



**CLIMATE ADAPTATION
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

FY 2024 ADDENDUM

Introduction

In September 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a Climate Adaptation Action Plan which focuses Agency attention on priority actions it will take to fulfill the EPA's mission and increase human and ecosystem resilience even as the climate changes. Following the direction in this plan, the EPA's Office of Policy (OP), along with Agency National Program and Regional Offices, each released Climate Adaptation Implementation Plans in October 2022.

This fiscal year (FY) 2024 Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan Addendum (Addendum) provides an update to the EPA Office of Policy Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan (2022 OP CAIP). OP recently established the Office of Climate Adaptation and Sustainability (OCAS) which has assumed leadership for actions previously listed under the Climate Adaptation Program in the 2022 OP CAIP. OCAS focuses broadly on the impacts of climate change on the environment and the sustainability of communities and businesses and leads ongoing efforts to coordinate across the EPA and the federal government on these issues. OCAS also explores new opportunities to support climate adaptation and resilience capacity-building across the Agency and by communities and businesses.

Priority Actions

In FY 2024, OP continues to work on these six priority actions found in the 2022 OP CAIP:

1. Lead and coordinate climate change adaptation across the EPA
2. Advance climate justice through adaptation
3. Address climate risk in policies, regulations, and economic analyses
4. Build resilience through collaboration with other federal agencies
5. Work with partners across the nation to enhance adaptive capacity
6. Catalyze climate resilient investments

Additionally, OP has expanded its adaptation work in FY 2024 with two new Priority Actions:

7. Strengthen the adaptive capacity of the EPA's workforce
8. Consider Indigenous Knowledge in OP's climate adaptation activities

FY 2024 Focus Areas

In addition to expanding climate adaptation priority actions into FY 2024, the EPA's National Program and Regional Offices are focusing on: 1) Integrating Adaptation into Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act Investments 2) Integrating Indigenous

Knowledge into Adaptation Projects and Decisions, and 3) Increasing Climate Literacy. The remainder of this Addendum describes OP's work in these three focus areas.

1) Integrating Adaptation into Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act Investments

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is a historic investment in water infrastructure improvements, pollution cleanup initiatives, and workforce opportunities necessary to transform communities around the country. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides support for equitable investment and climate-resilient communities. With this significant influx of funding from BIL and IRA, it is critical that the EPA – and our state, Tribal, and local partners – invest in resilient infrastructure projects that withstand climate change for decades to come. OP works to strategically integrate climate change considerations throughout the Agency's financial assistance programs (e.g., grants, loans, cooperative agreements) to achieve climate-smart investments.

In FY 2023, the EPA Deputy Administrator and the EPA's Senior Climate Change Adaptation Official issued a memorandum to EPA leadership entitled "Incorporating Climate Change Adaptation Criteria into Applicable Financial Assistance Agreements" calling on the Programs and Regions to integrate climate adaptation into all relevant financial assistance agreements over time. The immediate focus is on BIL and IRA to help ensure that the outcomes of investments made with those funds are resilient to the impacts of climate change. The memorandum also established a new subgroup to the Cross-EPA Work Group on Climate Change Adaptation. The Resilient Infrastructure Subgroup on Climate (RISC) is an Agency-wide team of individuals from the program and regional offices who are collectively supporting the efforts of EPA program managers to incorporate climate adaptation into financial assistance agreements, and helping recipients of funds make climate smart investments.

In FY 2024, RISC developed two main projects for the Agency that align with the Agency's goals and directives for climate adaptation. The first is an internal clearinghouse called the Climate-Resilient Investments Clearinghouse (CRIC) that provides EPA's financial assistance staff with a general approach to address climate adaptation and resilience throughout various steps of their program processes (e.g., writing announcements, assessing climate risks to a proposed project, performing meaningful engagement). The second is an external facing toolbox called the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Funding Toolbox (CRAFT) that supplies technical assistance providers with resources to support applicants and recipients investing in climate-resilient projects. These two projects provide the internal and external guidance needed to support success. EPA programs will be strongly encouraged to follow the approach laid out by the internal clearinghouse to integrate adaptation and resilience into their funding announcements, as well as climate justice. RISC has also produced interim products to help EPA

staff incorporate adaptation and resilience into grant and loan programs, including compiling example language for incorporating adaptation and resilience into funding announcements, innovative practices for financial assistance programs to advance the EPA's climate adaptation goals, and BIL and IRA focused priority actions that Agency offices can adopt as part of their Climate Adaptation Implementation Plans.

2) Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into Adaptation Projects and Decisions

OP is working with the EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs' American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) to learn how to consider Indigenous Knowledge in OP's programs consistent with the [Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge](#). Incorporating IK into OP's decision making is imperative because it provides Tribal environmental and cultural information to advise critical climate baselining and historical data from often underrepresented indigenous perspectives. OP staff providing climate adaptation and resilience technical assistance to Tribes are bolstering their understanding of Indigenous Knowledge, and how it may be included in federal research, policies, and decision making when a Tribe wishes to share their knowledge. OP is working with AIEO to ensure that staff providing adaptation technical assistance take the Indigenous Knowledge Training for EPA Employees to learn how to potentially incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into OP's engagements with Tribes.

3) Increasing Climate Literacy

For the EPA to continue fulfilling its mission of protecting human health and the environment even as the climate changes, Agency staff must better understand how to integrate climate adaptation into key aspects of their work. As such, OP is taking several steps to increase the adaptive capacity of its staff. OP is partnering with EPA Offices to take actions that will support and coordinate capacity-building across the Agency. OP is tracking and coordinating the EPA's climate adaptation learning and training opportunities.

OP is partnering with the Office of Research and Development's Integrated Climate Sciences Division to co-host an internal Climate Conversations Seminar Series to coordinate staff peer learning and knowledge sharing activities. This series provides a forum in which EPA employees can exchange knowledge and experiences on climate and apply it to their work. An average of over 300 employees from across the Agency regularly attend the sessions. The series (1) informs EPA staff about emerging climate science research relevant to the work of the EPA's programs and regions, (2) highlights best practices in applying climate data and information to EPA policies and practice, (3) demonstrates applicable tools and resources to support regional climate resilience, (4) facilitates interactive peer-learning activities related to certain climate topics, and (5) fosters a sense of community and collaboration among staff on EPA climate adaptation issues.