

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
CLIMATE CHANGE**

**2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter establishes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Climate Adaptation Network.

**2.2 What are the mission and vision of the Climate Adaptation Network (Network)?**

**A. Mission:** The mission of the Network is to guide the Service to enhance preparedness, adaptation, and resilience in the face of the impacts of climate change and its interaction with non-climate influences on fish, wildlife, plants, ecosystems, cultural resources, and facilities.

**B. Vision:** The Network leads the Service's efforts to meet the urgent challenge of global climate change in conjunction with other influences and stressors by guiding:

- (1) The development of appropriate policies and priorities,
- (2) Application of the best available science, and
- (3) Use of risk-informed decisionmaking.

**2.3 What are the authorities for this chapter?**

**A.** Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance.

**B.** Executive Order 13653, Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change.

**C.** Secretarial Order 3289 (and amendments), Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and Other Natural and Cultural Resources.

**D.** Secretarial Order 3330, Improving Mitigation Policies and Practices of the Department of the Interior.

**E.** [523 DM 1](#), Department of the Interior Climate Change Policy.

**2.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?**

**A. Adaptation:** Executive Order 13653 defines *adaptation* as an adjustment in natural or human systems in anticipation of, or response to, a changing environment in a way that effectively uses beneficial opportunities or reduces negative effects. For the Service, *adaptation* to climate change involves planned, science-based management actions that we take to prepare for and reduce the negative impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats ([056 FW 1](#)), as well as ecosystems, cultural resources, and facilities. These include actions such as on-the-ground activities, conservation planning, regulatory decisions, and regulatory and policy changes.

**B. Engagement:** Joining forces with others to seek solutions to the challenges and threats to fish, wildlife, and plant conservation posed by climate change.

**C. Mitigation:** The third National Climate Assessment defines *mitigation* as actions that reduce the human contribution to the planetary greenhouse gas effect, including lowering emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and increasing the net uptake of GHGs through land-use change and ecosystem management, including forestry.

**D. Resilience:** Executive Order 13653 defines *resilience* as the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions. Ecology literature defines *resilience* as the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
CLIMATE CHANGE**

undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and processes. For the Service, building resilience to the effects of ongoing and projected changes in climate (including the interactions of these effects with non-climate influences) refers to on-the-ground management actions, planning, policies, and other mechanisms designed to help maintain or enhance the capacity of species, habitats, or ecosystems to withstand or absorb disturbances without irreversible changes in important processes and functionality.

**2.5 Who are the members of the Network?**

**A.** The Network is comprised of a representative that each member of the Directorate nominates from the Regions and the following Headquarters programs:

- (1) Ecological Services,
- (2) Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation,
- (3) International Affairs,
- (4) External Affairs,
- (5) Migratory Birds,
- (6) National Conservation Training Center,
- (7) National Wildlife Refuge System,
- (8) Science Applications, and
- (9) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration.

**B.** Other Directorate members (e.g., Chief – Law Enforcement) have the option of nominating a representative to serve on the Network.

**C.** After Directorate members nominate their representatives, the Assistant Director for Science Applications approves them.

**D.** The Director will appoint one Directorate member (not a representative) to serve. In addition, the Assistant Director for Science Applications serves on the Network and will either Chair the group or assign a designee to Chair meetings.

**E.** Network representatives must have relevant technical, management, or policy expertise related to climate change adaptation, mitigation, or engagement.

**2.6 What are the Network's objectives?** The Network's objectives are to:

**A.** Advise the Directorate and make recommendations on efforts to respond to climate change and its effects, including non-climate influences that interact with climate change, as called for by:

- (1) The Executive Orders (13514 and 13653) and Secretarial Order 3289 (and amendments) that are listed in section 2.3,

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Climate Change**

**Part 056 Adaptation**

**Chapter 2 The Service Climate Change Adaptation Network**

**056 FW 2**

(2) The Department of the Interior Climate Change Policy (523 DM 1) and Service policy on Climate Change Adaptation (056 FW 1),

(3) “Rising to the Urgent Challenge: Strategic Plan for Responding to Accelerating Climate Change” (the Service’s Climate Change Strategic Plan), and

(4) The “National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy” (Adaptation Strategy).

**B. Advise the Directorate and other employees on the following activities:**

(1) Efforts to incorporate, coordinate, and implement climate change adaptation, mitigation, and engagement measures into the Service’s mission, policies, programs, and operations, including the Service’s Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) approach and practices; and

(2) Development and implementation of national climate change policies and guidance on topics related to climate change adaptation, mitigation, engagement, science, budget, and performance evaluation.

**C. Assess and address employee, field station, and program needs for climate change information, tools, science, and training.**

**2.7 What are the Network’s responsibilities?** Operating under the guidance of the Directorate, the Network must:

**A. Develop recommendations for periodic updates to the Service’s Climate Change Strategic Plan and priorities for its implementation.**

**B. Recommend new or proposed changes to policies, programs, procedures, budgets, performance evaluations, and regulations:**

(1) That are necessary to implement the Executive Orders, Secretarial Orders, and policy in section 2.3; 056 FW 1; the Service’s Climate Change Strategic Plan; the Adaptation Strategy; and other related guidance; and

(2) That promote the dual goals of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**C. Assess the need for and guide the work to develop, share, and provide to employees authoritative, easily accessible, usable, and timely information, data, decision support tools, and training on climate preparedness, adaptation, and resilience based on the best available science.**

**D. Identify and help coordinate Service priorities, resources, capacity needs, performance evaluation, and reporting systems for implementing the Climate Change Strategic Plan, the Adaptation Strategy, and other relevant documents.**

**E. Coordinate across programs and Regions and with other Departmental bureaus, other agencies, the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, and external partners at the national level to leverage Service resources and opportunities for climate adaptation, mitigation, and engagement initiatives.**

/sgd/ Daniel M. Ashe  
DIRECTOR

Date: June 20, 2014

**06/20/14  
New**

**CLIMATE CHANGE**