



FOR RELEASE
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First circumpolar adaptation portal launched

WHITEHORSE—The Arctic Adaptation Exchange, a new online information resource to support the exchange of knowledge on climate change adaptation in the Arctic, is now ready for use Minister of Environment Wade Istchenko announced today.

"This is the first web-based information portal in the world to focus on climate change adaptation in the circumpolar north. It will help users understand and respond to the impacts that we are experiencing. The Government of Yukon recognizes the importance of effective adaptation to a changing climate and we are pleased to participate in this development," Istchenko said.

Adaptation means coping with the negative impacts of climate change and embracing any opportunities that may arise. By participating in the Arctic Adaptation Exchange users can:

- explore information;
- innovate existing solutions;
- share knowledge; and
- connect with other northern peoples.

Completing the portal was one of Canada's priorities under its chairmanship of the Arctic Council, which concluded Friday in Iqaluit. Work to promote the portal and to add information will continue under the U.S. chairmanship.

"While the adaptation portal will be helpful to a wide variety of research and government organizations, one key focus of this portal is to improve access to climate change information for decision makers in northern communities," Istchenko added.

The adaptation portal offers access to about 600 published documents from nine countries, such as research papers and project reports. While the website is in English, the working language of the Arctic Council, users can also upload and access information written in other languages.

The Government of Yukon, through the Climate Change Secretariat, co-led the development of the Arctic Adaptation Exchange portal for the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group. Project partners included Natural Resources Canada, the University of Alaska (Fairbanks), the U.S. government, Gwich'in Council International and the Aleut International Association. Additionally the Yukon team worked with the Northern Working Group of Canada's Adaptation Platform and more than 60 other stakeholders.

Learn more:

- Arctic Adaptation Exchange information portal
- Arctic Council

See backgrounder below

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Backgrounder

1. What is an ‘adaptation information portal’?

An information portal is a website that provides a single point of access to different information resources. The new Arctic Adaptation Portal amalgamates, organizes and facilitates access to a wide variety of climate change adaptation information resources from the circumpolar north. It is easy to use and free for users.

2. How is climate change affecting the circumpolar north?

Climate change affects the environment, traditional ways of life, and our buildings, roads and infrastructure. It affects the decisions we make for our families, communities and businesses. In Yukon, the annual average temperature has increased by 2.2 oC and the average winter temperature by 5.5 oC since 1948. In contrast, Canada’s annual average temperature has increased by 1.5 oC and the average winter temperature by 2.6 oC over the same period. Yukon glaciers have decreased in size by 22 per cent since 1958.

3. Who will benefit from the new information portal?

The information portal aims to inform three key groups:

- Community intermediaries—intermediary organizations that can channel information to and from indigenous groups and communities.
- Decision-makers—decision makers working at various levels of government and in the private sector.
- Researchers—academics involved in adaptation research in the circumpolar north.

4. How will the new information portal be maintained in the future?

After the launch period ends, the University of Alaska (Fairbanks) will maintain the website. It has been constructed for flexibility and growth and will likely have an interactive function in future. The Climate Change Secretariat will use the portal to share climate change adaptation information, and in its work as part of the advisory committee providing ongoing direction for the service.

5. How was the new information portal funded?

The \$348,858 budget was funded by cash and in-kind contributions from: Natural Resources Canada (\$113,000 cash); Canada's Adaptation Platform Northern Working Group membership (\$80,000 in-kind); Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (\$11,200 cash); Government of Yukon (\$60,000 in-kind); and University of Alaska (Government of the United States of America) (\$84,658 cash).

6. What is the role of the Arctic Council in the information portal project?

The Arctic Council provides a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of Arctic Indigenous peoples and other inhabitants on common issues such as sustainable development and environmental protection. The Council's Sustainable Development Working Group pursues initiatives—such as the Arctic Adaptation Portal—that provide practical knowledge and contribute to building the capacity of indigenous peoples and Arctic communities.

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