

Ready or not?

A conference on issues and solutions for adapting to climate change

April 30, 2009 True Reformer Building
at 1200 U Street, NW, in Washington, DC
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

May 1, 2009 Capitol Hill
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Register by April 23, 2009

To register, please email Brian Schwartz at bschwartz@oxfamamerica.org with your name, organization, and phone number, as well as which day(s) of the conference you plan on attending.

Registration is required for all participants. Registration is free, and a light breakfast and lunch will be provided. Spaces are limited and will be reserved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Conference background

Global warming is already threatening developing countries with increasingly severe weather events, droughts, floods, food shortages, and disease outbreaks—and the poorest communities in the developing world and the US suffer disproportionately from these impacts. Adaptation strategies—such as water management technologies and practices, coastal zone restoration, and the use of drought-resistant seeds—can help vulnerable communities build their resilience to the potentially devastating effects of climate change.

Recognizing the pressing need for increased education and collaboration with the environmental, development, foreign policy, and faith communities, this flagship conference is an important opportunity to advance effective adaptation policies for the world's poorest communities, and to increase collaboration between the diverse groups working on climate change and adaptation.

This is a moment of critical opportunity. With US lawmakers moving fast to craft climate legislation, we must act now to advance support for development and equity goals as part of a global climate deal to be reached in 2009. As developing countries play an increasingly central role in international climate negotiations, questions of funding for climate-related issues such as adaptation and clean energy are gaining in importance. Among the most crucial policy decisions to be made by Congress and the current presidential administration in UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) negotiations will be decisions on funding levels and mechanisms to help developing countries adapt to climate change.

Agenda

Much of the expertise on climate change and poverty lies with advocates in developing countries, where climate change presents development challenges every day. Experts and advocates from developing countries will speak at the conference and to Congressional leaders, along with experts from US-based organizations. The first day of the conference will address different aspects of effective climate change adaptation on the ground, and the second day will discuss adaptation finance and seek to engage decision makers on US climate legislation and policy.

April 30, 2009 | True Reformer Building at 1200 U Street, NW, in Washington, DC

- 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. **Light breakfast/registration**
- 9:00 – 9:10 a.m. **Welcome**
- 9:10 – 9:40 a.m. **Introductory remarks**
Prominent voices from the US and from developing countries will provide a broad perspective on adaptation opportunities and challenges.
- 9:40 – 11:00 a.m. **Diverse perspectives on adaptation**
This panel will serve as a primer to the conference and offer a chance to view adaptation from various perspectives, including:
- From the perspective of people of color, indigenous people, and people living in poverty, who are disproportionately affected by climate change.
 - From the perspective of women, who, as the majority of the world's poor people, are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and are also critical to solutions.
 - From a global security perspective, since climate change also acts as a threat multiplier for instability for some of the most volatile regions of the world.
 - From a faith perspective, since people across the religious spectrum have been highlighting the moral imperative of adaptation efforts.
- 11:00 – 11:15 a.m. **Break**
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **Climate change and health**
According to the World Health Organization, Earth's warming climate is estimated to contribute to more than 150,000 deaths and five million illnesses each year—a toll that could double by 2030. Panelists will discuss the scope of these health impacts on the most vulnerable communities and share effective techniques to prevent injury, illness, and suffering as a result of climate change. They will also explore future research priorities and gaps for climate and public health scientists, as well as strategies to facilitate cross-disciplinary efforts.
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **Climate change and water**
Because of climate change, communities across the world are faced with the paradox of either too much or too little water. This panel will address the impacts of floods and droughts on sustainable development, how floods and droughts are affecting communities both in the US and in the developing world, and how water is being dealt with in international climate negotiations.

12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch with keynote speaker:

Nancy Sutley, chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality

Nancy Sutley is President Barack Obama's appointment to lead the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Prior to her appointment, she was the deputy mayor for energy and environment for the city of Los Angeles, California.

Sutley worked for California Governor Gray Davis as energy advisor, managing state and federal regulations, legislative affairs, finances, and press relations. She served as deputy secretary for policy and intergovernmental relations in the California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from 1999–2003. She advised on water and air pollution policy, and established budget and legislative priorities. During the administration of President William J. Clinton, Sutley was a senior policy advisor to the regional administrator for the EPA, Region 9 in San Francisco and special assistant to the EPA Administrator in Washington, DC.

1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Disaster risk reduction and adaptation strategies

From 1995 to 2004, 2.5 billion people were affected by disasters, with the loss of 890,000 lives and a cost of \$570 billion, according to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation share common concerns: reducing the vulnerability of communities and achieving sustainable development. This panel will look at how communities in the US and around the world are already working to reduce their risk, often with the help of NGOs and governments.

1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Climate change and agriculture

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, yields from rain-fed agriculture in some African countries could be reduced by up to half by 2020—one of many growing food security challenges faced by people around the world. This panel will explore the impacts of climate change on agriculture, farmers, and food security; panelists will discuss how farmers in the developing world are beginning to adapt their methods, and how sustainable agriculture can be a powerful tool both for adaptation and for mitigation of harmful carbon emissions.

2:20 – 2:30 p.m.

Break

2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Building urban resilience to climate change

Fifty percent of the world's population lives in cities and urban settings—meaning that any comprehensive adaptation strategies will need to take urban situations into account. This panel will provide an overview of the challenges and opportunities faced by metropolitan communities in building resilience to climate change.

2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Ecosystems and community resilience

Building the resilience of local communities to climate change impacts will often depend on the protection and restoration of ecosystems. Coastal restoration, forest protection, and wetlands protection are often essential components of community-based adaptation strategies such as reducing disaster risk, improving watershed management and protecting water supplies, and protecting agricultural resources. This session will highlight these approaches and explore how to strengthen the links between ecosystem adaptation and community-based adaptation.

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Break

3:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Adaptation and the global green economy

Adaptation activities can generate economic development activity while also helping to save lives. This session will highlight adaptation strategies and approaches as well as investments in new technologies and techniques that will feed into a new green economy.

5:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Closing remarks

May 1, 2009 | Capitol Hill briefing

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Adaptation finance

Adaptation finance will be an essential part of an international climate deal and upcoming US legislation. This panel will cover how we can generate the resources needed for adaptation and how that money should be spent.

Sponsoring organizations (additional organizations to be announced):

1Sky	InterAction
ActionAid USA	Jubilee USA
American Public Health Association	League of Women Voters
Bread for the World	National Hispanic Environmental Council
CARE USA	The National Religious Partnership for the Environment
Center for American Progress	Natural Resources Defense Council
Center for Clean Air Policy	National Wildlife Federation
Center of Concern	Oil Change International
Church World Service	Oxfam America
Earth Day Network	Sustainable Energy & Economy Network
Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative	US Bangladesh Advisory Council
Friends of the Earth	US Climate Action Network
Gender Action	William C. Velasquez Institute
Global Gender and Climate Alliance	Women's Environment and Development Organization
Heinrich Böll Foundation	