

“PRAC is Back” Manitoba Workshop

Wednesday, March 5, 2014 (9:00 am to 1:30 pm)

Workshop Outcomes

Meeting Objectives

The workshop was held as part of an ongoing effort to re-launch the Prairies Regional Adaptation Collaborative (PRAC) and aimed to:

- Review the current adaptation priorities of Manitoba and the foundations on which to build effective climate change adaptation programs in our province and across the Prairies region
- Cultivate a shared vision for advancing climate change adaptation within Manitoba
- Identify key priority areas for strategic and targeted work on climate change adaptation in Manitoba and across the Prairie provinces to be undertaken within the next PRAC funding cycle (2014-2016)
- Formulate an initial plan for managing inter-provincial collaboration that will enable continued progress towards enabling adaptation to climate change

Of these objectives, emphasis was placed on identification of key priorities for the next phase of the PRAC in light of the provincial interests and needs. Workshop outcomes will inform an inter-provincial workshop being held in mid-March 2014 at which a program of work for the next two years of the PRAC will be determined by Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Discussion Context

To set the context in which agreement on the design of the next phase of the PRAC is to be reached, introductory comments and presentations were provided by Terry Duguid, Randall Shymko and Jo-Ellen Parry. Key messages shared were:

- The first phase of the PRAC (2009 to 2012) was a \$6.6 million project cost shared by Natural Resources Canada and the Prairie Provinces that focused on four themes: Water Resource Management, Drought and Excessive Moisture, Terrestrial Ecosystems, and Interprovincial Coordination and Collaboration.
- The new phase of the PRAC runs from April 2014 to March 2016, and NRCan is providing \$100,000 per fiscal year to support this initiative. Outcomes of the PRAC are expected to be:
 - Engagement: Building strong partnerships with decision-makers in priority sectors
 - Awareness: Building shared understanding of risks and opportunities
 - Integration: Promoting mainstreaming of adaptation into regional policies, plans and programs
- Work in the new phase of the PRAC are to complement activities of the Adaptation Platform. Led by NRCan, this \$13-million program (April 2012 to March 2016) aims to mobilize collaborative action by government and industry and to enable effective and efficient development and updating of adaptation tools and projects. Projects financed through the Adaptation Platform related to mining, energy, coastal resources, northern Canada and synthesis of outcomes of first phase of the PRAC are being implemented in Manitoba.
- Activities in the PRAC should support achievement of Manitoba’s adaptation priorities, which include mainstreaming of adaptation into provincial planning processes, raising awareness of potential climate change impacts and strategies for managing these risks, improving

coordination and collaboration within Manitoba and across the Prairies, bridging information gaps, and establishing a framework for measuring adaptation progress.

Discussion Outcomes

The following **goals and principles** for the next phase of the PRAC were suggested by workshop participants:

- Aim to maintain or enhance the lives of Manitobans, protect the province's most vulnerable populations, and sustain its ecosystems.
- Enable an open, shared learning process such that different groups (e.g. scientists, industry representatives) can be engaged as the program of activity evolves. The need to involve the scientific community was noted, as their participation could ensure that decisions are made based on the most up-to-date and reliable information available.

A range of potential **focus areas** for the PRAC were suggested, including:

- Sector Focus:
 - Food security – how the agricultural sector on the Prairies might be affected by climate change and influenced by changes in the international agricultural trading system
 - Public health – potentially with an emphasis on prevention and the relationship between the environment and health and well-being
 - Municipalities – with a focus on district level planning processes. The City of Thompson was suggested as a possible community of focus.
- Geographic focus: It was recommended that a region be selected that encompasses more than one jurisdiction, is of priority to the government and/or there has an established knowledge base upon which to build. Suggested options were:
 - Northern regions of the Prairies given the more limited adaptive capacity of their populations and existing gaps in knowledge of potential impacts
 - Lake Winnipeg watershed, potentially linking to the Lake Winnipeg Accord
 - Southwestern Manitoba due to its greater vulnerability to climate change (e.g. drought)
 - Assiniboine Watershed, building on research from the first phase of the PRAC
 - Nelson River Basin, potentially examining projected climatic changes in different time periods, the possible impacts of these changes, and actions that could be taken to reduce vulnerability.
- Approach focus:
 - Collaboration – increase understanding of the meaning of and process for strengthening collaborative climate change adaptation efforts
 - Communication to engagement – promote interactive learning that leads to enhanced understanding of climate change impacts and possible risk management strategies
 - Scenarios – develop regional scenarios in that bring together scientific projections, potential impacts and adaptation options. Such scenarios could strengthen different stakeholder groups' understanding of potential vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies for multiple sectors, such as municipalities, transportation, health, tourism, fisheries etc.

Potential **priority audiences** for the PRAC were identified as being:

- Senior government officials (e.g. Ministers, Deputy Ministers) to build awareness within government of the need to enable adaptation to climate change. This internal awareness may need to be enhanced before pursuing efforts to build awareness outside of government.

- Industry and industry associations, so that they in turn can play a role in influencing political commitment to preparing for the impacts of climate change
- Municipalities, potentially through the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, given their diverse role in supporting adaptation efforts
- Metis and Northern Affairs communities
- Youth

It was recommended that the PRAC work with partners / audiences that are actively interested in adaptation to climate change and want to be engaged in the process.

Potential activities for the next phase of the PRAC were identified as being:

- Deepening understanding of the adaptation priorities of decision-makers, such as through a survey
- Preparation of materials that bridge the gap between the type of information being generated and the information needed by decision-makers
- Moving from assessment to piloting of specific adaptation actions, from which lessons can be learned, shared and applied in other context
- Foster collaboration through the use of knowledge sharing software such as Peek and SharePoint

Finally, it was generally supported that the PRAC project should be designed to enable people from different departments to work together and share knowledge and information. It also would be appropriate to build upon existing processes (such as the IAWG) to better create the enabling conditions for continuation of action after the current phase of the PRAC ends. Indicators for measuring the success of the PRAC's work will need to be developed to demonstrate outcomes (e.g. integration of climate change into a revised policy or plan).

Final Options Identified

Workshop participants concluded that in its next phase the PRAC should focus its efforts on a **single shared initiative** that will complement or build on existing mandates and initiatives. Agreement was also reached on preference for a focus on **scenario planning** at the regional level, bringing together different stakeholder groups and provincial representatives to explore the potential implications of climate change, possible adaptation strategies and identification of required policy changes. Area of focus for the planned scenarios were suggested as being:

- Cross-jurisdictional watershed(s), such as the Souris River Basin or the Assiniboine River Basin
- Northern regions of the Prairie Provinces, potentially with a focus on the Nelson River Basin