



# TOWARD A NATIONAL ADAPTATION STRATEGY

Roundtable Summary Report

AUGUST 2021





## ABOUT PPF

**Good Policy. Better Canada.** The Public Policy Forum builds bridges among diverse participants in the policy making process and gives them a platform to examine issues, offer new perspectives and feed fresh ideas into critical policy discussions. We believe good policy is critical to making a better Canada—a country that’s cohesive, prosperous and secure. We contribute by:

- Conducting research on critical issues
- Convening candid dialogues on research subjects
- Recognizing exceptional leaders

Our approach—called **Inclusion to Conclusion**—brings emerging and established voices to policy conversations, which informs conclusions that identify obstacles to success and pathways forward. PPF is an independent, non-partisan charity whose members are a diverse group of private, public and non-profit organizations.



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## WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNER



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- About PPF ..... 2
- With thanks to our partner ..... 3
- Acknowledgements ..... 3
- Key takeaways..... 4
- Roundtable agenda ..... 6
- Governance ..... 7
  - The role of government ..... 7
  - Engaging and listening to indigenous peoples ..... 9
  - Applying a resilience lens to infrastructure..... 9
  - Inclusive partnerships..... 11
  - Educational & communication campaigns..... 11
- Setting targets and Developing indicators ..... 12
  - Tailored targets and indicators ..... 12
  - Adaptation standards..... 13
  - Constraints and challenges facing Canada..... 13
- The role of business ..... 14
  - Industry associations ..... 14
  - Climate-related financial disclosures ..... 14
- International role ..... 15
  - Global climate impacts & Canada’s responsibility ..... 15
  - Collaboration with the United States ..... 16
- Conclusion ..... 17
- Roundtable Participants..... 18

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Public Policy Forum convened a roundtable discussion on June 16, 2021, to look at the development of a national adaptation strategy in Canada that spans disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation domains. The participants represented a range of public- and private-sector perspectives on the key challenges that need to be addressed to push towards greater resilience and adaptation and confront the challenges of climate change. The conversation also looked at the need to set clear time-bound targets and performance measures and ensure these are grounded in [Canada's Emergency Management Strategy](#).

Coinciding with the roundtable, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) released a comprehensive research report, [Toward a National Adaptation Strategy for Canada: Key insights from global peers](#). As Canada works to develop its own National Adaptation Strategy (NAS), the IISD report provides recommendations specific to the Canadian context, based on a thorough analysis of how other countries have approached and implemented NASs.

The panel and larger roundtable (see agenda on page 6) focused the discussion on three key areas related to the creation and implementation of Canada's NAS, including:

- Issues of governance;
- The importance of target setting; and
- The opportunity to learn from best practices in other jurisdictions and to lead internationally.

Key takeaways from the panel and roundtable discussion were:

- A common sense of urgency for Canada's NAS with clear governance structures, institutional arrangements and responsibilities.
- A national adaptation strategy framework should be developed by setting clear targets related to the perils Canada is most exposed to (heat, flood and wildfire). A target is an outcome that references defending a certain number of Canadians either physically or financially from that peril within a specific timeframe. Indicators and a data collection strategy should be developed to measure progress towards each of these desired outcomes. Targets could also be set related to Indigenous Peoples and other vulnerable communities and to ecosystem protection.
- Programming should be developed to attain these targets while being mindful that climate impacts manifest differently across the country. Local outcomes or targets could be defined to drive local resilience while being nested within the national framework. Data collection as a key aspect of ensuring adaptation is considered at the outset, rather than as an expensive response measure.
- There is an urgent need to set infrastructure standards that reflect the climate of the future and protect communities.

- Social inclusion by listening to and responding to the communities most impacted by changing climate and weather is essential, with an emphasis on Indigenous Peoples, who are critical to nature-based climate change solutions.
- While Canada is currently catching up to other countries on the adaptation front, there is an opportunity to learn from others and eventually play an international leadership role.

# ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

1:00 – 1:02 **Welcome Message**

Katie Feenan, Senior Policy Lead, Public Policy Forum

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1:03 – 1:13 **Theme Introduction**

Adam Radwanski, Columnist and Feature Writer, The Globe and Mail

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1:13 – 1:18 **Introduction to the National Adaptation Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plans**

Jeffery MacDonald, Director General, Climate Change Adaptation, Environment and Climate Change Canada

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1:18 – 1:25 **Preparing a National Adaptation Strategy for Canada: Insights from International Experiences**

Anne Hammill, Senior Director, Resilience, IISD

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1:25 – 2:10 **Panel Discussion**

Lisa DeMarco, Senior Partner and CEO, Resilient LLP

Dr. Richard Florizone, President and CEO, International Institute for Sustainable Development

Dr. Julie Rozenberg, Senior Economist, World Bank

Moderator: Adam Radwanski, Columnist and Feature Writer, The Globe and Mail

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2:10 – 2:55 **Roundtable Discussion**

Moderator: Adam Radwanski, Columnist and Feature Writer, The Globe and Mail

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2:55 – 3:00 **Closing Summary**

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# GOVERNANCE

## THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

As the second largest country in the world, with 15 ecozones and 38 million inhabitants unevenly situated in urban and rural environments, climate change is affecting Canadians unevenly and in wide-ranging ways. Year after year, Canadians are experiencing the impacts of climate change and severe weather as the number and intensity of forest fires increase, floods become increasingly catastrophic and communities are impacted by the thaw of Arctic permafrost and coastal erosion. While climate change mitigation tends to dominate the public discourse, the importance of defending against and preparing for impending disasters through climate adaptation and increased resilience is frequently sidelined.

Responding to the effects of a changing climate in Canada means not only bridging a federation with varying concerns, but also considering communities and segments of the population bearing a larger brunt. As one roundtable participant noted, we cannot homogenize climate impacts in Canada — community loss and damage impacts are different across the country.

In late 2020, the Government of Canada announced a commitment to develop Canada's first ever National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) approach, outlined in the department's [A Healthy Environment and A Healthy Economy](#), emphasized inclusivity, working in coordination with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, Indigenous Peoples and other key stakeholders.

While the federal government has only begun to develop a whole-of-Canada NAS, there have been collaborative efforts between federal government departments and provinces on the issue of adaptation, such as the [Prairies Regional Adaptation Collaborative](#). Certain provinces have also independently forged ahead. Acknowledging the need to take a system-wide approach to climate change, in 2017, the Government of Saskatchewan, under Premier Brad Wall, launched [Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy](#). This strategy is outlined in four segments of capital: natural capital (the environment); financial capital (the economy); human capital (indicators of health); and infrastructure capital. Through developing an evaluation framework, Saskatchewan has been able to create metrics and determine accountability, allowing for a prioritization mechanism. However, while the province's approach may stand as a Canadian jurisdictional model, according to one roundtable participant, this strategy "predominantly excludes First Nations in Saskatchewan from governing and making decisions about adaptation and mitigation."

The governance over the many varied aspects of climate adaptation is cross-jurisdictional. While the ownership, management and oversight of matters impacting multiple levels of government, business, civil society and stakeholder groups can easily get bogged down in complexities and lead to fragmented

approaches, adapting and becoming more resilient to the impacts of climate change sit outside of partisan discourse. Like the urgent response to the COVID-19 pandemic, building resilience and adopting measures to better prepare requires a nonpartisan effort, which we are already beginning to witness. One roundtable panelist pointed to the analogy of Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic as an example of the importance of resilience. With shared accountability for health, the federal government and provinces/territories have worked collaboratively to respond to the pandemic and to effectively vaccinate the population. This shared jurisdictional accountability is similar, when dealing with adapting to climate change and building resilience; however, in the case of adaptation, municipalities play a much greater role.

Canada's NAS provides the opportunity to move beyond a fragmented approach to climate change and severe weather adaptation. As one panelist indicated, the federal government has a humility-based coordination role to play, which is particularly important since there is no "perfect" information or policy that exists. An objective evaluation of how and who best to implement is critical to avoid conflict over jurisdiction. The pandemic has only emphasized the need for policymakers to work collaboratively across jurisdictions to respond rapidly to crises.

The World Bank's [Adaptation Principles](#) report, while targeted at developing countries, provides useful guidance to governments in the early stages of outlining an NAS. The report identifies priorities for adaptation relevant to all countries, which are organized by government department responsibility, three of which are applicable in the Canadian context. These include:

## 1

### **FINANCE / ECONOMY**

Provide guidance and tools to assist private-sector actors in adapting to future risks and facilitate the economic transition away from sectors that may not exist in the future.

## 2

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Prepare critical public assets — including infrastructure systems and land use plans, but also health and education services — to ensure they are adapted to the future needs of the population.

## 3

### **ENVIRONMENT**

This cuts across all the unavoidable aspects where, regardless of how we adapt, society will be impacted by natural disasters too large-scale to completely protect against. Therefore, this priority requires government to assist in the building of systems of social protection, ensuring appropriate insurance and other types of financial tools are in place to allow for rebuilding after a destructive event.

## ENGAGING AND LISTENING TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous Peoples have a unique role in addressing climate change. As a [B.C. government climate preparedness and adaptation resource states](#), “Indigenous Peoples have deep relationships and histories with the land and water, and rich knowledge systems that are guiding their work to respond to climate change” - from food security challenges, heat, wildfire and flood risk reduction to species protection and energy security.

Roundtable participants underscored the importance of social inclusion in crafting policy around adaptation, placing an emphasis on Indigenous Peoples’ historical and present connection to the land and their essential role in the success of nature-based solutions to climate change.<sup>1</sup> One panelist, in particular, pointed to the need for an NAS to look at the conservation efforts currently in place with an open mind to evaluate changes required, while managing the competing priority of ensuring traditional livelihoods are maintained. It was further emphasized that interaction with and integration between Indigenous energy-efficient and resilient housing must be cultivated.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, another panelist emphasized using adaptation as a reconciliation tool, given that current policies, programs and legislation often prevent First Nations from exercising their own adaptive capacity. For example, seasonal mobility, a significant aspect of past Indigenous adaptation practice, is no longer possible. Similarly, discourse around climate change needs to attract broader audiences to reflect greater diversity.

## APPLYING A RESILIENCE LENS TO INFRASTRUCTURE

Canada’s [global infrastructure ranking](#), according to the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Global Competitiveness Index, fell to 26th in 2019 from 16th in 2017/2018. We are continuing to lag on infrastructure at a time when investments increasingly matter.<sup>3</sup>

Infrastructure spending, in relation to ensuring new builds are constructed in a manner that places resilience top of mind, as well as the importance of maintaining current infrastructure, was a key point of the roundtable discussion. There was overall agreement amongst participants that spending on infrastructure presents the challenge of being the most partisan aspect of adaptation. Investments in new infrastructure are often used as a political tool by those in power to show a commitment to communities. Macro infrastructure investments tend to be inherently political in nature and also, as a former Ontario Deputy Minister of Infrastructure recently put it, “suffer the stigma as a cyclical investment, made when the economy needs a

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<sup>1</sup> Craig, K., Moola, F., and Townsend, J. (2020). Indigenous Peoples are critical to nature-based solutions to climate change. iPolitics. <https://ipolitics.ca/2020/10/26/indigenous-peoples-are-critical-to-nature-based-solutions-to-climate-change/>

<sup>2</sup> See, Baird, K., and Podlasly, M. (2020). The Opportunity for Indigenous Infrastructure. Public Policy Forum. <https://ppforum.ca/publications/the-opportunity-for-indigenous-infrastructure/>

<sup>3</sup> Fagan, D. (2016). Building the Future: Strategic Infrastructure for Long-Term Growth in Canada. Public Policy Forum. <https://ppforum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Building-the-future-Strategic-Infrastructure-for-Long-Term-Growth-PPF-report.pdf>

boost, as opposed to a long-term tool for productivity and competitiveness.”<sup>4</sup> Crucially, as one panelist pointed out, “spending money to maintain infrastructure is not sexy, but it is mandatory to ensure community needs are met.” Finding a model that balances the requirement for government to show the benefit of well-planned, large-scale infrastructure investments while taking into consideration science and data, is exactly what communities need — this is the ultimate challenge.

Among ongoing efforts towards resiliency, one of the panelists did cite the active role of the Canada Infrastructure Bank in looking for the biggest infrastructure risks and opportunities for impact through evaluating the biggest “bang for buck.” Nevertheless, the question remains whether evaluating only the biggest risk and impact, in terms of economic value, is sufficient.

Micro infrastructure investments present an easily actionable way to implement a resilience lens. One example where Canada is failing to implement quick-win solutions is visible through the work of the country’s independent energy regulators. In this case, a panelist pointed to an energy regulator neglecting to apply a resilience lens to identifying operations and maintenance capital and acknowledging spending. The example was given of how, in Alberta, transformer stations are being constructed at ground level on a flood plain, instead of on an elevated platform. However, given the relative miniscule nature of cases such as this in the larger infrastructure spending spectrum, the absence of an adaptation lens does not get as much public attention.

Canada’s inability to look at the overall risk that weather and climate pose to infrastructure has become a costly problem. The Canadian Institute for Climate Choices, through its series on the cost of climate change for Canada called the [Tip of the Iceberg](#), has presented shocking numbers that point to a real need to invest in resilience and adapt a public- and private-sector approach that invests in avoiding future damages, instead of reacting to impacts of weather and climate after they occur. After all, as [a recent WEF article](#) point out, “infrastructure — in particular public infrastructure — is about much more than bricks and mortar; it is about people, improving the quality of life for all residents and raising long-term economic growth.”

The Global Commission on Adaptation, in its flagship report [Adapt Now: A Global Call for Leadership on Climate Resilience](#), called on governments to “raise understanding of the value of nature for climate adaptation” and “embed nature-based solutions into adaptation planning.” Nature-based solutions can often be the most cost-effective means of addressing negative climate impacts. In Canada, the government has indicated support for multiple nature-based solutions under the [Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund](#), promising to invest \$4 billion over the next decade. The three key initiatives covered under the fund are: growing Canada’s forests; nature smart climate solutions, and; agricultural climate solutions. Projects under

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<sup>4</sup> Fagan, D. (2019). Canada’s Infrastructure Revival: Let’s Get the Biggest Bang for our Buck. Public Policy Forum. <https://ppforum.ca/publications/canadas-infrastructure-revival/>

the fund will be evaluated across three dimensions: Indigenous partnerships; place-based actions; and sector-based policy.

While nature-based solutions carry merits, they do face challenges, according to the IISD. For example, initiatives under nature-based solutions often lack a business case, confront challenges in implementing at scale, and are themselves vulnerable to climate change. Therefore, as they relate to the NAS, Canada can aim to focus on the synergies and minimize trade-offs between efforts to promote the use of nature-based solutions for mitigation as well as adaptation.

## INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Adapting to climate change and building resilience requires diverse stakeholders to act in a co-ordinated and united manner benefiting from each other's resources such as knowledge, expertise, financing, access and outreach.

Such partnerships do already exist between private and not-for-profit organizations in Canada and the government. ECCC has identified a [list of partnerships](#) that it aims to develop through its adaptation work. One example of a partnership is [Partners for Climate Protection program \(PCP\)](#), put together by the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#), a national network of 400+ municipalities. The financial sector is also acting on supporting investments in start-ups that promote green technologies. One such example is the [RBC Tech for Nature](#), which since 2019 has brought together more than 125 organizations to protect the natural ecosystem with investments totaling over \$27 million.

Multiple organizations across Canada are engaged in meaningful efforts towards improving resiliency. Most of these partnerships, however, are tracking progress towards achieving process-based initiatives, such as creating plans or having regulations in place. Specific adaptation targets, though, seem to be missing from the discourse so far.

## EDUCATIONAL & COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Several quick-win opportunities to improving resilience exist. The suggestion was made to create a national flood-prevention protection programs for homes. Through a simple intervention, either an education campaign or possibly a subsidy, vulnerable homes could reduce their flooding-risk profile. The [Home Flood Protection Program](#) by the Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation at the University of Waterloo provides some background material for this approach. This point was further emphasized by indicating a concerted effort is required to dispel notions that such investments must be expensive. Another panelist suggested the need to think about creative ways to tell adaptation stories from across Canada.

Such campaigns are critical, given the disparity in understanding of climate risks in the Canadian populace. Only 66 percent of Canadians recognize climate change as a major threat, according to [a 2019 Pew Research](#)

[study](#). Perceptions around threats also differ by gender and education. For example, in Canada, 72 percent of women consider climate change a major threat, compared to 59 percent of men. Similarly, 70 percent of respondents with “more education” perceive climate change as a major threat, as opposed to 59 percent of respondents with “less education.” Such disparities highlight the need for a cohesive communication strategy that cuts across socioeconomic strata and calls for consistent messaging.

## SETTING TARGETS AND DEVELOPING INDICATORS

### TAILORED TARGETS AND INDICATORS

Setting targets and establishing a predefined list of indicators can help a government track progress and adjust its strategy as new insights are gained. As it relates to defining adaptation targets, there is currently no singular practice or agreed-upon global methodology. Frequently, targets tend to be defined both on outcomes and processes; however, the best targets are tailored to a specific and often local context, driving real-world action. The [Adaptation Gap Report 2020](#) produced by the United Nations Environment Programme proposes five dimensions to gauge the effectiveness of standards, mainly: comprehensiveness; inclusiveness; implementability; integration, and; monitoring and valuation. An example of a target mentioned by a participant was to reduce or mitigate the number of homes at high risk of flooding by 30 percent by 2030. Similar measurable targets could be used to drive outcomes related to wildfire risk, climate-related health risks (e.g., heat), risks to Indigenous communities (e.g., food security) and risks to ecosystems and biological diversity.

An indicator’s utility will depend on [four factors](#), including: purpose; specific context; resources & the capacity available to deploy and apply indicators, and; alignment with existing monitoring and evaluation systems. A typical confluence of indicators tends to be based on parameters, impact, actions and result based.

Most of the indicators under adaptation plans are based on [socioeconomic data](#) already collected by governments, such as those related to income, access to modern energy, water and sanitation, social protection spending, or percentage of farmers with access to fertilizers or improved seeds. **Typical risk indicators** include exposure to natural hazards, coping capacity based on preparedness, governance and security, and adaptive capacity related to future natural events. **Climate specific indicators** include number of weather or hydrological observation stations operational in the country, data platforms providing access to hazard and climate change scenario data, or percentage of country covered by high-resolution digital

terrain model. These indicators are only suggestive among many that countries can adapt that are better suited to their context.

However, the intention is not only to generate data but also create [legal frameworks](#) to allocate responsibilities and risks. For example, in the Netherlands, the government is responsible for protection from floods but only to a certain extent. The country [produces risk maps](#) that outline a range of potential risks that could possibly be disastrous. These maps, by identifying residual flooding risks, allow private-sector actors to decide where to build and what building standards are required.

## ADAPTATION STANDARDS

According to the **Standards Council of Canada (SCC)**, a third of municipal infrastructure needs to be fixed or replaced, highlighting the significance of adaptation standards that reflect Canada's future climate. These standards will carry significant importance in developing resilient communities, as they touch on infrastructure ranging from the roads Canadians travel on to the foundations of the homes they live in. According to SCC's report [Standards in Action: Building a Climate-Resilient Future](#), a 2016 review of 714 standards related to infrastructure and buildings identified more than 100 standards assessed to be needing an urgent update to address climate change adaptation. The report identified the need for a "consistent, coordinated, and predictable process for updating standards for climate considerations."<sup>5</sup> Such standards will also strengthen the efforts of the [Financial Stability Board \(FSB\)](#) in promoting voluntary adaptation-related disclosures under the [Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures \(TCFD\)](#). As cited in IISD's *Toward a National Adaptation Strategy for Canada* report, currently only 28 percent of countries use regulatory instruments such as standards and building codes.

## CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES FACING CANADA

The 2017 [Expert Panel on Climate Change and Adaptation Resilience Results](#) provided guidance on the development of a monitoring system to track Canada's adaptation progress; however, the actual system and the indicators within remain in development.

Currently, two bodies in Canada are engaged in coordinating adaptation efforts. [Canada's Climate Change Adaptation Platform](#) was established in 2012 to "create an enabling environment" and works on specific sectoral issues. However, it does not engage in development or implementation of policy decisions. Similarly, the [Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment \(CCME\)](#) is currently the main intergovernmental forum addressing environmental issues of national concern; however, it remains singularly a body of ministers with insufficient interaction with other governmental departments or industry representation.

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<sup>5</sup> Standards Council of Canada. (2021). *Standards in Action: Building a Climate Resilient Future*, p 20. [https://www.scc.ca/en/system/files/publications/SCC\\_Standards\\_in\\_Action\\_Report\\_EN.pdf](https://www.scc.ca/en/system/files/publications/SCC_Standards_in_Action_Report_EN.pdf)

A CCME priority is the establishment of common metrics for use by federal, provincial and territorial governments to track progress on adaptation efforts. IISD, in its review, cites that the CCME is “not well suited” to enabling collaboration across stakeholders because of its narrow participant base, thereby drawing the conclusion that Canada lacks a “permanent body... that is mandated to coordinate climate change adaptation action across the federal government and between different ministries.”<sup>6</sup>

As it relates to decision-making around adaptation, a common sentiment among panelists was that the specific local impacts of climate change and their timing were inherently unpredictable, therefore decision-makers need to be comfortable with uncertainty when pursuing measures. While the dearth of this data at the onset should not prevent action, collecting and updating data and subsequently making it available to drive decision-making within public and private sectors is important.

There is also a need to leverage existing data to operationalize adaptation programs. For example, ECCC has produced extensive maps on how disasters will impact Canada that can be leveraged for decision-making. The suggestion made to improve buy-in for these adaptation programs is to contextualize them with a perspective on job creation and economic value, which will allow policymakers and elected officials to understand and contextualize this for their audiences.

## THE ROLE OF BUSINESS

### INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Industry associations, especially those representing businesses involved in areas such as engineering, construction, insurance, appraisal, lending and real estate, have already been playing a critical role in bringing attention to adaptation. These associations are equipped to help define “operational strategies” based on a deeper understanding of how their industries will and are being impacted by severe weather and climate change. A particular mention was made about the benefit of collaboration between chief operating officers represented within these associations.

### CLIMATE-RELATED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES

The FSB created the **Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)** to improve and increase reporting of climate-related financial information related to transition, physical and liability risk. Despite TCFD being a primarily voluntary framework, investors are increasingly seeking additional information on sustainability and climate impact from companies and company boards are pushing for it. Climate disclosures

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<sup>6</sup> International Institute for Sustainable Development. (2021). Toward a National Adaptation Strategy for Canada: Key insights from global peers. p. 19. <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2021-06/national-adaptation-strategy-canada.pdf>

becoming an industry standard is a promising trend; however, TCFD recommendations lack enforcement and specificity mechanisms, and implementation in Canada and abroad has been mitigation-focused (transition risk) rather than adaptation-focused (physical risk). According to the [2020 Status Report: Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures](#), only one in 15 companies reviewed disclosed information on the “resilience of its strategy” that took into consideration different climate-related scenarios. Another roundtable participant cited the significance of accountants promoting accountability and standards. There’s significant progress towards developing international sustainability standards that will enable accountants to hold the industry to higher standards when it comes to climate-related financial disclosures.

Multilateral institutions are also increasingly attaching a resilience score to their financial investments. However, it is critical that these resilience scores do not inhibit investments in vulnerable or risk-prone areas. Rather, resilience scores are meant to highlight whether a team has looked at the risk and has a contingency plan against it.

## INTERNATIONAL ROLE

### GLOBAL CLIMATE IMPACTS & CANADA’S RESPONSIBILITY

According to the IISD report, 72 percent of the world’s countries had at least one national adaptation planning or policy instrument and another nine percent are developing them. There is still a concern about whether governments can translate these into their adaptation objectives. To aid social inclusion and enable science-based decision-making in developing countries, Canada can leverage its international assistance policy.

The inequality issue around the impacts of climate change should be front and centre in Canada’s approach domestically and abroad. One panelist emphasized, “We have an obligation to help those who are hardest hit by climate change but are the least responsible for it.” Canada has an opportunity to lead by prioritizing social inclusion, knowledge sharing and promoting climate-friendly policies through its international development programs.

International climate impacts should be of concern to Canada for a [multitude of reasons that could impact the country over the coming decades](#). Shrinking sea ice resulting from climate change will increase marine traffic in the Arctic Ocean, including the Northwest Passage (NWP). For effective stewardship of the NWP, and to ensure safe, secure and sustainable navigation, Canada will have to strengthen its rules. Canada also has significant dependence on international trade and how these routes are impacted is a cause for concern.

Given climate impacts will be distributed unevenly across the world, the country will come under growing internal and external pressure to accept large number of migrants from climate-disrupted countries. All these will largely impact human security across the world, thereby requiring Canadians to address risks and promote humanitarian goals by providing financial and technical assistance.

[Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's announcement at the June 2021 G7 summit](#) to double international climate finance was cited as a promising sign. Canada has also proposed to establish and host a new [NATO Centre of Excellence on Climate and Security](#) and intends to work with allies as the centre's framework nation. It would provide allies with a central location to pool their knowledge and develop effective preparedness and responses to the security impacts of climate change.

## COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED STATES

With the election of U.S. President Joe Biden, the participants felt the room for co-operation on climate policy has increased significantly. Two immediate areas for collaboration were highlighted: the opportunity to develop a coastline resiliency standard and shoreline resiliency standard for the Great Lakes.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Collaboration by way of the Great Lakes Commission, a convening of the Canadian provinces and U.S. states surrounding the Great Lakes, seems to already be underway (see: <http://glc.org/wp-content/uploads/GLC-Federal-Priorities-2020-FINAL.pdf>)

## CONCLUSION

As a result of Canada's northern latitude, significant landmass and expansive coastline, the country is particularly vulnerable to worsening climate impacts. Within the last decade, Canada has witnessed large-scale population displacements and billions of dollars in losses. While mitigation measures may contain long-term impacts, the need for adaptation and resilience measures cannot be overstated.

The will to navigate jurisdictional obstacles and the need for renewed, consolidated efforts, boldness and creativity to address the governance challenge are much needed. Focusing on the key objectives of outlining governance and performance measurement structures, promoting social inclusion with a particular emphasis on Indigenous Peoples and data collection will be key to the success of the National Adaptation Strategy.

The need for an adaptation strategy to address the adverse changes was emphasized by all panelists. A comprehensive National Adaptation Strategy supported through the right governance mechanisms would be a step in the right direction for Canada.

# ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

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