

2024 ADDENDUM



EPA Region 6 Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan

2024 Addendum to the October 2022 Plan



EPA Region 6 serves
Arkansas, Louisiana, New
Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas
and 66 Tribal Nations

Disclaimer

To the extent this document mentions or discusses statutory or regulatory authority, it does so for informational purposes only. This document does not substitute for those statutes or regulations, and readers should consult the statutes or regulations to learn what they require. Neither this document, nor any part of it, is itself a rule or a regulation. Thus, it cannot change or impose legally binding requirements on U.S. EPA, States, the public, or the regulated community. Further, any expressed intention, suggestion or recommendation does not impose any legally binding requirements on U.S. EPA, States, tribes, the public, or the regulated community. Agency decision makers remain free to exercise their discretion in choosing to implement the actions described in this Plan. Such implementation is contingent upon availability of resources and is subject to change.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN LEADERSHIP

REGION 6 CLIMATE ADAPTATION SENIOR LEADER:	Stacey Dwyer Deputy Regional Administrator
REGION 6 CLIMATE ADAPTATION COORDINATOR & WORKGROUP LEAD:	Marie Stucky Office of the Regional Administrator
REGION 6 CLIMATE ADAPATION WORKGROUP	
Office of Tribal Affairs and Border	Randy Gee
Office of External Affairs	Tom Ruiz
Air and Radiation Division	Karolina Ruan-Lei
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division	Craig Young
Environmental Justice Division	Kaitlin Morton
Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division	Allison Scott
Land, Chemical and Redevelopment Division	Kristin Dunbar
Mission Support Division	Michael Nelson
Superfund and Emergency Management Division	Nathaniel Applegate Lindsey Griffin
Water Division	Danielle O’Neil Randall Rush

PRIORITY ACTIONS

U.S. EPA Region 6 has prioritized a number of actions to support the Agency's Climate Adaptation Plan. This effort began in Fiscal Year 2022, when EPA Region 6 developed five regional actions and multiple sub-actions to proactively incorporate climate adaptation planning into Region 6 programs and policies. In Fiscal Year 2024, Region 6 expanded our work to identify thirty priority actions. The priority actions identified below include separate Division- and Office-specific priorities that will further support the advancement of climate adaptation-related actions across the Region, while further collaborating with the National Program Managers. Additionally, Region 6 staff are actively integrating climate adaptation into efforts with a strong focus on Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funded projects and investments.

The Agency has established priority actions and initial performance metrics to provide a foundation for implementing our climate adaptation plan in collaboration with U.S. EPA's partners going forward. The Region is stressing the need for acting internally, enhancing our partners' capabilities, and supporting the most vulnerable to adapt to climate impacts affecting their communities.

The Region is committed to supporting activities critical to building greater resiliency to climate challenges. A crucial aspect of building that resiliency is increasing the climate literacy of regional staff and our partners. Region 6's priority actions in 2024 are further described below.

Regional Priority Actions:

Office of Tribal and Border (OTAB)

Priority Action 1 – OTAB

Region 6 will coordinate with Office of International and Tribal Affairs/American Indian Environmental Office to learn how to consider indigenous knowledge (IK) in climate adaptation actions.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Get HQ direction regarding understanding IK; reviewing and learning best practices on IK; participating in webinars on IK; and learning how to potentially consider IK in federal research, policies, and decision making, including climate adaptation programs and activities.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Region 6 staff learn more about IK and how IK can be used in EPA programs and policy development.

<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Resources from OITA/AIEO to provide IK training
------------------------------	---

Priority Action 2 – OTAB

OTAB will highlight climate work in four of the projected twelve tribal engagements during FY24	
<i>Performance Metrics</i>	Tribal engagements highlighting climate work
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increase tribal partners awareness of climate partners and activities in the Region.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Availability of external climate technical assistance providers to join Regional tribal engagements

Priority Action 3 – OTAB

OTAB will advance climate adaptation in the next Border grant cycle by embedding climate change and climate adaptation within the request for proposal priorities.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Border project proposals that focus on climate work.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increase border communities' awareness of climate mitigation activities within the border region.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Border grant funding

Air and Radiation Division (ARD):

Priority Action 4 – ARD

Participate in Port Authority meetings to increase opportunities for engagement to support air quality improvement initiatives.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Participate in meetings with communities and port(s).
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Ozone/PM
<i>Outcomes</i>	Communicate resources to partner entities to address climate change vulnerability as it relates to ozone/PM. Reduce vulnerability from

	ozone and PM ambient air pollution that have increased due to climate change.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff resources to research and amplify opportunities and provide technical input and support.

Priority Action 5 – ARD

Mobile monitoring - Assuming increasing frequency of severe weather events due to climate change (such as hurricanes), address/reduce impacts to air monitoring stations during severe weather events that may impact air quality monitor data collection.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	<p>Meetings with State/Local agencies on how to best fill in data gaps during severe weather events.</p> <p>Trainings conducted for technical staff who will operate the mobile monitoring asset.</p>
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Severe weather events. Impacts to EPA air programs.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Coordinate with partner entities on vulnerabilities of monitoring sites due to increased severe weather events. Address data collection gaps on monitoring sites due to vulnerability from increased severe weather events.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff resources for planning, meetings, and procurement. Funding to procure van and required instrumentation.

Priority Action 6 – ARD

Provide training and technical support instances related to climate pollution reduction grants (CPRG) planning to States, MSAs, and Tribal Nations.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	<p>Technical assistance instances to support states/MSAs and Tribes in developing their PCAPS and on the rollout of EPA's Phase II Implementation Grants program.</p> <p>Grants awarded to climate reduction projects selected in Phase II Implementation Grants program.</p>
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Ozone/PM; air pollution.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Provide assistance to partner entities on climate-related grants to reduce climate change impacts. Reduce impacts due to increased air pollution from climate change.

<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff resources to provide assistance and award grants.
------------------------------	--

Priority Action 7 – ARD

Provide Clean School Buses Program training, technical support, and grant application support to school districts and bus manufacturers.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Oversight and support activities conducted. These include: (1) monitoring school bus delivery from manufacturers; (2) providing both grant application support and rebate application support to school districts and bus manufacturers; (3) addressing electrification infrastructure questions; and (4) maintaining contact with entities developing charging infrastructure.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Ozone/PM; air pollution
<i>Outcomes</i>	Provide assistance to partner entities on the Clean School Buses Program to reduce air pollution impacts from climate change. Reduce impacts due to increased air pollution from climate change.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff resources to provide oversight and support activities.

Land, Chemical, and Revitalization Division (LCRD):

Priority Action 8 – LCRD

Increasing internal awareness for understanding climate adaptation and mitigation in the Brownfields technical assistance programs.	
<i>Performance Metrics</i>	Conduct internal training on Brownfields
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Better development for site climate vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increase knowledge and skills of project managers in the brownfields program, and better equip them with the tools needed when discussing climate change and climate change mitigation/adaptation strategies with stakeholders.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 9 – LCRD

Increasing external awareness for understanding climate adaptation and mitigation in the Brownfields technical assistance programs.	
<i>Performance Metrics</i>	Conduct climate assessment technical assistance workshops virtually/in-person.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Better development for site climate vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	More brownfield grantees requesting assistance for climate adaptation and mitigation through grant programs.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Lab Services and Applied Science Division (LSASD):

Priority Action 10 – LSASD

Maintain the mobile laboratories that respond to hurricane events with flooding and related drinking water issues. The Houston Lab works to maintain the mobile labs' International Organization for Standardization (ISO) accreditation status for total coliforms and its employees trained and ready for a response via regular exercises.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Successful ISO accreditation earned for mobile labs.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Storms/Hurricanes
<i>Outcomes</i>	Ensure mobile laboratories are ready to deploy by request of State, local, or tribal governments in flooding events with drinking water related concerns.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Superfund and Emergency Management Division (SEMD):

Priority Action 11 – SEMD

Conducting reviews of Superfund remedial sites and their remedy protectiveness and energy consumption.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Five-Year Reviews
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Considers multiple vulnerabilities.

<i>Outcomes</i>	Assessing the effectiveness and protectiveness of Superfund remedial site remedies with the goal of decreasing energy consumption.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff time to review Five Year Reviews, tools to assess protectiveness against various climate threats, training on protectiveness tools and lower energy consumption remedies.

Priority Action 12 – SEMD

Conducting preparedness discussions, meetings, and exercises for planning for flooding and hurricanes in pre-hurricane season and pre/post storm events in coastal and EJ communities.	
<i>Performance Metrics</i>	Meetings, trainings, exercises with states, Local Emergency Planning Committees, State Emergency Response Commissions, Potentially Responsible Parties, and EPA Contractors.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Hurricanes, flooding
<i>Outcomes</i>	Regional partners and EPA R6 are better prepared to respond to flooding and hurricane events to mitigate impacts to coastal communities.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff time to prepare for meetings, trainings, and exercises.

Priority Action 13 – SEMD

Reduce exposure to toxic substances related to remedial and removal actions.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Remedial and removal actions.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Addresses multiple vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Reducing exposure to toxic substances.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Existing staff time to review and complete, additional staff to cover increase in climate affected actions

Priority Action 14 – SEMD

Superfund remedial sites that are referred for full Climate Vulnerability Assessment	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Climate Vulnerability Assessments
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Addresses multiple vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Superfund remedial sites are assessed for the climate vulnerability.

<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A
------------------------------	-----

Environmental Justice, Community Engagement and Environmental Review (EJCEER) Division:

Priority Action 15 – EJCEER

EPA is providing technical assistance to strengthen the adaptive capacity and resilience of Region 6 communities in West Dallas, with a focus on advancing environmental justice.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Community engagements highlighting adaptive capacity and resilience
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Considers multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increased community awareness to provide prospective recipients of funds with information to make climate-smart investments and increased community agency to further protect public health and the environment.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	TASC contract renewal and FY 2024 funding

Office of External Affairs (ORAX):

Priority Action 16 – ORAX

Incorporate climate change language into news releases and social media content – including funding opportunities.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	News releases and social media posts.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increased knowledge regarding actions meant to reduce or compensate for or adapt to the adverse impacts that arise from changes to the Earth's climate.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Staff time to prepare news releases and social media posts.

Priority Action 17 – ORAX

Plan and execute public events and elected official briefings that support climate change-related programs and activities.	
--	--

<i>Performance Metric</i>	Public events and briefings.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increased knowledge and partnering with elected officials regarding actions meant to reduce or compensate for or adapt to the adverse impacts that arise from changes to the Earth's climate.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Staff time for planning, preparing, and conducting events.

Priority Action 18 – ORAX

Engage with youth on climate adaptation to promote learning and capacity among future generations.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Engagements with school-aged groups.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple vulnerabilities
<i>Outcomes</i>	Increased knowledge regarding actions meant to reduce or compensate for or adapt to the adverse impacts that arise from changes to the Earth's climate.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Staff time for planning, preparing, and conducting events.

Mission Support Division (MSD):

Priority Action 19 – MSD

100% IT Hardware ordered (Monitors and Laptops) compliance with the <i>Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool</i> (EPEAT) Gold standard	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Compliance percentage of newly purchased telecommunications equipment, desktop computer monitors, and laptops
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Lack of procuring sustainable telecommunications and information technology equipment has the potential of contributing to climate change.
<i>Outcomes</i>	The EPEAT Ecolabel addresses sustainability impact areas across the electronics life cycle, from materials extraction to end-of-life – climate change, chemicals of concern, circularity and sustainable use of resources, and responsible sourcing

<i>Resource Requirements</i>	Federal Acquisition Regulation FAR 23.108-3 , EPEAT Registry : (https://www.epeat.net/about-epeat)
------------------------------	--

Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division (ECAD):

Priority Action 20 – ECAD

Continue surveillance activities and issue enforcement actions targeted at VOC reductions at oil and gas facilities that will also result in reductions of methane emissions.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Methane emissions reductions achieved through settlements
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Air quality
<i>Outcomes</i>	Reduced GHG
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 21 – ECAD

Increase in Risk Management Plan inspections at facilities in EJ areas along the Gulf Coast that are susceptible to the impacts from storms	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Risk Management Plan Inspections
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Air Quality
<i>Outcomes</i>	Improved climate resilience
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 22 – ECAD

Ensure facilities have developed Risk and Resilience Assessments (RRA) and Emergency Response Plans (ERP) sufficient to meet requirements of America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (AWIA)	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Inspections
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple climate vulnerabilities.

<i>Outcomes</i>	Improved Climate Resilience
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 23 – ECAD

Target facilities noncompliant with the AWIA which requires RRAs and ERPs to address risks such as Natural Disasters caused by climate change through compliance assistance and/or enforcement actions.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Drinking water facilities in compliance with AWIA provisions (e.g. complete RRA and ERP)
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Multiple climate vulnerabilities.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Improved climate resilience
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Water Division (WD):

Priority Action 24 – WD

Perform Administrative completeness reviews for increasing UIC Class VI wells applications.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Permit reviews
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Unprecedented warming
<i>Outcomes</i>	Administrative completeness reviews determine if individual Class VI project applications address all regulatory components required for a long-term technical review, ultimately leading to issuance of a permit(s) to construct.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 25 – WD

Continue to build tribal drinking water climate resiliency by completing sanitary surveys that assess climate resiliency measures (e.g., power and source redundancy, well head protective measures against flooding risks).	
--	--

<i>Performance Metric</i>	Tribal drinking water systems ability to become more resilient and adaptive to changing climate by reducing drinking water scarcity through drought plans, source water protection plans, etc.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Unprecedented warming, drought
<i>Outcomes</i>	Ensure tribal drinking water systems are more resilient in the face of changing climate by incorporating drought resilience, wildfire protection, source water protection, and redundant power generation.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 26 – WD

Deploy Sustainability Advisors (SA) and/or Subject Matter Experts (SME) after federally declared disasters to help communities adapt to climate impacts and become more resilient	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Hours supporting effort as SA or SME.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Extreme heat, extreme precipitation events, unprecedented warming, sea level rise, droughts, wildfires, coastal inundation, frequency, and intensity of storms.
<i>Outcomes</i>	Restoration and longer term resiliency of public health, environmental health, and environmental justice at locations impacted by a federally declared disaster.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 27 – WD

Initiate efforts to provide outreach on changing agriculture production practices in response to changing water resource availability and changing pest pressures.	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Outreach to State/Tribal/local and non-governmental partners with EPA HQs led webinars, regional webinars, and informational products such as fact sheets and brochures.
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Extreme heat, extreme precipitation events, unprecedented warming, and drought.

<i>Outcomes</i>	Make agriculture sector more resilient to climate change.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 28 – WD

National Estuary Program (NEP) Climate & Equity Actions BIL Workplan Review	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Implementation of Climate and Equity Checklist as part of BIL Workplan reviews
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Coastal loss, extreme temperatures, and storm surge events.
<i>Outcomes</i>	The WDAS NEP Project Officers (PO) have implemented a Climate and Equity Checklist which aligns with the current NEP Program Guidance for BIL funds. The climate actions review asks whether any climate change specific activities were specified in the BIL workplan (e.g., vulnerability assessments, climate change research, green infrastructure, etc.). The checklist also asks whether any metrics to track climate change resiliency and adaptive capacity were included in the BIL workplan and provides a field in which the PO may summarize climate and equity activities for awareness.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 29 – WD

Results of Climate Assessment Recommended in Current Program Guidance for CWA 604(b) BIL Funds	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	Assessment results
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Increased wildfire risk and burn scar debris mass wasting during monsoons.
<i>Outcomes</i>	The current 604(b) BIL funding guidance recommended that States perform an assessment using provided example questions to develop a plan for potential climate actions to be undertaken in subsequent BIL funding years (FY23-26). The guidance stated that the outcomes of the assessment should be included in the FY23 and subsequent BIL FY workplans as applicable. States were asked to assess the extent to which their water quality management planning activities and programs consider climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience and

	identify actions to advance climate goals through water quality planning that informs program implementation (e.g., reduced greenhouse gas emissions, resilience plans, and increased flood mitigation).
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A

Priority Action 30 – WD

Results of Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Activities Recommended in Current Program Guidance for Hypoxia BIL Funds	
<i>Performance Metric</i>	BIL Workplan Reviews and Assessment results
<i>Climate Risk</i>	Extreme heat, extreme precipitation events, unprecedented warming, frequency, and intensity of storms, increase nutrient loads contributing to hypoxic zone formation and algal blooms.
<i>Outcomes</i>	The Hypoxia BIL funds will be used to advance water quality actions that have climate adaptation or mitigation co-benefits. Grantees will include climate adaptation/mitigation benefits in FYs 24 and 25 workplans and track all accomplishments through the Clean Water Act Section 319 National Grants Reporting and Tracking System database as well as semi-annual, annual, and final reporting. GRTS fields that track results of climate adaption/mitigation results include whether the project resulted in pollutant load reductions for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment; amounts of load reductions per year; narrative description of anticipated and achieved outputs and outcomes; and narrative description of actions that provided climate adaptation/mitigation benefits.
<i>Resource Requirements</i>	N/A