



Your Health and a Changing Climate
Activities Update
Spring 2003

SPECIAL ISSUE: FOCUS ON HEALTH RESEARCH



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CCHO ACTIVITIES UPDATE - SPRING 2003

The mandate of the Climate Change and Health Office (CCHO) is to address the expected impacts of climate change on health and well-being by working with partners, both inside and outside of the Government, to better understand the effects of climate change, to raise awareness of these effects and begin integrating climate change considerations into public health policies in Canada.

HEALTH RESEARCH COMMITMENTS UNDER KYOTO AND THE UNFCCC

Canada is a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and on December 17, 2003 ratified the Kyoto Protocol. In addition to requiring a reduction of GHGs, these international agreements commit Canada to undertaking a number of activities with respect to climate change and health research:

- Take into consideration the impacts of climate change on human health when developing public health policies/actions.
- Undertake health impact assessments to minimize the adverse effects on public health of measures to mitigate climate change.
- Undertake health impact assessments to minimize the adverse effects on public health of measures to adapt to climate change (e.g., export of freshwater, biotechnology).
- Promote and collaborate on research on the adverse impacts of climate change.
- Support communications efforts to increase the public awareness of climate change including impacts and adaptation issues.

Contact: Anita Walker
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CANADA'S CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN AND BUDGET 2003

On November 21, 2002 the Government of Canada released *Canada's Climate Change Plan*. In addition to outlining proposed efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Plan identifies the need to increase understanding of the impacts of climate change on Canadians and begin taking efforts to address them. The Federal Budget 2003 announced \$2 billion for climate change activities and \$1 billion for health research (2002-2005). In the new budget, Government programs such as research granting councils, were asked to report on how their contribution to Canada's climate change objectives can be improved within existing resource levels.

Canada's Climate Change Plan can be obtained at:

<http://www.climatechange.gc.ca/>

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HEALTH ISSUE RESEARCH NETWORKS

CCHO has identified a number of risks to the health and well-being of Canadians that are expected to increase in the future because of climate change. The Office is coordinating the activities of external Health and Climate Change Research Networks (HCCRN) which have been developed to increase our understanding of these risks.

Extreme weather events

Organization: Institute for Catastrophic
Loss Reduction

Coordinator: Leanna Falkiner
(lfalkiner@iclr.org)

Air pollution-related health effects

Organization: New Brunswick Lung Association

Coordinator: Barb MacKinnon
(barb.makinnon@nb.lung.ca)

Water-and food-borne contamination

Organization: Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control, Health Canada

Coordinator: Dominique Charron
(Dominique_Charron@hc-sc.gc.ca)

Vector-borne and zoonotic diseases

Organization: Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control, Health Canada

Coordinator: Dominique Charron
(Dominique_Charron@hc-sc.gc.ca)

Population vulnerability in rural and urban communities

Organization: Centre hospitalier de l'Université Laval

Coordinator: Pierre Gosselin
(Pierre-L.Gosselin@crchul.ulaval.ca)

Socio-economic impacts on health & well-being

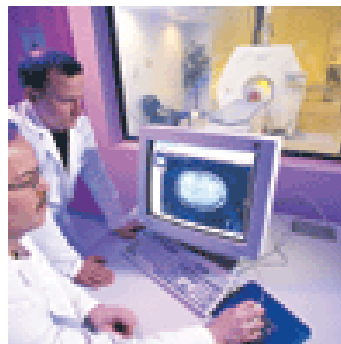
Organization: network under development

IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Following up on the creation of the 10 year Climate Change and Health Research Agenda, a number of HCCRN's have held workshops to provide information on possible funding sources, prioritize identified research gaps, identify possible research projects and begin linking researchers with similar interests to create teams that may address specific project needs. Summaries of these workshops will shortly be made available on the CCHO website

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cc

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NEW PUBLICATIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH

A series of publications being issued by the Government of Canada under the title *Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation: A Canadian Perspective* reviews recent literature on Canadian impacts and adaptation research (post-1997) and also highlights results from research funded by the Impacts and Adaptation component of the Climate Change Action Fund. The series includes reports on water resources, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, coastal zone and health, as well as general information on impacts and adaptation, advances in research techniques and knowledge gaps.

It is expected that the Canadian Perspectives Health Chapter, authored by Dr. Dieter Riedel of CCHO, will be released in Fall 2003. Sector-specific chapters are available at <http://adaptation.nrcan.gc.ca>

HEALTH RESEARCH FUNDING

During 2003, it is expected that some funding for climate change health impacts research will become available from the Climate Change Action Fund (CCAF), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and Health Canada's Health Policy Research Program (HPRP). To increase awareness of research needs in the area of health impacts of climate change, CCHO has provided the 10 year Research Agenda developed by its networks to Health Canada's Office of the Chief Scientist and has presented it to the department's Science Advisory Board.

CCAF

In 2002 the Impacts and Adaptation component of the CCAF provided approximately \$1 million for climate change and health related research. A second Call for Proposals (CFP) on the issue of climate change and health is expected in 2003. It would be intended to address knowledge gaps and regional Impacts and Adaptation gaps not covered in the first CFP. For further information and future announcements of CFP see the following web site: http://adaptation.nrcan.gc.ca/proposal_e.sp

CIHR

A "Global Health Research Initiative" (GHRI), was created jointly by the CIHR, Health Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and includes climate change and health research. In addition, climate change and health research was recently recognized to be a priority area to help CIHR lay a solid foundation for the development of a national research agenda on the relationship between health and the environment. The CIHR report, "Identifying National Research Priorities for the Environmental Influences on Health: Context and Options" is available at:

http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/publications/about_cihr/environmental_influences_e.shtml

For further information and future announcements of CFP see the following web sites:

http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/services/fun...ties/institutes/2002/fra_global_e.shtm

http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/funding/index_e.shtml

HPRP

Health Canada's Health Policy Research Program (HPRP) provided over \$700 000 for needed climate change and health research projects in

2002. This funding initiative is intended to develop a baseline of health information that will be needed by policy makers to develop adaptation strategies as climate change progresses.

For more information and future announcements see <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iacb-dgiac/arad-draa/englis h/rmdd/funding1.html>

HEALTH RESEARCH THAT ADDS UP

Several research projects concerning the impacts of climate change on health are ongoing. These projects will help increase understanding of the impacts climate change is, and will have on the health of Canadians and of special vulnerabilities which currently exist.

National

"Links Between Climate, Water and Waterborne Illness, and Projected Impacts of Climate Change" April 2002 to March 2005 (HPRP - \$274 800), David Waltner-Toews, University of Guelph

"A Multi-Centre Approach to Investigating the Health Impacts of Extreme Weather Events due to Climate Change and Climate Variation" 3 years (CCAF - \$198 000) (Total -\$453 500), Mao/Thompson, Health Canada

"Impacts of Climate Change on the Spread of Lyme Disease in Canada, 2 years (CCAF - \$203 744) (Total - \$476 844), Dominique Charron, Health Canada

Alberta

"Climate Change, Extreme Weather Events, and Health-Effects in Alberta", May 2002 to April 2004 (HPRP - \$182 702), Colin L. Soskolne, University of Alberta

Saskatchewan

"Respiratory ailments of Aboriginal people and residents in northern Saskatchewan compared with historical wildfire occurrences and possible future wildfire scenarios as a result of Climate Change", 2 years (\$80 000) (Total - \$162 500), Langford, Environment Department, Saskatchewan

Ontario

"Synergistic Impacts of Winter and Summer Weather and Air Pollution Due to Global Warming on Human Mortality in South Central Canada", July 2002 to June 2004 (HPRP - \$255 473), Monica Campbell, City of Toronto

Quebec

"Awareness of risks and actions considered and taken in response to intense heat be non-institutionalized patients with chronic health and lung disease", 2 years (\$96 500) (Total - \$193 000), Kosatsky, Santé Publique, Montréal Centre

"Hausse des concentrations des particules organiques (pollen et spores) causé par le changement climatique et ses conséquences sur les maladies respiratoires des populations vulnérables en milieu urbain", 2 years (\$127 000) (Total - \$345 000), Garneau, UQAM/Environment Canada

"Les changements climatiques et la qualité de l'eau potable au Nunavik (Nord du Québec). Incidences potentielles sur la santé des Inuit et pistes pour des stratégies d'adaptation, 18 months, (\$140 896) (Total - \$304 396), CHUQ

Northern Canada

"Impacts of Climate Change on Food Security in Three Northern Aboriginal Communities - Plans for Adaptation", 3 years (\$275 000) (Total - \$627 000), Chan, McGill University

INFORMATION RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM CCHO



- *Climate Change and Health & Well-being: A Policy Primer for Canada's North, Health Canada, 2002*
- *Report on the Public Health Planning Workshop on Climate Change and Health & Well-being in the North (July 6-7, 2002 Yellowknife, NWT), Health Canada, 2002*
- *Climate Change and Health & Well-being National Policy and Planning Conference Summary Document, Health Canada, 2001*
- *Climate Change and Health & Well-being: A Policy Primer, Health Canada, 2001*
- *Meeting Report: Planning Meeting for Ministries of Health to Address Climate Change and Health, Geneva, Switzerland (March 18-19, 2002)*
- *Expert Panel Workshop on Climate Change and Health & Well-being in Canada: Key Findings and Recommendations, University of Ottawa, (April 15-16, 2002)*

Contact: ClimatInfo@hc-sc.gc.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

Assessing the Health Impacts of Climate Change

The Government of Canada, through its recent ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, has committed to conducting regular national climate change impact assessments. The next Assessment is due to be completed by 2005/06. Health Canada has begun work to develop the health component of the National Assessment. Consultations on the approach and scope of the assessment will take place in the coming months. Regular updates of progress on the Assessment will be included in upcoming issues of the Activities Update.

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For more information, on all other activities, we invite you to contact the office at ClimatInfo@hc-sc.gc.ca or by facsimile at (613) 957-1886.

C-CIARN Workshops

The Canadian Climate Impacts and Adaptation Research Network (C-CIARN) is a national network that facilitates the generation of new climate change knowledge by bringing researchers together with decision-makers from industry, governments, and non-government organizations to address key issues. C-CIARN provides a collective voice for this community to:

- improve our knowledge of Canada's vulnerabilities to climate change;
- identify ways to minimize the negative effects of future impacts;
- explore opportunities that take advantage of any positive impacts.

Information on upcoming meetings and workshops of the 6 regions and 7 sectors which constitute C-CIARN is available at

http://www.c-ciarn.ca/index_e.asp?CaId=16&PgId=27

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