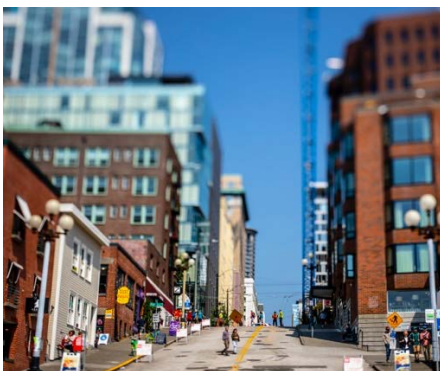


Creating accessible and useful climate change science for Washingtonians

STORY FOUR IN A SERIES HIGHLIGHTING WASHINGTON STATE-FUNDED WORK LED BY THE CLIMATE IMPACTS GROUP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

W

BRIEF, VISUALLY APPEALING REPORTS AVAILABLE IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH ARE INCREASING AWARENESS OF -- AND ACTION ON -- CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ACROSS WASHINGTON.



AT A GLANCE

- > **THE CHALLENGE.** Decision makers and the public need localized, relevant science to act on climate change. Yet, the latest science is typically broad and technical.
- > **THE GAP.** Funding to help better communicate existing science is limited.
- > **STATE SUPPORT.** State funding supported staff time and printing costs to develop two accessible, brief reports. Additional private funding supported the translation of these reports into Spanish.
- > **THE IMPACT.** Reports in Spanish and English have been used by policy makers, reporters and community groups to better communicate climate change impacts in Washington with the public and to inform policies.

THE CHALLENGE OF EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING CLIMATE IMPACTS

One challenge in preparing for climate change impacts is getting up-to-date and localized information into the hands of people who can use it. This audience includes policy makers, planners, and other decision makers in state and local governments. It also includes members of frontline communities — people of color, people with low incomes, people who rely on natural resources for their livelihoods, and others — who are likely to be hurt first and worst by climate change impacts.

However, current climate science assessments are often written by large teams of scientists that take a national or global look at climate change impacts. Many of these major reports are lengthy, technical and difficult to apply to local information needs. The Climate Impacts Group responded to the need for brief, accessible reports that summarize the lengthy assessments and make conclusions relevant to state and local decision makers and frontline communities.

ADDRESSING A GAP WITH STATE SUPPORT

Despite their potential value to many audiences, these accessible reports were difficult to fund. At the Climate Impacts Group, much of our funding is typically directed to climate change research that generates new knowledge or to address specific information needs of local governments or state agencies.

Funding from the Washington state legislature supported staff time as well as printing costs to develop *No Time to Waste* and *Shifting Snowlines and Shorelines*, which summarize International Program on Climate Change reports on climate trends, impacts, and adaptation, highlighting what the reports mean for Washington state. Using plain language and informational graphics, these reports are designed to be accessible to a range of audiences.

BRIEF REPORT, BIG IMPACT

These brief reports are used by government officials as the scientific basis for policy decisions. They have supported adaptation efforts at the Department of Health, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Ecology, Association of Washington Cities, and elsewhere. These reports were also shared on social media and referenced in news reports, all in support of informing the public about climate changes and impacts in Washington.

In 2021, using private funding, we developed Spanish-language versions of *No Time to Waste* and *Shifting Snowlines and Shorelines*. These reports responded to a request from Team Naturaleza, a community group based in Wenatchee, for graphics and illustrations to use as part of their educational outdoor programs. Several community partners, including Washington Stormwater Center and Agriculture Climate Network, featured these reports on their websites, and one community group requested 50 print copies of the reports.

Making localized climate science available in languages other than English is critical for engaging all Washingtonians – especially those who will be most affected by climate change and who have been historically marginalized from the climate adaptation field. In leveraging Climate Impacts Group funds to pilot the translation process with *No Time to Waste* and *Shifting Snowlines and Shorelines*, we established connections and procedures for translating future reports. In 2023, we returned to these partnerships to translate *In the Hot Seat: Saving Lives from Extreme Heat in Washington state*, which was released simultaneously in Spanish and English.

