

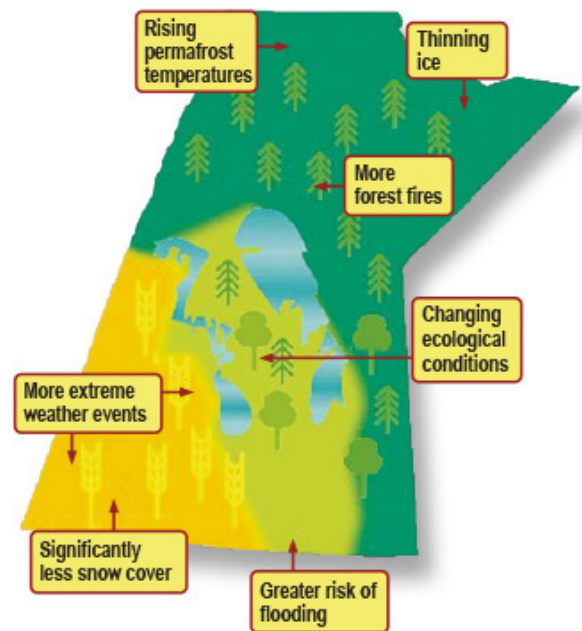
Climate Action Primer Series

# Is Your Business Ready for Climate Change?

## How does climate change impact Manitoba businesses?

### Climate change in Manitoba

Manitoba—particularly northern Manitoba—is now experiencing the effects of climate change along with the rest of Canada. Historical records show that every year since 1998 has been warmer than the 20th century average ([Government of Canada, 2022](#)). By the end of the 21st century, Manitoba’s summer climate could become much like that of Kansas and northern Texas, a change that “would present our children with an entirely different climate, which would necessitate a complete reworking of how we live and thrive in our environment” ([Prairie Climate Centre, n.d.](#)).



Source: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/climateandgreenplan/climatechange.html>

### Climate change impacts on business

A changing climate has a real and measurable impact on Manitoba businesses, including production losses due to extreme weather events such as droughts and flooding, and disruptive market trends such as carbon pricing and more expensive commercial insurance. However, climate change can also present new market opportunities arising from consumer preferences for low-carbon products and services. In today’s marketplace, climate action and sustainability are increasingly seen as drivers of economic competitiveness.

Here are just a few examples of the risks and opportunities that climate change poses to Manitoba businesses.

#### Direct Physical Risks and Opportunities:

**Extreme weather:** Increased extreme weather will necessitate more attention to risk assessment and increasing the resilience of business operation, facilities, products, and services. Companies will need to

adapt to the increased risk of floods, drought, winter power outages and wildfires, etc. This will also create opportunities for consultants to provide risk management services.

**Pests, invasive species and extreme heat:** The health sector will see changes in the demand for certain health care services as incidences of heat-related illnesses in urban centres increase, and pests bring increased frequency of disease vectors such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease. Businesses may also experience an increase in sick days and reduced productivity due to extreme heat.

**Changes in the growing season:** A longer and warmer growing season presents new risks and opportunities for agribusiness going forward: some traditional crops may thrive while others may not, and some crops never grown in Manitoba, may now be viable.

**Shifts in demand for tourism:** Warming winter and summer temperatures could shift demand for certain tourism activities and destinations, from summer to winter and vice versa.

**Supply chain disruptions:** Extreme weather in Canada, the U.S., and also across the world, can disrupt supply chains in Manitoba. It may also lead to more local production as an adaptation response.

### Indirect Transition Risks and Opportunities:

**A busy North:** With expectations of year-round shipping in the arctic sea passages in the coming decades due to a warming climate, economic opportunities may grow rapidly in Manitoba's northern supply chain route through Thompson and Churchill. But there are also social and environmental risks associated with rapid economic expansion, risks that will need to be managed through integrated and forward-looking planning and through public-private-civil society partnerships.

**Supply chain opportunities:** Companies across the globe are making climate commitments and decarbonizing their supply chains. Your business' carbon footprint can represent a source of emissions for the customers you supply. Therefore, measuring and reporting on emissions is becoming an increasingly important part of being competitive within global supply chains.

**Changes in policy and regulation:** The federal carbon price will affect operating costs, but at the same time will also incentivize new market opportunities for less carbon-intensive products and services. New federal requirements for assessing carbon emissions and undertaking climate resilience for infrastructure funding will create new opportunities for consulting services.

**New legal liability:** New health and safety issues can emerge related to facilities and operations, for instance, if buildings aren't maintained under revised building codes for snow loads, wind resistance, etc. And liabilities could exist for new builds if climate change isn't taken into account, even if building codes have not yet been updated accordingly. Some facilities may even become harder to insure, for instance, if they are already situated in or near a known flood zone.

**Changes to consumer preferences:** Reacting to the climate crisis, consumers are shifting their preferences toward less carbon-intensive and more eco-friendly products and services, including energy-efficient appliances, plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles, renewable energy for heat and power, plant-based sources of protein nutrition, to name just a few.

**Changes to employee preferences:** Workplace surveys show that millennial workers want their jobs to hold meaning and suggest that corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability are becoming increasingly important for attracting millennials and Gen Z workers.

*For more information on the basics of climate change in Manitoba see [Climate Change: A Primer for Manitoba Business](#).*

## How can your business take climate action?



Taking climate action involves two important parts: **enhancing resilience** to climate change and **reducing carbon** to help limit the extent of climate change. These are two sides of the same coin. And importantly, taking climate action applies to your **business operations** (your “home game”) and the **products & services** you offer (your “away game”).

### Climate Action for Business Operations (Your Home Game)

There are actions your business can take through the operation of buildings, facilities and vehicle fleets, and participation in low carbon supply chains, to reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to climate change. For example: increase the energy efficiency of your buildings; capture carbon through tree planting; enhance flood protection for vulnerable facilities; maintain backup power systems, etc. And part of an effective home game is increasing knowledge and capacity within your company, so that employees and stakeholders better understand why it is important to take climate action.

### Climate Action for Products & Services (Your Away Game)

There are actions your business can take through the types of products and services offered, to realize reductions in carbon emissions and boost climate change adaptation. With a growing local and global market for climate solutions, opportunities abound. For example: providing technical services for renewable energy installations to help organizations transition to net-zero emissions; sourcing and/or producing products that are sustainable; and helping businesses and communities manage flood and drought conditions.

Taking climate action may seem like a daunting or even insurmountable task, but it’s as easy as 1-2-3-4! MCC’s [Climate Action Checklist for Manitoba Businesses](#) outlines four key steps.

### Climate Action Checklist for Manitoba Business

- **Step 1:** Discuss the rationale for taking climate action
- **Step 2:** Identify ways to reduce carbon emissions and take priority actions
- **Step 3:** Increase resilience to climate risks by assessing and prioritizing risks and actions
- **Step 4:** Communicate your climate actions and continually improve

## Where can I go for more information?

### Manitoba Chambers of Commerce

- [Climate Action Toolkit for Manitoba Business](#)

### Manitoba Climate Resilience Training

- [Climate Change 101](#)
- [Manitoba's Changing Climate](#)
- [Climate Change Impacts to Northern Business](#)

### Other Resources

- [Climate Solutions 101](#) – Project Drawdown
  - [Prairie Climate Centre](#)
  - [Climate Data for a Resilient Canada](#)
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## The MCC Climate Action for Manitoba Business Initiative

Led by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (MCC), in collaboration with Novel Futures Corporation, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association, and with funding from the Government of Manitoba's Conservation and Climate Fund, the MCC Climate Action initiative builds awareness and capacity among Manitoba's small-and-medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Assessing Climate Risk and Enhancing Resilience, Reducing Carbon Emissions via the Circular Economy; and Using Nature-based Solutions.

