



Foreword

NATIONAL ISSUES REPORT



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Three years ago, when we started working on Canada's current National Knowledge Assessment process, *Canada in a Changing Climate: Advancing our Knowledge for Action*, we could never have imagined how different the world would be at the time of release of this report. Since early 2020, we have lived through rapid and unprecedented change as the global population has struggled to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. All aspects of our lives have been affected—health and well-being, social connections, jobs, economic stability and more.

Although dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the world's attention, the issue of climate change remains firmly embedded in many global, national and sub-national dialogues. Indeed, while we are still trying to understand the pandemic shocks that are rippling through our social, economic and environmental systems, some encouraging insights are emerging that are relevant to responding to climate change. The response to COVID-19 thus far has shown that once individuals, businesses and governments understand the risks, they are willing to make major changes to protect lives and livelihoods, even in the face of uncertainty. The experience of the past year has also demonstrated the advantages that can be realized through cooperation, the progress that can be achieved through aligned efforts, and the critical role that the private sector and civil society play in responding to global challenges.

There is abundant research indicating that current efforts to adapt are insufficient in the face of rapidly accumulating social and economic losses from current and future climate change impacts. The research also demonstrates that the window for taking action to reduce increasingly severe impacts is rapidly closing. Urgent action, supported by strong investments, is needed to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to increase resilience to climate change through adaptation. Our decisions and actions today will determine our ability to survive and thrive under a changing climate. Informed decisions, drawing from the best science and knowledge available at the time, are imperative.

Within this context, we are pleased to release the [National Issues Report](#). This report, led by Natural Resources Canada, is part of Canada's National Knowledge Assessment process, *Canada in a Changing Climate: Advancing our Knowledge for Action*. The report provides a national perspective on how climate change is impacting our communities, environment and economy, and how we are adapting to reduce risks. It includes chapters on topics that are of national importance or that benefit from a pan-Canadian perspective, along with case stories featuring examples of adaptation in practice.

Within the larger National Knowledge Assessment process, the [National Issues Report](#) follows the release of [Canada's Changing Climate Report](#) in 2019 and the [Prairie Provinces chapter](#) of the *Regional Perspectives Report* in December 2020. Other regional chapters—including Northern Canada, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Provinces—will also be released over the coming year.

The overarching goal of the National Knowledge Assessment process is to assess, synthesize and share the latest knowledge on climate change impacts and adaptation in Canada. We hope that this report, as well as those that follow, will inspire you to take timely and meaningful actions for adapting to climate change and equip you with the information you need to do so.



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