

PARP report summary: Climate Change and the Upper St'at'imc Territory

This report, prepared by Dominique Saheed for the Poverty Action Research Project, consists of direct quotes and information acquired from a variety of sources, including international and national reports, agreements, journal articles and internet materials.

It is projected...that Lillooet and the entire Upper St'at'imc Territory will experience a 5.2°C warmer annual mean temperature during the 2080s. Such changes will affect the salmon fishery, forestry, sedimentation (meaning more landslides and runoffs), drought, as well as food security. Changing conditions will lead to increasingly unpredictable supplies of naturally growing foods and medicines that the St'at'imc have used. Communities, therefore, have had to learn to adapt in response to the changing weather events to survive...

Changing temperatures are not only affecting the distribution, abundance and habitat of wildlife, which are important to Aboriginal communities, but are also making traditional hunting sites inaccessible (Ford et al., 2010). [But case studies included in this report] will inform the St'at'imc Territory of successful examples of coping mechanisms, that if implemented correctly, can be used to reduce their sensitivities, and strengthen their resilience against the adverse effects of climate change in British Columbia.

[In regards to the hydroelectric power generating facilities in St'at'imc territory] BC Hydro and the St'at'imc will determine the operating regime (water flows) that will be use for the next 15 years. However, in order to determine such changes, the potential impacts of changing weather and climate must be carefully considered. Concerns include glaciation, the size of the glaciers within St'at'imc territory have been decreasing and that leads to increased water flows. This leads to concerns about dam safety.

. As new projections of climatic impacts become known, new adaptation measures should be researched, tested and implemented to enhance community resiliency (Krishnaswamy et al., 2012). It is also important to acknowledge that no community is entirely safe from natural disasters and disturbances; however, a resilient community is one that is able to mitigate its sensitivities and adjust to fluctuations from such hazards, while at the same time, functioning effectively.