

EPA Climate Change and Water News

December 14, 2012

The *EPA Climate Change and Water News* is a bi-weekly newsletter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water that features news and information about EPA and other federal activities related to climate change and water. Partner activities, as well as related events and publications, are also included.

For more information on climate change and water, please visit our website:
<http://www.epa.gov/water/climatechange>.

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U.S. EPA News

EPA Releases 2012 National Water Program Climate Change Strategy

EPA has released the "National Water Program 2012 Strategy: Response to Climate Change," which describes how EPA's water-related programs plan to address the impacts of climate change and provides long-term visions, goals and strategic actions for the management of sustainable water resources for future generations. The strategy, which builds upon EPA's first climate change and water strategy released in 2008, focuses on five key areas: infrastructure, watersheds and wetlands, coastal and ocean waters, water quality, and working with Tribes. It emphasizes working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders, developing information and tools, incorporating adaptation into core programs, and managing risks of impacts including those from extreme weather events. The 2012 strategy also includes

goals and strategic actions for EPA in 10 geographic climate regions. To learn more and to read the strategy, visit: <http://water.epa.gov/scitech/climatechange/2012-National-Water-Program-Strategy.cfm>.

EPA Releases Climate Change Indicators in the United States 2012 Report

EPA has released its Climate Change Indicators in the United States 2012 report. This report updates the Agency's initial climate-indicators report, which was published in 2010. It contains information about 26 key indicators that together show what climate change looks like in the United States. The report also highlights some of the public health and environmental impacts that are already happening today. To learn more and access the report, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/indicators/>. For an accompanying brochure, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/pdfs/CI-brochure-2012.pdf>, and for a summary of the report's key points and an overview of changes in weather and climate, trends in the physical environment, and impacts on society and ecosystems, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/pdfs/CI-summary-2012.pdf>.

Other U.S. Federal Agency News

Abstract Deadline: December 14, 2012 for 11th Annual NOAA Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop

The annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop, initiated in 2002 by NOAA's National Weather Service Climate Services Division, will take place on April 23-25, 2013 in Utah. This workshop brings together climate researchers, climate product producers, and users to share developments in research and applications of climate predictions for societal decision-making. Conference organizers invite abstract submissions which demonstrate a broad array of climate information applications in water, energy, land, forest, wildlife, habitat, and other natural resources management. Presentations may illustrate the use of climate prediction in special-purpose programs such as wildfire risk reduction, species recovery, ecosystem restoration, and flood and drought response. Special emphasis may be on the synthesis of scientific information for user applications, various aspects of social sciences as a cross-cutting discipline for extended range preparedness, vulnerability assessments, or scenario development and planning. Presentations may focus on examples of web-based tools for climate-sensitive decision support, sustainability of resources, product usability, and performance evaluation. Organizers encourage the submission of abstracts on topics of environmental data stewardship including data access, distribution, quality, and availability, and their impact on decision support, and also invite discussions on climate science and service partnership between government, non-government, public and private organizations. The deadline for abstract submissions is December 14, 2012. To submit an abstract and for more information about the workshop, please visit: <http://climate.usurf.usu.edu/CPASW/index.php?show=abstracts>.

Training Webinar on Assessing Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources to be Held December 17, 2012

This webinar will introduce a pilot training program on assessing climate change impacts on water resources. The Climate Change and Water Working Group agencies (Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA, EPA, and U.S. Geological Survey) in cooperation with the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research COMET Program and the Western Water Assessment have developed this pilot training program. The pilot program includes both an online module for self-paced training (see subsequent item in e-newsletter) and a set of subsequent residence courses building on the online training, which focus on assessing impacts on surface water hydrology and crop irrigation requirements. This webinar will cover high-level objectives, the prerequisite online training, the registration process, and the supporting materials and resources for the following two training courses: "Hydrologic Impacts under Climate Change" (January 15-17, 2013), and "Crop Irrigation Requirements

Impacts under Climate Change" (March 5-7, 2013). To register for this webinar, please visit: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/417576272>.

Self-paced Module on Preparing Hydro-climate Inputs for Climate Change in Water Resource Planning Now Available Online

Developed by the Climate Change and Water Working Group agencies (Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA, EPA, and U.S. Geological Survey) in cooperation with the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) COMET Program and the Western Water Assessment, this training module describes the process of selecting the best available climate projection information and using it to develop "climate-adjusted weather" inputs to be used for modeling climate change impacts. These modeled impacts can be used for planning future water resources. Specific steps of this process include: 1) recognizing the general science and terms associated with atmosphere-ocean general circulation models (AOGCMs); 2) making AOGCMs more regionally applicable through bias correction and downscaling; 3) determining climate change scenarios based on climate projections and selecting specific projections to inform each scenario; and 4) developing climate-adjusted weather inputs associated with each climate change scenario. The module is designed for water resource practitioners, planners, water resource engineers, technical specialists and others that need to conduct technical studies for assessing the impacts of climate change on water and water-related natural resources, and is available to the public at no cost during the 2012-2013 pilot period. To access the module, visit: <http://www.usbr.gov/research/climate/training.html>.

Experts Supported by NASA Publish Landmark Study Documenting Ice Sheet Melting

In a recent study published in the journal *Science*, forty seven researchers report that the combined rate of melting for the ice sheets covering Greenland and Antarctica has increased during the last twenty years. The study utilized a combination of satellite altimetry, interferometry, and gravimetry data sets along with common geographical regions, time intervals, and models of surface mass balance and glacial isostatic adjustment to estimate the mass balance of Earth's polar ice sheets. The study found that these ice sheets are losing more than three times as much ice each year (equivalent to sea level rise of 0.04 inches), as they were in the 1990s (equivalent to 0.01 inches). About two-thirds of the loss is coming from Greenland with the rest from Antarctica. For more information about the study, visit: <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/338/6111/1183>. To read the press release from NASA, visit: http://www.nasa.gov/home/hqnews/2012/nov/HQ_12-409_Ice_Sheet_Sea_level.html.

Other News

Water Research Foundation Releases Report and Action Plan on Building a Climate-Ready Regulatory System

The Water Research Foundation's project "Building a Climate-Ready Regulatory System" has produced two documents, a report and an executive white paper/action plan, which provide a summary of U.S. legislation and regulations that pose constraints to water utilities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They also provide a summary of unique legislative and regulatory frameworks in other countries and in individual states that could be adapted to the national legislative and regulatory framework. In addition, they present opportunities for new legislative and regulatory options and flexibility that can help water utilities optimize costs and levels of service and reduce environmental impacts. For more information and to access this documents, visit: <http://www.waterrf.org/Pages/Projects.aspx?PID=4239>.

Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Coastal & Inland Wetlands in the State of Michigan Jointly Published by Association of State Wetland Managers

The Association of State Wetland Managers has jointly published this report for the State of Michigan. A number of organizations collaborated in the fall of 2011 to host a Symposium on Wetland Management in Response to Climate Change. Held in conjunction with the Michigan Wetlands Association Annual Conference, the symposium brought together over 150 scientists, policy makers, and agency staff from state, federal, local, and nonprofit organizations in a broad review of wetland and climate change issues. The symposium closed with a session that set the stage for developing and implementing a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Coastal and Inland Wetlands in the State of Michigan. This report was developed for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Wetlands Program and Coastal Management Program. Carrying out many of the recommendations in this document will require the cooperation, expertise, and active engagement of many other state, local, and regional agencies and groups. Collectively, this much larger partnership will need to review the recommendations in the report and reach agreement on specific actions that can be taken to ensure that wetland resources are included in broader strategies to address and adapt to climate change. To view the report, visit: <http://www.aswm.org/wetland-science/climate-change/climate-change-adaptation/3214-climate-change-adaptation-plan-for-coastal-a-inland-wetlands-in-the-state-of-michigan>.

Washington State Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification Releases Recommendations Report

A Washington State Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification, consisting of scientists, public opinion leaders, industry representatives, state, local, federal, and tribal policy makers, and conservation community representatives, was convened by Washington State's Governor Gregoire in February 2012. Panel scientists reviewed and summarized the current state of scientific knowledge about ocean acidification in Washington State and produced a technical document providing a scientific summary of ocean acidification in Washington State marine waters. The panel has recently released a report, entitled: "Ocean Acidification: From Knowledge to Action, Washington State's Strategic Response." The report recommends actions to be taken to address the root cause of acidification by: reducing carbon dioxide emissions; reducing local land-based pollutants that enhance acidification; helping our shellfish industry and marine ecosystems adapt to ocean acidification; advancing research and monitoring to fill in knowledge gaps about ocean acidification; actively informing, educating and engaging stakeholders, decision makers and the public; and, maintaining a sustained and coordinated focus on acidification. For more information on the panel and the report's recommendations, visit: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/water/marine/oceanacidification.html>.

Registration Now Open for Conference on Disasters and Environment: Science, Preparedness, and Resilience on January 15-17, 2013 in Washington, DC

The 13th Annual Conference hosted by the National Council for Science and the Environment brings together leaders from the emergency response, scientific, policy, conservation, and business communities, as well as federal and local government officials, to address themes such as cascading disasters, the intersection of the built and natural environments, disasters as mechanisms of ecosystem change, rethinking recovery and expanding the vision of mitigation, human behavior and its consequences and "no regrets" resilience. For more information about the conference and to register, visit: <http://www.environmentaldisasters.net/>.