



Pacific Institute
for Climate Solutions
Knowledge. Insight. Action.

MEDIA TIP

June 14, 2011

Food security and climate change – Vancouver forum starts today

Finding out how British Columbia's climate is expected to change and how this will affect our future food supplies is just part of the agenda of the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions' annual forum that kicks off in Vancouver today.

The "Resilient Communities: Preparing for the Climate Challenge" two-day (June 14-15) forum at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue on 580 West Hastings St. brings together scientists, planners and decision-makers to learn about the latest climate change projections and to exchange information about how communities are adapting. The forum is open to media.

Forum chair and environmental policy specialist Ben Kangasniemi says climate change brings challenges that communities, food producers and local governments have never dealt with before, so the sharing of information and resources is essential for long-term planning and infrastructural investments.

"Past and continuing global increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are shifting the goal posts and we can no longer rely on historical climate patterns to guide our decision-making," he says. "The forum will reveal what climate impacts we should expect in BC and where people can find the information they need to guide their adaptation decisions."

Part of the forum includes a free public panel discussion on "Food Security: Preparing for Climate Change" that will be held tonight (June 14). Starting at 7 p.m. in the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts (149 West Hastings St.), the event will examine the latest climate change projections and how it will affect BC agriculture. The panel's speakers include: Dr. Francis Zwiers, Director of the University of Victoria's Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium; Herb Barbolet, Simon Fraser University food policy researcher and activist; Dawn Morrison, coordinator, BC Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty; Emily MacNair, coordinator of the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative; and Erik Karlsen, past chair of BC's Agriculture Land Commission. The event is open to everyone.

Wednesday's sessions will focus on the particular challenges that local governments and communities face in terms of reducing GHG emissions while also becoming more resilient to climate impacts. Case studies will be presented on how different BC communities are adapting for climate change.

Media are welcome to attend the forum and should contact the PICS communications staff in advance. The full forum program can be viewed at www.pics.uvic.ca/

PICS is a collaboration of BC's four-research intensive universities, and is hosted and led by the University of Victoria.

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