

**US Forest Service**  
**Climate Change Science/Management Integration Team**  
**Charter**  
**March, 2009**

The Climate Change Science/Management Integration Team is appointed by the Climate Council and works under their guidance. The Strategic Framework for Responding to Climate Change and related documents serves as the guide for actions implemented by the Science/Management Integration Team.

The Team is responsible for Action 1.1 – Science/Management Integration. The objective of this action is to develop a mode of collaboration and integration that will ensure improved and ongoing feedback between science and user communities on research needs and priorities, development of science-based tools and applications, and development of science syntheses and other educational materials.

Coordination and consultation with the other chartered Framework teams is essential to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness. This critically important action will support many other Framework actions.

The Science/Management Integration Team will provide a plan of work for their overall effort. Extension or modification of the charter must be approved by the Climate Council. The Team is to complete the design, implementation plan, and recommended action items by June 30, 2009.

**Background**

Forest Service has a long history of research and investigating and tracking many aspects of forest and grassland ecosystems, including how these ecosystems are affected by changing climate. Agency scientists have participated in global and national assessments of climate change impacts, mitigation, and adaptation, and have developed collaborative relationships with scientists around the world. Researchers are beginning to incorporate climate change into regional and local-scale models of potential impacts on plant and animal species, vegetation structure, stand dynamics, water supplies, and disturbance patterns. The Forest Service Global Change Research Strategy (February 2009) lays out direction for the agency's research program over the next ten years. This strategy will need to be flexible over time in response to an organized interactive dialogue among researchers, land and resource managers, and other users in modifying research priorities and providing feedback.

Integration of science and managers' needs and the translation of relevant science into land management applications will help managers - Federal, State, Tribal, and private - and policymakers - better evaluate the effects of management actions, consider alternative scenarios, and make decisions in an uncertain changing environment. This integration is vital to understanding the role and contribution of United States national forests and grasslands in international agreements addressing climate change.

Lastly, the translation of science into high quality, science based education and outreach to Forest Service employees, partners, and the public will build awareness and understanding about climate change on forests and grasslands.

A successful system will lead towards:

- Assessments and syntheses that will help guide Action 2.3 (Assess how land management activities contribute to adaptation objectives) and Action 4.1 (Create a rapid national analysis of the implications of climate change for the Nation's forests and grasslands).
- Guidelines for periodic review and adjustment of research priorities (Action 1.2)
- Enhanced methods for moving science into application (Action 1.3)
- Science findings and products easily available to a diverse set of audiences (Action 6.3).

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The work of the Team should:

- Identify, review, and improve existing efforts and actions, including the July 2008 user/scientist workshop and the 2008 Forest Service Research and Development strategic plan for climate change research.
- Develop internal processes and a pilot demonstration that ensures systemic, interactive dialogue between researchers and users (managers, communicators, educators, citizens, and others) for identifying priorities in each of four categories:
- Information needs
- Science based analysis and decision support
- Syntheses of current knowledge for users
- Communication tools and education products.
- Design the system to be effective and cost-efficient.
- Provide an estimate of costs (people and money) to implement the planned system.

The Team will consult and coordinate with the other chartered Framework teams to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness. The team will also consult with other experts and users for advice, review, and feedback.

### **Team Operations**

Team members will carry out these roles in conjunction with the duties of their current position. Additional task teams and support staff from the Washington Office and the field can be requested as needed through the Climate Council, appropriate Directors and line officers. Integration team members may seek some relief of their current duties to meet limited duration high priority assignments if approved by the employee's Director

or line officer and recommendation of the Climate Council Executive Sponsor, Dave Cleaves.