

First Nation Communities Engagement on Climate Adaptation in Manitoba

Project Summary

The Province of Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan Implementation Office within Manitoba Environment and Climate reached out to all First Nations in Manitoba to gain a better understanding of the observed and anticipated climate impacts within these communities and their traditional territories.

In early 2023, our team attended (4) and hosted (2) events to engage with First Nations communities and discuss the impacts and challenges caused by a changing climate, and better understand the barriers that limit communities' ability to adapt to these changes. An online survey was another method of gathering information. This project summary provides an overview of our work and our findings.

Thank you to all who participated for your contributions, and to all who have expressed sincere interest in finding ways to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Engagement Events & First Nations Engaged

Through the following 6 events, and 44 responses to the online survey, we have received climate adaptation feedback from 26 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba.

Northern Manitoba Trappers' Festival*

February 15th-16th → 38 participants

Efficiency MB Working Group Gathering*

March 1st-2nd → 23 participants

Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Schools Science Fair*

March 8th → 22 participants

Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective General Gathering*

March 15th → 27 participants

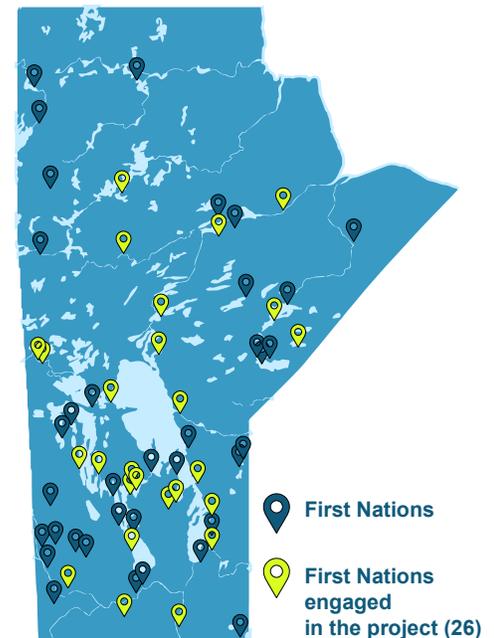
First Nations Climate Adaptation In-person Gathering

April 3rd → 13 participants

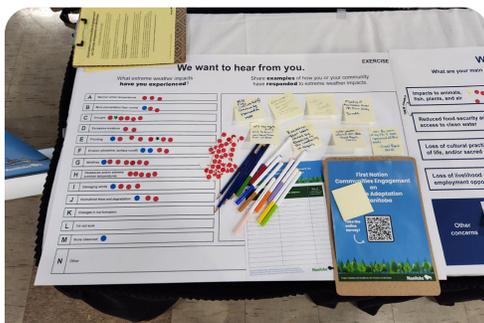
First Nations Climate Adaptation Virtual Gathering

April 12th → 2 participants

**Attended*



Event Images



Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Schools Science Fair

(March 9, Assiniboia Downs, 3975 Portage Ave, Wpg)

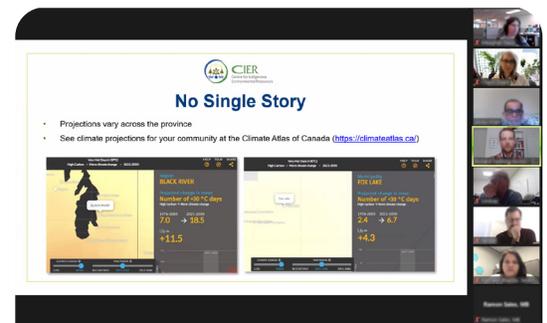
"We want to hear from you." Interactive Activity Board with responses received.



First Nations Climate Adaptation In-person Gathering

(April 3 at Agowidiwinan Centre, 15 Forks Market Road, Wpg)

Attendees at gathering view the project introductory video at the start of the event.



First Nations Climate Adaptation Virtual Gathering

(April 12, ZOOM Platform)

Richard Farthing-Nichol from the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources presents "Climate Change Projections" to attendees.

What We Learned

Summary of feedback from events and 44 survey responses



Most common climate impacts for First Nation community members:

- Overwhelmingly, **flooding** and **warmer winter temperatures** were the two most common impacts affecting communities in recent memory. **Wildfires**, **heatwaves**, and **erosion** were also experienced in over half of the communities represented.
- **Evacuations** - whether from floods or wildfires - were a common disruption, and one that can **affect or displace communities** long after the weather-related event subsides.
- Increased fall/winter precipitation and warmer winter temperatures have led to an **increase in structural damage to homes** and infrastructure from permafrost loss and rapid melting events.
- The **cost of fuel and food have been increasing**, especially for remote communities as winter and overland road seasons are shortening and becoming less reliable.
- Wildlife **migration patterns have been changing** and affecting hunting and trapping seasons.

What climate adaptation/resilience looks like for First Nation communities:

- The first step in adapting to climate change is **understanding what is happening**.
- The **needs of First Nations** should be **recognized and respected**, and First Nation communities want to have **control over their own futures** to advance adaptation in their communities.
- **Consultation with Elders** and/or **knowledge keepers** in tandem with **monitoring changes** in the natural environment are key in identifying what actions need to be prioritized.
- First Nation communities are **developing local and renewable energy sources**, to become more resilient.
- **Protecting and restoring surrounding ecosystems** was cited by nearly every represented community as a top infrastructural priority. This can be strengthened and put into practice through **on-the-land education**, especially for youth as they will be the generation to inherit these challenges.



Most common barriers preventing community preparedness for climate change:

- **Provincial policies need to better address the needs of First Nation communities** and the ability of First Nation communities to adapt and become more resilient to a changing climate.
- **Better communication and engagement** is needed from the province about climate vulnerabilities and risks, as well as funding opportunities and resources.
- Few represented communities were aware of the Climate and Green Plan and nearly all flagged a **lack of information** as a barrier to preparedness.
- **Knowledge sharing** – especially between communities that are experiencing similar impacts – is key for improving regional resilience and understanding best practices but more communication is needed in facilitating this type of collaboration.
- The reporting requirements and metrics needed to receive adaptation funding remain an ongoing barrier for communities either due to a **lack of in-community expertise, available data, or timeline constraints**. For many, **technical hurdles** have resulted in a lack of funding.
- Despite the many adverse impacts, climate change also presents **new opportunities** for First Nations especially with regards to **food security and decreased heating costs**.



The Province of Manitoba is taking action to address the impacts of a changing climate in northern, remote, and Indigenous communities. To learn more, visit: www.manitoba.ca/climateandgreenplan