>There was some consensus that there is a fair amount of information available on potential future climates and historical climate change but that this information hasn’t been translated into the “so what” (socio-economic impacts, costs to government, implications for environmental and natural resource managements, ect). This translation was considered key to facilitating mainstreaming of climate change and moving the conversation from “its an issue” to “its an issue we can or</p>

	<p>are doing something about”. Climate information is also available from many sources, with some differences in models and forcing scenarios used, and there isn’t really a standardized set of climate change scenarios or a centralized location to get information for AB or the Prairies.</p> <p>The need for identifying some meaningful adaptation options and describing what is already being done was emphasized. Possible key messages include the perspective that there is no choice about adaptation; we are doing things already and there is lots left to do but opportunities exist to do things in a much more strategic, effective and efficient way. Framing communications around the work that is already being done and what the key adaptation gaps are or how what we are already doing could be done in a better way was seen as an empowering message that could raise the profile of adaptation. Avoiding a focus solely on extreme events was also raised as an issue.</p> <p>There was some discussion of the political climate in jurisdictions and what grabs attention of decision makers. Suggestion to bring in senior politicians from other jurisdictions to talk about what they are doing or have dealt with a particular type of issue (e.g Australia has faced major water management and fire issues, a jurisdiction with a climate comparable to what is expected here in the future). The idea of having business or industry leaders speak to the topic was also suggested, perhaps at an event that engaged senior decision makers across the prairies.</p>
5. Summary and next steps	<p>The main message from the discussion seem to be that PRAC should focus on communication of what’s known about adaptation in the prairies and how it could be better applied, and focus on engagement of key decision-makers in mainstreaming rather than on primary research.</p> <p>Kendra will share the meeting summary with PRAC and bring any additional input forward at the interprovincial meeting in Winnipeg on March 19<sup>th</sup>.</p>