

MEETING SUMMARY
WASHINGTON CLIMATE CHANGE
Human Health Preparation/Adaptation Workgroup

Meeting #2 - July 23, 2007 9:00am – 11:00am

Attendance:

1. Preparation/Adaptation Workgroup members:
Dave Seabrook, Roger Rosenblatt, Harriet Ammann, , Ned Therien, Stephen Bezruchka, Dick Hoskins, Ann Bikle, Richard Fenske, Anne Marie Kimball
2. Washington Department of Health Liaisons: Gregg Grunenfelder, Glen Patrick, Rachel McKinlay
3. Other Attendees: Liz Dykstra, Victor Coleman

Background Documents:

(all posted at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat_pawg_hh.htm)

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Prioritization tool for key Health Effect Categories

Discussion items and key issues:

1. Gregg Grunenfelder started the meeting with a roll call of those present and obtained acceptance of the group of the June 20th meeting summary.
2. Gregg provided an update of the Preparation/Adaptation Working Group (PAWG) leads. Key highlights included:
 - A writer/communicator (Barb MacGregor) has been hired by Ecology to assist in the development of the final Climate Change documents. An outline for the PAWG reports is being developed and will be available by early September, at the latest.
 - An Education/Engagement workgroup will likely be formed in the near future and representation from the various PAWGs will be requested. Once an outline for the workgroup, and a sense of time commitment of workgroup members has been developed Gregg will forward the information on to the Human Health PAWG members to solicit interest. (Dave, Harriet, and Ann Bikle all expressed potential interest in the workgroup's efforts).
 - A resource section to the Ecology website will be developed and will serve as a place to store articles and other climate change links that may be of interest. (Harriet suggested that links to existing EPA publications be made available at this site).
 - The Climate Impacts Group (CIG) has produced a Climate Facts Document that includes both global and regional observed and projected climate facts assembled from the latest IPCC and CIG research. The document also includes a summary of climate impacts for the PNW, primarily from CIG research. Gregg will distribute the

document to the workgroup. It is meant to be a reference and guide and we are encouraged to consult the cited references for more information.

- The Climate Impacts Group and King County are producing a document entitled *Planning for Climate Change: A Guidebook for Local, Regional, and State Governments*. This document should be available in September 2007 and among things may be helpful as we consider overarching principles associated with our workgroup efforts.
3. Roger provided an update on the HB 1303 Human Health workgroup efforts. Roger noted the Climate Health Impact Team (CHIT) has been formed and is comprised of Richard Fenske, Anne Marie Kimball, Catherine Karr, and himself. We will continue to work to align the work of the PAWG with that of the CHIT.
 4. Glen Patrick led a discussion of the health effects prioritization matrix that had been completed and returned prior to the meeting by 7 PAWG members. Glen noted that no weighting had been provided to the prioritization criteria and the PAWG discussed the pros and cons of weighting the criteria.

The results of this prioritization exercise ranked that the climate change parameters PAWG members felt most comfortable associating with the health effect categories in the following order (from most comfortable to least comfortable):

- a. Temperature
- b. Precipitation
- c. Ecosystem
- d. Air Quality
- e. Water Quality

With no weighting applied to the prioritization criteria the health effects categories were ranked as follows (from highest priority to lowest priority):

- a. Health effects of excessive heat
- b. Health effects of air pollution
- c. Health effects of a changing Ecology
- d. Health effects from flooding
- e. Health effects of ozone depletion and UV exposure
- f. Psycho-social health effects
- g. Health effects of water and food-borne disease
- h. Health effects of demographic impacts
- i. Health effects of vector-borne disease

Significant discussion followed and many PAWG members expressed concern that this exercise was based more on individual knowledge of issues, and was not well founded on scientific fact. It was also noted that things like the social determinants of health were under-represented in the matrix exercise.

5. A question was asked about the approach the CHIT was taking in defining health effect categories. Roger responded that the following categories had been identified for further research, after which additional discussion would occur:
 - a. Health effects of excessive heat – lead is Richard Fenske
 - b. Cardio Pulmonary Health effects – lead is Catherine Karr
 - c. Infection diseases – lead is Ann Marie Kimball
 - d. Rising Sea Level/ Increasing storm intensity – lead is Roger Rosenblatt

6. Gregg reported that Dr. Mike McGeehin from the Centers for Disease Control recently had a white paper on climate change approved by CDC which will soon be published in a national journal. The health effect categories identified by Dr. McGeehin (not prioritized) are noted below:
 - a. Water and food-borne disease
 - b. Vector-borne diseases
 - c. Health effects of air pollution
 - d. Extreme weather events
 - e. Health effects of excessive heat

7. After further discussion, the PAWG agreed that the future focus of our work should focus on the following health effect categories, and that our work should be coordinated as much as possible with the work of the CHIT:
 - a. Health effects of excessive heat
 - b. Health effects of air pollution
 - c. Health effects associated with infection diseases (e.g. enteric, vector-borne, etc.)
 - d. Health effects associated with extreme weather events (e.g. sea level rise, flooding, population displacement, etc.)

8. The group noted that as we further develop our work we need to be thoughtful about, and highlight the important issues of environmental justice and the disproportionate impacts of climate change on the economically less advantaged. This perhaps could be accomplished through a preamble in our final report or by including a set of overarching principles to be carried on into the future. How to pay for climate preparation and adaptation strategies was also raised as important issue for future consideration. Paying for the implementation of preparation/adaptation strategies through a regressive sales tax mechanism will only further compound the effects of climate change on the poor.

Next steps and agreements:

1. The PAWG will continue its work with a focus on the four health effect categories as listed in item #7 above. Gregg and Roger will discuss a strategy for combining the efforts of the PAWG and CHIT and will communicate that strategy, with defined expectations and timelines to the PAWG members.
2. The next meeting of the PAWG was scheduled for August 29, 2007 in the afternoon. We will strive to make arrangements for video conferencing for this meeting. The focus of our next meeting will be on updates and from the health

effect category teams and an initial discussion on adaptation/preparation strategies.