



# BC | Climate Resilience Summit 2026

Vancouver, Robson Square | March 2-3

## Summit Outcomes

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### Data, Dialogue & Storytelling for Resilience

#### About

The BC Climate Resilience Summit 2026 is the second convening of BC CRS, building on the inaugural summit and nearly a decade of Understanding Risk BC (URBC) symposiums that began with UR+ Vancouver in 2017. It brings together practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and community leaders from across British Columbia and beyond to foster the interdisciplinary, 'all of society' dialogue essential to reducing risk and building resilience across the province.

The Summit is designed to move the conversation from awareness and analysis toward coordinated, actionable strategies spanning climate risk management, low carbon resilience, and disaster risk reduction. Its objectives are aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030), adopted by the BC government in 2018, and with the National Emergency Management Strategy for Canada: Toward a Resilient 2030, which focuses on earthquakes, floods, and wildfires.

The program was shaped by a broad and growing community of practice, convening colleagues from government, academia, insurance and finance, business and industry, and other key sectors. Sessions are highly participatory and cross-cutting, pairing leading practitioners with structured dialogue to generate actionable outcomes. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to this journey so far. Together, we are building toward a more climate and disaster resilient BC.

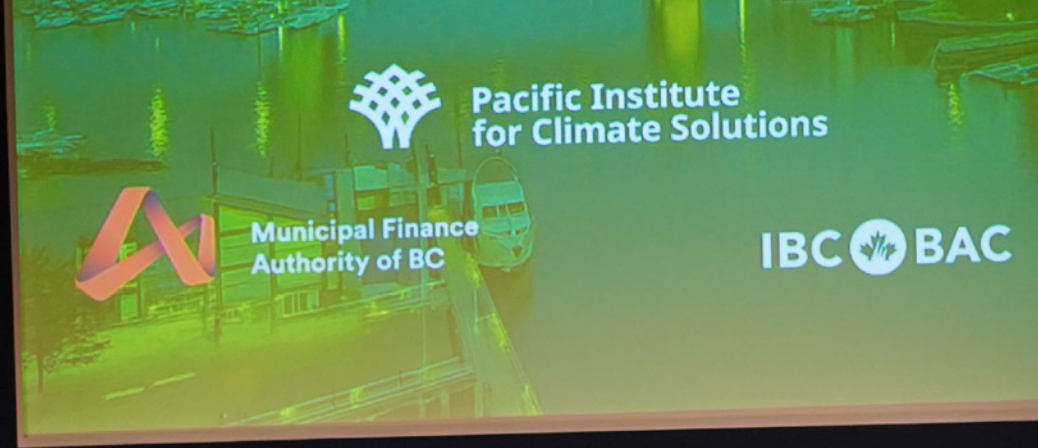


## Recommended Policies and Strategies

The following recommendations were developed from cross-sectoral dialogue at BCCRS 2026. They are organized into **four thematic categories** to support 'whole of society' action across government, industry, academia, and civil society.

### Risk Communication & Education

1. Invest in social infrastructure (i.e. community programs, neighbourhood networks, and mutual aid relationships) as a foundational and measurable pillar of climate and disaster resilience, recognizing that connected communities are better equipped to withstand and recover from extreme events.
2. Develop community pathfinder programs that train residents to navigate post-disaster systems, including insurance claims, government assistance, and rebuilding processes, ensuring that this capacity exists before a disaster occurs.
3. Communicate the concept of 'avoided loss' more effectively to decision-makers and the public through plain-language cost-benefit tools that make the financial value of resilience investments visible, politically actionable, and comparable to the cost of inaction.
4. Engage young people as an untapped resource in building community resilience, including through paid and mentored roles in resilience planning, emergency management, and climate risk communication.
5. Apply Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) frameworks to environmental and disaster risk assessments and communications to ensure that impacts on Indigenous women and marginalized groups are systematically identified and addressed.
6. Use interactive, community-based engagement tools, including games, art installations, and locally grounded storytelling, to involve residents in disaster risk decision-making and build the social buy-in that determines speed of delivery.
7. Leverage AI tools to make dense technical reports and climate risk data accessible to community members and local governments, reducing barriers to meaningful participation in risk governance for non-specialist audiences.



Don Iveson (The Co-operators)

## Data, Mapping, Modelling & Tools

1. Accelerate the completion and public release of updated floodplain maps through the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP), reflecting current and projected future conditions and make them accessible to local governments, First Nations, and the public through a centralized national flood risk portal.
2. Require that all floodplain mapping products and risk assessment tools incorporate dynamic, future-looking climate scenarios rather than relying solely on historical return periods, so that risk information remains valid as conditions change.
3. Apply machine learning and climate analogue modelling to improve flood and hazard risk projections, using current conditions in comparable cities to help communities anticipate how hazard and risks may evolve under future climate scenarios.
4. Develop and maintain interactive, open-access climate decision-support platforms, such as the Canadian Centre for Climate Services Fire Weather Projections Tool, that translate complex modelling outputs into practical planning information for policymakers and the general public.
5. Establish shared hazard, asset, and exposure datasets across jurisdictions to reduce duplication, improve consistency in risk assessment, and increase the leverage of public investment in risk information.
6. Mandate watershed and hydrologic impact assessments as a prerequisite for clearcut logging approvals, addressing the current gap whereby the vast majority of logging operations proceed without such review.
7. Regulate AI and data centre infrastructure in BC as a resource sector, requiring detailed energy and water management plans and environmental impact tracking to ensure that digital tools supporting climate resilience do not compound the climate crisis.
8. Co-design all AI, geospatial, and climate risk tools with Indigenous communities using their specific ecological indicators and governance principles, ensuring data sovereignty and preventing the misuse or extraction of traditional knowledge.

## Buildings, Codes & Construction

1. Advance performance-based seismic design standards that go beyond life safety to support functional recovery, reducing the risk of widespread building demolition and long-term community displacement following major earthquakes.
2. Develop financial and legislative frameworks to incentivize voluntary seismic retrofits of private buildings, particularly those constructed between 1973 and 1990, including access to low-interest retrofit loans and phased compliance pathways linked to renovation triggers.
3. Mandate that new construction in fire-prone areas prohibit combustible exterior materials and landscaping that creates direct pathways for fire to reach structures, and develop provincial financing programs to support the retrofit of existing homes with fire-resistant materials.
4. Shift flood risk management away from sole reliance on aging dyke infrastructure toward multi-scale, nature-based, and community-rooted strategies, recognizing that dykes alone cannot address the full range of flood risk, they are financially unsustainable, physically insufficient in the face of sea-level rise, subject to seismic hazard, and vulnerable to being overwhelmed when upstream landscape disturbances continue to increase runoff and sediment loads.
5. Establish essential services delivery standards for critical infrastructure systems, including water, energy, transportation, and health, using a hazard-agnostic, systems-based approach that accounts for cascading failures across interconnected networks.
6. Embed critical infrastructure resilience planning into annual capital budgets and long-term asset management frameworks, integrating seismic, flood, wildfire, and climate risk into standard infrastructure planning rather than treating them as one-time or post-disaster concerns.
7. Require AI and digital infrastructure to be powered by renewable energy wherever possible and to adopt sustainable cooling designs, such as waste-heat recovery and closed water circulation, so that the digital tools underpinning resilience planning are themselves low-carbon.



Kookai Chaimahawong (UBC Sauder School of Business)

## Process, Risk Governance & Funding

1. Implement the BC Emergency and Disaster Management Act framework fully, ensuring that ministry-led risk assessments are completed, integrated into annual planning and capital budgeting cycles, and translated into actionable guidance for local governments and regulated entities.
2. Design risk assessments with a defined purpose and intended use from the outset, including clear identification of which decisions they will inform and who will act on them, so that they produce genuine risk reduction rather than documentation for its own sake.
3. Develop a national strategy for climate and disaster resilience that coordinates federal, provincial, and municipal responsibilities, supported by aligned fiscal transfers, equitable response criteria, and clear roles across orders of government, ensuring communities without national profiles receive comparable support.
4. Pursue legislative superfund models, similar to those in New York and Vermont, to institutionalize cost recovery from major carbon polluters, directing those funds toward climate adaptation, and complement this with attribution science and legal mechanisms such as subrogation.
5. Direct provincial market conduct authorities to develop and publicly release localized, household-level insurance premium and property risk rating data, enabling informed decision-making by homeowners, lenders, and municipalities, and preventing systemic insurance market instability.
6. Integrate climate risk explicitly into long-term municipal financial planning, including through voluntary climate risk disclosures, and explore catastrophe bonds and other capital market risk transfer tools to broaden the distribution of climate-related financial exposure.
7. Establish a lead authority or coordinating body for critical infrastructure resilience in BC, tasked with de-siloing governance, facilitating data sharing across sectors, and developing cross-sector standards for infrastructure performance under climate stress.
8. Implement UNDRIP across flood, wildfire, and land-use governance frameworks, engage First Nations at the earliest stages of risk assessment design, and support Indigenous-led stewardship initiatives as a core strategy for wildfire mitigation, flood resilience, and biodiversity protection.
9. Require that cross-jurisdictional risk governance accounts for the fact that natural systems do not respect political boundaries, and develop regional collaboration structures, particularly for watersheds and wildfire corridors, with stable funding independent of electoral cycles.



George Benson (The Zero Emissions Innovation Centre)



Participants of BCCRS 2026 engaged in a presentation

## Next Steps

1. Continue building the community of practice between summits through regional roundtables and working groups that maintain momentum and deepen cross-sectoral relationships.
2. Strengthen the impact pathway from Summit dialogue to policy and practice through improved session design, synthesis of contributor intentions around disaster risk reduction, a policy brief template informed by the Waterloo Climate Institute, and identified opportunities for interest holders to apply insights between summits.
3. Advance Indigenous partnership in the governance and design of future summits, ensuring Indigenous communities are engaged as decision-making partners and that programming reflects Indigenous priorities and knowledge systems.
4. Work with provincial and federal partners to track progress against the indicators identified in this report, establishing baselines where data exists and identifying gaps where new monitoring mechanisms are needed.
5. Pursue dedicated funding to translate summit recommendations into policy briefs and interest holder engagement processes that can influence decision-making between summits.

