



California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment

BACKGROUND

California is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. In the last decade, Californians have endured severe droughts, floods, historic wildfires, rising seas, and record temperatures all driven by climate change. Building resilience to these impacts requires sustained investment in climate change research and science.

[Senate Bill 1320](#) (Stern, 2020) calls on the State to advance action-based science by developing California Climate Change Assessments at least every five years. Previous Assessments (2006, 2009, 2012, 2018) contributed to a growing understanding about the impacts of climate change in California and offer communities and decision makers the tools to take action. Building on the strong foundation set by previous Assessments, the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research is leading implementation of the California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment (Fifth Assessment), in partnership with the California Energy Commission, California Natural Resources Agency, and California Strategic Growth Council.

EXAMPLES OF CLIMATE-RELATED EVENTS AND TRENDS THAT IMPACT CALIFORNIA INCLUDE:

- » Wildfire
- » Heavy precipitation
- » Flooding
- » Extreme heat events
- » Drought
- » Rising temperatures
- » Declining snowpack
- » Sea level rise
- » Ocean acidification



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THE FIFTH ASSESSMENT WILL DEVELOP:

- » New climate data and scenarios that portray impacts of climate change on California (the next generation of projections that align with Coupled Model Inter-comparison Project Phase 6, or CMIP6).
- » Original research that addresses California-specific research needs and questions related to climate change.
- » A Tribal research program to integrate tribal expertise, Traditional knowledge(s), and input from California Native American tribes throughout the Fifth Assessment process.
- » A suite of regional, topical, and statewide synthesis reports that prioritize equity in the translation of this cutting-edge research to meet the needs and unique contexts of regions across the state.
- » A dedicated, sustained, and equity-centered engagement process, tools and resources to ensure this information drives climate action on the ground.

DEFINITIONS

- » **Adaptation** is an action or set of actions that reduce climate risk.
- » **Resilience** describes a state of readiness to face climate risks.

OUTCOMES

The Assessment will be informed by ongoing engagement and outreach, and advance the integration of tribal expertise, Traditional knowledge(s) into the Fifth Assessment process and products. Leveraging diverse expertise throughout the state, the Fifth Assessment will contribute to the scientific foundation for understanding climate-related vulnerability throughout California. It will support on-the-ground implementation and decision-making at the local, regional, tribal, and state levels, focusing on the needs of communities most vulnerable to climate change impacts.

