

NATIONAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Summit Day | October 22, 2024 | Ottawa

Climate Proof Canada Recommendations

Enhancing Economic Resilience and the Cost of Inaction

The trendline is clear: Canada is currently under-prepared for the extreme weather events and climate-related disasters we are already experiencing, let alone what we could face in the future.



Summer 2024 shattered records for severe weather damage with over **\$7 billion** in insured losses alone for the year according to Insurance Bureau of Canada. Severe flooding in Quebec and Ontario, the costly hail storm in Calgary and the Jasper wildfire that destroyed parts of the community and crippled a tourism season in one of Canada's most beloved National Parks. This builds upon the 2023 wildfire season - the most destructive season ever recorded - that saw **four wildland firefighters lose their lives** and

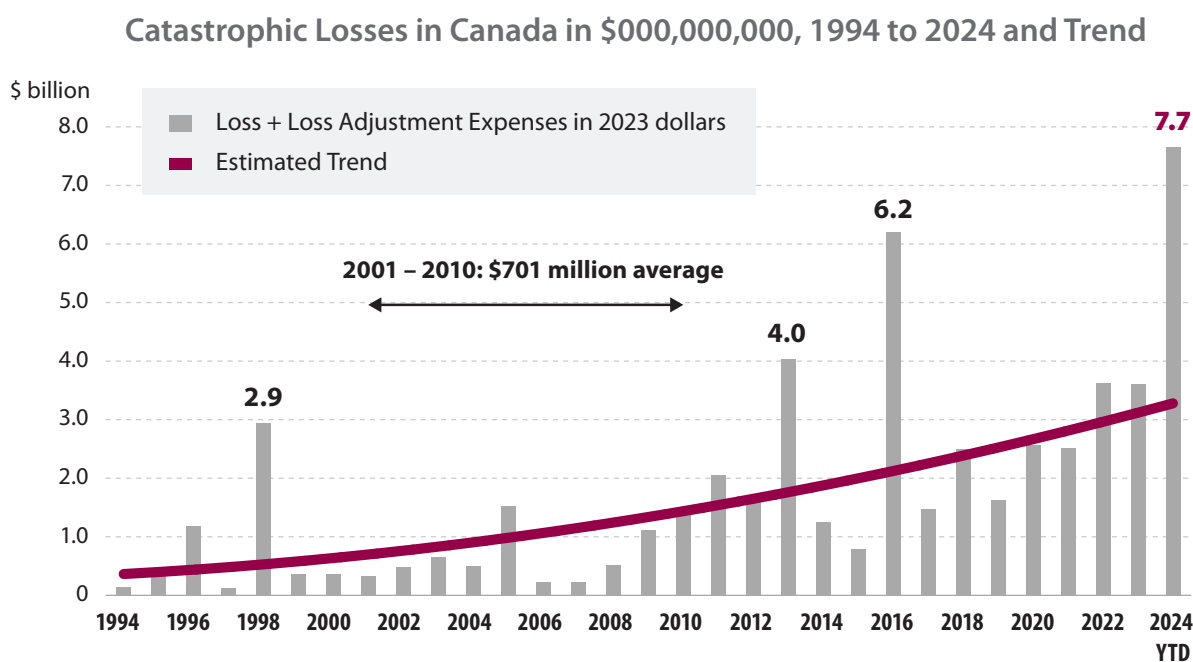


15 million hectares of land burned that blanketed the eastern seaboard with smoke. The insured losses don't adequately represent the economic losses faced by governments to repair and replace public infrastructure, businesses interrupted and supply chains disconnected. Nor does it address the mental health toll on the displaced families, and related costs to society.



The cost of inaction is too high. Climate Proof Canada calls for federal leadership on implementing Canada's National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) to catalyze a whole-of-society approach to meet the adaptation targets. To support this effort that Coalition has set out recommendations in four key areas that will lay the ground work to enhance economic resilience: **Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, Enhancing Disaster Resilience, Enhancing First Nations and Métis Resilience and Improved Health and Well-being** through new additional spending and improved program delivery. We need rapid tangible progress on disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation to enhance economic resilience and better protect Canadian communities across the country.

A clear and escalating trend – Canada has become a riskier place to live, work and insure



Sources 1994 to 2007: IBC, PCS Canada, Swiss Re, Deloitte
Source 2008 -2024: CatIQ

We need to take action now to fully fund and rapidly implement Canada's first National Adaptation Strategy. To better protect Canadians from climate-related threats and harm, the federal government needs to invest at least \$5.3 billion annually over the next five years. Climate Proof Canada has developed a series of recommendations to guide federal investment, that will enable Canada to make rapid, tangible progress on the targets set out in the NAS and become more climate resilient. A range of immediate actions that do not require additional budgetary investment has also been identified.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities



Climate Proof Canada recommends the following urgent actions to build climate resilient infrastructure and communities and make rapid tangible progress on the National Adaptation Strategy targets:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Avoid Risk Creation: Build New Homes in the Right Places and Protect Existing Communities

- a** **Avoid investing in new housing developments or infrastructure programs that build new homes in high-risk flood and wildfire areas.** Canada's Housing Plan must align with the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) to factor resilience into all federal housing, building codes, retrofit and infrastructure programs to deliver 3.87 million new homes the country desperately requires. New investments should not pose significant risk to new or existing communities, as well as individual health and well-being.
- b** Ensure that, where adding density, completing neighbourhoods or re-building in high-risk areas is unavoidable, **investments in cost-effective risk management measures are coupled with new housing developments** to ensure housing insurability and tangible risk reduction.
- c** **Work with provinces and municipalities to improve publicly accessible, user-friendly mapping** and disclosure of areas identified as high-risk, including areas subject to flooding, wildfire, extreme heat, melting permafrost and coastal erosion.
- d** **Implement revised Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA) in 2025** to support recovery that reduces climate risk while allowing impacted communities to build back better.

Connection to NAS Targets

2024



Starting in 2024 resilience to climate change impacts is factored into all new federal infrastructure funding programs.

By 2025



Of Canadians, including northerners and Indigenous peoples, are aware of the disasters facing their households.



Of Canadians have taken concrete actions to better prepare for and respond to climate change risk facing their households.



Conserve 25% of our lands and waters by 2025 and 30% of each by 2030, working to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 in Canada.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Prioritize Infrastructure Investments in High-Risk Communities

- a** **Provide surge funding for the Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund (DMAF)** of \$2 billion in the first year and at least \$1 billion per year for 10 years thereafter, with investments prioritizing allocation to high-risk zones and municipalities.
- b** **Expand funding eligibility** to support planning and design for communities in high-risk zones and local communities with critical local risk-assessments to help them respond pre and/or post-disaster.
- c** **Ensure funding for adaptation projects is long term**, predictable with limited administrative burden to support communities of all sizes.
- d** **Rapidly establish a Home Adaptation Rating System and a Community Resilience Standard** to encourage homeowners and communities to undertake retrofits to better protect lives, property and infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Mainstream Natural Infrastructure Solutions into Federal Program Design

- a** **Mandate consideration of natural infrastructure solutions** and existing natural infrastructure assets in all federally-funded infrastructure programs and projects.
- b** **Embed identification of financially valuable natural infrastructure services** (e.g. for emissions reduction, water quality, flood mitigation, biodiversity, and more) in program design guidance, in particular DMAF program criteria.

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2026



Additional climate change resiliency considerations have been incorporated into three Canadian Codes – National Building Code, Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code, and Canadian Electrical Code.

By 2028



By 2028 the federal government, provinces and territories have worked collaboratively to prioritize at least 200 higher-risk areas for new hazard maps/regional level modelling, and have taken evidence-based risk mitigation actions in accordance with scientific guidance.



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Expand eligibility criteria and guidance for existing and new infrastructure programs to include funding for local government and organization project planning and design, to support incorporation of natural infrastructure and nature-based solutions within infrastructure projects. Particular focus should be given to smaller and rural municipalities. Factoring these solutions into project planning and design will increase resilience, maximize co-benefits and enable progress on the NAS Target to have factored climate change adaptation into their decision-making processes by 2030.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Unlock private capital to multiply the impact of public investments in resilient infrastructure.

a

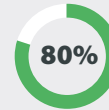
Explicitly mandate the Canadian Infrastructure Bank to develop innovative funding models to attract private capital to adaptation investments under the existing “Green Infrastructure” stream and work to develop mechanisms to incentivize participation by private capital.

b

Create an incentive mechanism within DMAF to encourage applicants to: 1) identify the major stakeholders who will benefit from the planned infrastructure, then 2) secure those stakeholders’ financial contributions to the infrastructure project in proportion to the benefit they will receive. This could unlock cash flows enabling greater private investor participation, allowing the applicant to do more, faster, and to share more risk. To ensure social equity, this should not apply to applicants with projects aiming to build resilience of equity-deserving communities. ■

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2030



Of public and municipal organizations have factored climate change adaptation into their decision-making processes.



Robust guidance, codes and standards covering the top climate change risks for key public infrastructure systems are available to be adopted by all infrastructure decision-makers.



**CLIMATE PROOF
CANADA**

Building a Resilient Tomorrow

Climate Proof Canada is a national coalition of Canadian business representatives, disaster relief organizations, municipalities, Indigenous organizations, environmental NGOs, and think tanks that believe Canada must prepare for the present and growing effects of climate change through building a more disaster-resilient country.

Contact: Jason Clark | Chair, Climate Proof Canada | JClark@ibc.ca | 647-208-3678

Enhancing Disaster Resilience



Climate Proof Canada recommends the following urgent actions to enhance disaster resilience and make rapid tangible progress on the National Adaptation Strategy targets:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Immediately commit to establishing a whole-of-society approach to disaster preparedness, response and recovery, to explore the development of coordination measures, including, but not limited to, a National Emergency Management Agency, where each level of government and sector enables the other to do their part to close existing capacity and capability gaps. This effort must include clearly defined roles and responsibilities of response actors and ensure that equity and inclusion are a key foundational aspect of approaches and related efforts.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

By 2028 implement a National Recovery Strategy to ensure that all orders of government, including Indigenous governments, have established emergency management planning and processes; enhanced preparedness and adaptation capacity for climate risk with key indicators; enhanced disaster response and recovery capacity; and clear and reduced national recovery timelines to enable impacted communities to return to their homes within two years. To achieve this the Federal government must immediately establish a consultation process to include perspectives from all orders of government and Indigenous governments, civil society and the private sector, as well as individuals and communities that are most impacted and at highest risk of natural catastrophes.

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2025



A federally-led table that includes federal, provincial, and territorial governments and Indigenous partners has engaged regularly to align and coordinate emergency management adaptation activities to promote disaster resilience.

60%

Of Canadians, including northerners and Indigenous Peoples, are aware of the disaster risks facing their household.

50%

Of Canadians, including northerners and Indigenous peoples, are aware of the disasters facing their households.



RECOMMENDATION 3:

In the upcoming Fall Economic Statement commit funds to stand up the reinsurance entity to administer Canada's National Flood Insurance Program for high-risk households (committed to in Budgets 2023 & 2024) in partnership with property & casualty insurers through a new subsidiary of CMHC. The flood insurance program should create incentives for investment in resilience and avoid ongoing subsidization of risk to ensure the overall risk Canadian communities face is reduced over time. The federal government should align Canada's Housing Plan with changes to DFAA and the implementation of the flood insurance program to ensure it isn't adding new homes to the flood program by funding development in high-risk areas.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Implement a national education program to promote guidance on extreme weather protection and physical risk at the level of the home and business, aligned with the forthcoming public flood portal as well as other hazard risk awareness efforts. This program would inform Canadians, including northerners and Indigenous Peoples, about simple adaptive measures they can take around their residence to reduce risk, complemented with incentives or rebates for those at high-risk and people experiencing vulnerability.

These recommendations echo our recommendation to urgently invest in and support the ongoing collaboration of the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda.

Climate Proof Canada supports the need for the Federal government to take leadership - and for all orders of government to collaborate in good faith - to develop a National Emergency Action Plan on Disaster Resilience before the end of 2024. This effort must include Provinces and Territories, Indigenous governments, Municipalities, First responders, Disaster Response organizations, Industry and Civil Society to deliver a whole-of-society Action Plan to enhance preparedness for, response to and recovery from natural disasters across the country. ■

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2025



Complete the modernization of the Disaster Financial Assistance

Arrangements to incentivize disaster risk reduction and improve recovery outcomes from large-scale disasters. Communities, including northern and Indigenous communities, in zones of high risk, as identified by provinces and territories, develop wildfire community prevention and mitigation plans by 2030, with up to 15% implemented by 2028.

By 2028



The federal government, provinces, and territories have worked collaboratively to

prioritize at least 200 higher-risk flood areas for new flood hazard maps / regional level modelling, and have taken evidence-based risk mitigation actions in accordance with scientific guidance.



A national recovery strategy is developed which sets out shorter timeframes for displaced

individuals to be able to return to their homes or resettle after climate change disaster events.



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Enhancing First Nation and Métis Resilience



Co-Convenors: Assembly of First Nations, Métis National Council, and the Canadian Red Cross

RATIONALE FOR ACTION

Disclaimer: The below content reflects discussions from the Climate Proof Canada workshop series that included representatives from The Assembly First Nations and the Métis Nation. Inuit representatives were unfortunately not represented. As such, it is imperative to note that while the Inuit perspective is not captured, there is acknowledgement and recognition of the extreme threats to life, livelihood and culture Inuit people face with the onset of climate change. Their needs and calls for support should be addressed in a culturally safe, distinctions-based, and rights-based manner in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other applicable legal frameworks.

Indigenous communities are on the frontline of the climate crisis. The rapidly changing environment affects critical aspects of First Nations and Métis communities' livelihoods such as access to traditional food sources, health and well-being, and their ability to engage in cultural practises. Disaster and extreme weather events fuelled by climate change exacerbate these impacts and compromises a community's ability to respond to, recover from and prepare for climate events. Greater collaboration between the federal government, First Nations and Métis communities to address the impacts of climate change is ongoing with positive developments. This includes supporting First Nations-led emergency management approaches through the ongoing development of multilateral emergency management service agreements, and commitments to better integrate self-determination and traditional knowledge for wildfire prevention. While positive measures continue to evolve, more needs to be done to recognize gaps and empower First Nations and Métis resilience.

Increasingly, First Nations and Métis communities are being displaced and negatively impacted by wildfire and flood events. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada's 2024 *Rapid Review: An intersectional analysis of the disproportionate health impacts of wildfires on diverse populations and communities*, 42% of wildfire evacuations are made up of First Nations communities, affecting 93 First Nations in July 2023. In 2024, Indigenous Services Canada noted that 83 First Nations had been affected. Métis communities were also affected by the 2024 wildfire season. For example, Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens that live in Jasper, Alberta, faced evacuation and loss of homes and livelihoods. Despite a lack of federal emergency management funding, Otipemisiwak Métis Government was able to quickly mobilize to assist impacted citizens. Whole-of-community resilience can be bolstered with funding for self-determined Métis and First Nations as demonstrated in Jasper. Indigenous Peoples living in remote and isolated communities, as a result of colonialism, face difficulty in accessing needed supports and materials that can foster disaster resilience and bolster effective emergency management strategies and practices. In addition to geographic difficulties, First Nations and Métis communities encounter jurisdictional and funding barriers that further hinder resilience building. For example, the Métis Nation does not have federal earmarked funding for emergency management. Further, Modern Treaty and Self-Governing First Nations are not supported under the *Emergency Management Act*, with the Act silent on the role and authority of Modern Treaty and Self-Governing First Nations within the Canadian emergency management framework.

Challenges to First Nations and Métis resilience are created by jurisdictional complexities, outdated programs, and chronic funding barriers. Ineffective implementation of service delivery from federal, provincial, and territorial levels due to jurisdictional challenges and competition of funding priorities has increased manufactured vulnerability for First Nations and Métis communities. Further, most of the available funding is tied to reservations and land bases, making it inaccessible to Métis and non-reservation based First Nations. This exacerbates and creates an unnecessary drain on the resources of under-supported and disproportionately vulnerable First Nations and Métis communities. Further, existing federal programming and funding opportunities entail cumbersome application and reporting structures that create an inequitable administrative burden, adding additional pressures on First Nations and Métis communities where capacity and expertise has not been comparably or adequately supported by service providers across the nation. This results in instances where communities are unable to submit applications or fulfill requirements to receive critical funding or be successful in reimbursement for disaster prevention and recovery.

The lack of communication between relevant federal departments and the absence of First Nations and Métis leaders at established policy and other tables is a serious issue. There is an urgent and essential need to seek more effective ways to develop and support programs and funding opportunities and create elegant solutions to the vulnerabilities that are exacerbated with over reliance on proposal-based funding mechanisms. The integration of First Nations and Métis leaders at such tables will improve collaboration and service delivery and reduce costs by creating effective avenues for successful investment into pro-active emergency management.

The best way to address the emergency management gaps to empower and sustain long term climate resilience for First Nations and the Métis Nation would be to have full federal support and funding for the implementation of Indigenous Climate Leadership (ICL). This should include the support for the co-development of First Nations and Métis emergency management funding from relevant federal departments. The ICL has potential to further Canada's commitment to reconciliation and create space for Indigenous-led climate leadership where Indigenous partners are enabled to direct funding and work with partners of their choice.





Climate Proof Canada recommends the following urgent actions to enhance First Nations and Métis Resilience and make rapid tangible progress on the National Adaptation Strategy targets:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Government of Canada urgently supports the funding and implementation of Indigenous Climate Leadership (ICL) in Budget 2025 to ensure that appropriate action is being taken to develop and sustain First Nations and Métis resilience as the effects of the climate crisis grow in frequency and severity.

- a** The ICL should be fully funded and support self-governance and self-determination, with Indigenous partners able to direct how funding is used and choose which partners to work with.
- b** The ICL must advance reconciliation, contributing to cultivating nation-to-nation relationships.
- c** The ICL must support the co-development of emergency management funding for the Métis Nation and First Nations. ■

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2030



The Government of Canada, in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis will continue to make immediate and long-term investments to support ongoing work to close the infrastructure gap by 2030.



All northern and Indigenous communities have resources to develop, or have access to, culturally appropriate tools and information to address climate risks.



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Enhance Health and Well-Being



Climate Proof Canada recommends the following urgent actions to enhance health and well-being and make rapid tangible progress on the National Adaptation Strategy targets:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Implement a national communication and action campaign for extreme heat preparedness – to inform, prepare and protect people from the health risks of extreme heat events.

a Advance findings from Public Safety Canada's [National Risk Profile, May 2023](#), and Canada's [National Adaptation Strategy, 2023](#), which called for greater public education and awareness on risks – including health risks from extreme weather hazards, and how to prepare for them.

b **Communicate on:**

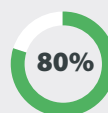
- i.** Protective actions that can be implemented at households/residences in advance of a heat wave;
- ii.** Health tips for staying cool and safe during a heat wave; and
- iii.** Community-based strategies such as checking on neighbours and family members.

c Benefit from rapid deployment – using known/available best-practice adaptation actions and health tips.

d Employ multi-modal, multi-language, culturally-sensitive communication designed to target harder to reach populations and those experiencing vulnerability.

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2026



Of health regions will have implemented evidence-based adaptation measures to protect health from extreme heat.

By 2030



Health systems have identified risks, developed adaptation plans and are measuring progress towards climate-resilience.



Consideration of health impacts and benefits are integrated into key climate change tools, guidelines and standards.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Continue to support local and regional level action to reduce health risks from extreme heat and other severe weather events, for the most vulnerable.

- a** Continue to fund the expanded HealthADAPT and HeatADAPT programs so that more local stakeholders, including community organizations and public health units, can access funds to implement and scale interventions that reduce the health impacts from climate change and extreme weather.
- b** Scale up federal investments in public housing and municipal building retrofits, to reduce the risk of indoor overheating and weatherize buildings for extreme weather, as these buildings provide essential housing and critical refuge for vulnerable residents.
- c** Evaluate and offer incentives/subsidies for cooling technology/infrastructure (e.g., heat pumps) for low-income households and multi-unit residential housing.
- d** Consult with local communities to ensure the federal government's efforts to implement Heat Alert and Response Systems are effective and accessible to those most vulnerable to extreme weather impacts.

Connection to NAS Targets

By 2030



Deaths due to extreme heat waves have been eliminated.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Improve data on the health impacts of extreme weather events to support the attribution of adverse health outcomes to extreme weather events.

- a** Identify and map vulnerability to extreme heat events in communities, and available supports to triage intervention to more vulnerable communities
- b** Encourage the provinces to reliably document, and Statistics Canada to include tracking and publishing of deaths related to extreme weather events in the Canadian Coroner and Medical Examiner Database.
- c** Map extreme weather event and air quality data against data in the National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS).



d

Develop a strategy for prioritizing, collecting, modelling, and disseminating climate and health data to inform efforts to build resilience in Canadian healthcare provision and implement initiatives to minimise and treat the health impacts from climate change.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Equip Canada's frontline health workers with evidence-based knowledge to anticipate, prevent and treat health impacts from extreme weather events.

a

Renew Canadian Institutes of Health Research's funding for scientific research into the link between climate change, severe weather events, and health outcomes in Canada, for \$80 million over five years.

b

Work with the Canadian Institute of Health Information to model long-term forecasts of health impacts from extreme weather events for different warming scenarios such that it can be incorporated into scenario analysis exercises that policymakers, healthcare providers and companies can use for resource planning and risk management strategies.

c

Improve dissemination of evidence-based knowledge of the health impacts of extreme heat events and educate health care workers. ■



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