

## Climate Change and MNR: A Program-Level Strategy and Action Plan

The following describes how the Ministry of Natural Resources works to contribute to the Ontario Government's commitment to reduce the rate of global warming and the impacts associated with climate change. The framework contains strategies and sub-strategies organized according to the need to understand climate change, mitigate the impacts of rapid climate change, and to help Ontarians adapt to climate change:

### Theme 1: Understand Climate Change

**Strategy #1: Gather and use knowledge in support of informed decision-making about climate change.** Data and information gathering and management programs (e.g., research, inventory, monitoring, and assessment) that advances our knowledge of ecosphere function and related factors and forces such as climate change are critical to informed decision-making. Accordingly, MNR will work to:

Strategy 1.A: Develop a provincial capability to describe, predict, and assess the important short- (0-5 years), medium- (5-20 years), and long-term (20+ years) impacts of climate change on the province's ecosystems and natural resources.

Strategy 1.B: Model the carbon cycle.

**Strategy #2: Use meaningful spatial and temporal frameworks to manage for climate change.** A meaningful spatial and temporal context in which to manage human activity in the ecosphere and address climate change issues requires that MNR continue to define and describe Ontario's ecosystems in-space and time. In addition, MNR will use the administrative and thematic spatial units required to manage climate change issues.

### Theme 2: Mitigate the Impacts of Climate Change

**Strategy #3: Gather information about natural and cultural heritage values and ensure that this knowledge is used as part of the decision-making process established to manage for climate change impacts.** MNR will continue to subscribe to a rational philosophy and corresponding suite of societal values that equip natural resource managers to take effective action in combating global warming and to help Ontarians adapt to the impacts of climate change.

**Strategy #4: Use partnership to marshal a coordinated response to climate change.** A comprehensive climate change program involves all sectors of society as partners and participants in decision-making processes. The Ministry of Natural Resources will work to ensure that its clients and partners are engaged.

**Strategy #5: Ensure corporate culture and function work in support of efforts to combat rapid climate change.** Institutional culture and function provide a "place" for natural resource managers to develop and/or sponsor proactive and integrated programs. The Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to provide a "home place" for the people engaged in the management of climate change issues.

**Strategy #6: Establish on-site management programs designed to plan ecologically, manage carbon sinks, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and develop tools and techniques that help mitigate the impacts of rapid climate change.** On-site land use planning and management techniques must be designed to protect the ecological and social pieces, patterns, and processes. Accordingly, MNR will work to:

- Strategy 6.A: Plan ecologically.
- Strategy 6.B: Manage carbon sinks.
- Strategy 6.C: Reduce emissions.
- Strategy 6.D: Develop tools and techniques to mitigate the impacts of rapid climate change.

### Theme 3: Help Ontarians Adapt

**Strategy #7: Think and plan strategically to prepare for natural disasters and develop and implement adaptation strategies.** MNR will sponsor strategic thinking and planning to identify, establish, and modify short- and long-term direction on a regular basis. Accordingly, MNR will work to:

- Strategy 7.A: Sponsor strategic management of climate change issues.
- Strategy 7.B: Maintain and enhance an emergency response capability.
- Strategy 7.C: Develop and implement adaptation strategies for water management and wetlands.
- Strategy 7.D: Develop and implement adaptation strategies for human health.
- Strategy 7.E: Develop and implement adaptation strategies for ecosystem health, including biodiversity.
- Strategy 7.F: Develop and implement adaptation strategies for parks and protected areas for natural resource-related recreational opportunities and activities that are pursued outside of parks and protected areas.
- Strategy 7.G: Develop and implement adaptation strategies for forested ecosystems.

**Strategy #8: Ensure policy and legislation respond to climate change challenges.** Policy, legislation, and regulation guide development and use of the programs needed to combat climate change. MNR will work to ensure that its policies are proactive, balanced and realistic, and responsive to changing societal values and environmental conditions.

**Strategy #9: Communicate.** Ontarians must understand global warming, climate change, and the known and potential impacts in order to effectively and consistently participate in management programs and decision-making processes. Knowledge dissemination through life-long learning opportunities that are accessible and current is critical to this requirement. MNR will raise public understanding and awareness of climate change through education, extension, and training programs.