

Template for a Tribal Climate Change Adaptation Planning Guide

This template was created by the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) to serve as a model on which tribal staff, along with tribal leadership, can develop a guide for their tribe's climate change adaptation planning initiative. The guide will define the goals, process, schedule, participants, responsibilities, and products of the climate change adaptation planning initiative. The primary users of the guide will be the tribe's Climate Change Working Group, to be assembled according to the tribe's discretion.

Throughout the template, there are words or phrases in brackets that the user should replace with their own information. For example, wherever the term "[Tribe]" occurs, the user should insert the name of their tribe. The template is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution, and users are encouraged to modify the template to better represent the needs and priorities of their own tribe.

The template is based on a document that the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes developed to guide their climate change adaptation planning process.

Please direct questions and feedback about this template to either Climate Change Program Co-Managers:

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If your tribe uses this template, please email a copy of your final document to ITEP for our reference.

[Tribe]

Climate Change Adaptation Planning Guide

The purpose of this document is to guide the development of a [Tribe] *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*. It outlines the goals, process, schedule, participants, responsibilities, and products of the tribe's climate change adaptation planning initiative.

Goals of the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Initiative

The [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Initiative will:

[NOTE: the statements below are provided as examples only—replace with information that reflects the goals for your tribe]

- Determine the current and projected impacts of climate change on the [Tribe] community and reservation, including impacts on the local environment, forest resources, agriculture, fish and wildlife, water resources, air quality, infrastructure, social services, human health, and cultural resources;
- Determine the vulnerabilities of the tribe and reservation to the current and projected effects of climate change, and prioritize key areas for development of adaptation strategies;
- Develop appropriate policies and goals for addressing the effects of climate change on the tribe and reservation;
- Develop potential programmatic and/or regulatory actions and changes consistent with said policies and goals as appropriate to address the effects of climate change;
- Use “traditional knowledge” along with the best available science to help address the expectations presented above;
- Communicate and coordinate with local, state, regional, and national entities and jurisdictions on addressing current and projected impacts of climate change, including government-to-government cooperation and identification of funding sources and opportunities as possible and available.

Participants

- The [Tribe] Tribal Council recognizes and acknowledges the existing and potential impacts of climate change and declares the intent and commitment of the tribe to address effects of climate change.

- [Department; i.e. Natural Resources Department] received funding from [source of funding] to support the efforts to develop the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Plan and will oversee and coordinate the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group. [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will serve as the Climate Change Working Group Lead.
- The [Department] along with all other departments within the tribal government shall assess how best to implement the actions under this initiative and how best to incorporate such actions into programs and activities. A staff member from each department will serve on the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group.
- A Science Panel, composed of nationally recognized experts, will provide input, advice, and services to the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group as explained throughout this guide. The initial members of the Science Panel include:
 - [name, affiliation, relevant experience]
 - [name, affiliation, relevant experience]
 - [name, affiliation, relevant experience]
- Elders and community members will provide input to the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group as explained throughout this guide.

Process, Schedule, Responsibilities, and Products

Step 1 – Tribal Council approval of Resolution (*target month, year*)

- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will present the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Initiative Resolution to the Tribal Council and seek their affirmation.
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will consult with the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group, the Science Panel, and perhaps others to complete this Charter and affirm the overall process, schedule, responsibilities, and products.
- Product = *Adopted Resolution* for a climate change adaptation initiative to develop the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Step 2 – Develop Climate Change Scenarios (*target month, year*)

- The Science Panel will use existing information and prepare a report that synthesizes existing climate change scenarios consistent with the objectives presented above. This report will provide basic information on projected climate change scenarios; it *will not* highlight potential impacts and vulnerabilities - this will come later in the process.

[Climate Change Working Group Lead] will consult with elders and community members and prepare a set of narrative stories to illustrate how climate has changed over time from their perspectives. **Note:** if you are including Traditional Knowledge (TK) in the adaptation planning process, clarify if the TK is

meant for internal review only, or if and how the TK will be shared. TK should not be included in any publically available reports or deliverables without tribal consent

- The Science Panel will meet with [Climate Change Working Group Lead] and the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group to review and integrate the results, and discuss next steps.
- Product = A report on *Climate Change Scenarios for [Tribe]* synthesizing reports from both the Science Panel and [Climate Change Working Group Lead]. This and the other short reports that will be produced throughout this process will become chapters in the final [Tribe] *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*.

Step 3 – Identify Local Impacts and Vulnerabilities (*target month, year*)

- Using the spreadsheet provided by the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) to organize information, the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will:
 - Identify planning areas of interest within the sectors identified earlier (**forest resources, agriculture, fish and wildlife, water resources, air quality, infrastructure, social services, human health, and cultural resources**);
 - Identify how the projected climate changes will affect these areas of interest;
 - Identify the vulnerabilities of the areas of interest.
- The Science Panel will provide a webinar to help the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group (1) clarify key terms (e.g., adaptive capacity, vulnerability, risk) and methods, and (2) identify resources for impact and vulnerability assessment of areas of interest – e.g. guidebooks, online tools, etc.
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will consult with elders and other community members to identify local impacts and vulnerabilities in the form of narrative stories. **Note:** if you are including Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge (TK or IK) in the adaptation planning process, clarify if the TK is meant for internal review only, or if and how the TK will be shared. TK should not be included in any publically available reports or deliverables without tribal consent
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will convene a meeting with the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group to integrate and review information from the ITEP spreadsheet and the consultation with elders and community members. The Science Panel will participate to observe and offer input and advice where appropriate.
- Product = A synthesis report of the *Local Climate Change Impacts and Vulnerabilities*

Step 4 - Develop Adaptation Strategies (*target month, year*)

- The [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will:
 - Prioritize areas of interest for the development of adaptation strategies;
 - Develop a menu of adaptation goals and actions for each high priority area, articulating that particular goals and related actions may need to be revised as new information about climate change impacts and vulnerabilities becomes available;

- Identify what resources and capacities are needed to implement each action, estimated timeframe within which the action needs to happen, and potential partners and funding sources.
- The Science Panel will convene a webinar to provide resources to the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group to help in identifying and linking adaptation strategies – e.g., flowcharts, decision trees, online tools, etc.
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will consult with elders and community members to create a menu of adaptation strategies for each priority area of interest.
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] will convene a meeting with the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group to review and refine adaptation strategies and identify synergies and potential conflicts. The Science Panel will participate to observe and offer input and advice where appropriate.
- Product = A synthesis report on [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Strategies. Given that climate change will continue over time and the nature of the challenge will change as will the capacity to respond and prepare, this report is intended to serve as a framework to guide decisions, rather than a recipe to follow.

Step 5 –Write and Integrate the Adaptation Plan (*target month, year*)

- The [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will compile and synthesize the shorter reports and products produced throughout the adaption planning process into the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Plan. The Science Panel and perhaps other experts will review the draft adaptation plan and offer input and feedback before the plan is finalized.
- [Climate Change Working Group Lead] and perhaps others will present the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Pan to the Tribal Council for their review and adoption.
- Working with each department of the tribal government, [Climate Change Working Group Lead] and the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will integrate the [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Plan into ongoing planning and management activities of all tribal departments.
 - [Climate Change Working Group Lead] and the [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will work with individual departments and staff to:
 - Develop action plans for implementation;
 - Identify indicators that can be monitored to determine if actions are having the desired effect, or whether adaptation goals and actions need to be reconsidered. This iterative process will inform the evolution of the adaptation document.
- Product = The [Tribe] Climate Change Adaptation Plan, based on the reports and products developed throughout this process.

Step 6- Implement, Monitor, Evaluate, & Update the Plan (*ongoing*)

- All departments will report back annually to the Tribal Council on their progress and lessons learned in implementation.
- The [Tribe] Climate Change Working Group will assess annually the effectiveness of the [Tribe] *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*, highlighting how the suggested actions or strategies are being incorporated into work across tribal departments and suggesting changes where appropriate to both the overall process and specific actions or strategies. The [Tribe] *Climate Change Adaptation Plan* will be updated at least every [5] years.

