



## Health and a Changing Environment

The natural environment is changing and it will have an impact on the health of Canadians, and on people around the world. While scientists continue to build a good understanding of the physical factors that influence the environment, only now are we beginning to build a better understanding of how a changing environment will affect human health and well-being, and how people can adapt to such changes.

The Government of Canada is contributing towards sustainable development objectives through ecosystem and human health and well-being science, policy and partnership activities.

### What is the Government of Canada Doing About Environmental Change and Health?

A national strategic framework is being established to facilitate the collaborative integration of environmental and ecosystem considerations into current public health policies and practices by all levels of government, key agencies and community stakeholders. One of Health Canada's priorities is to lead the development of the research agenda on ecosystems and human health and well-being for the Government of Canada. The Department will also foster the collaborative development of national policies for assessing, managing and communicating the health risks associated with a changing environment.

### How the Government of Canada Deals With a Changing Environment

The Government of Canada organizes its work on climate change and health around the following eight significant climate change-induced health and well-being effects which are expected to increase in the future in Canada: temperature-related morbidity and mortality, extreme weather events, air pollution, water- and food-borne contamination, vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, stratospheric ozone depletion, population vulnerabilities in communities, and socio-economic impacts. Support is provided by eight extramural Health Issue Research Network Coordinators.

The knowledge generation and exchange work related to ecosystems is regionally organized, and supported by policy network coordinators around the following environmental hazard categories: chemical, microbiological, physical, invasive species, global change. The work also includes assessing levels of exposure, as well as health and well-being effects and vulnerabilities.



### What is the Government of Canada Doing About Climate Change and Health?

Health Canada is the federal agency responsible for safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and social health and well-being of Canadians, including the human health consequences of climate change and other environmental and ecosystem alterations.

Its Climate Change and Health Office provides the focal point for the Government of Canada for facilitating the research needed to produce sound public health policies to help cope with the effects of climate change. The Office works with all levels of government, with researchers and policy makers and with private sector and community organizations to integrate health considerations into research and educational activities and into health policies related to climate change.



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