

Climate Change and Public Health in Connecticut: State Health Assessment 2019 and the Governor's Council on Climate Change

Laura Hayes, PhD

Epidemiologist, Connecticut Department of Public Health,
Health Statistics and Surveillance Section

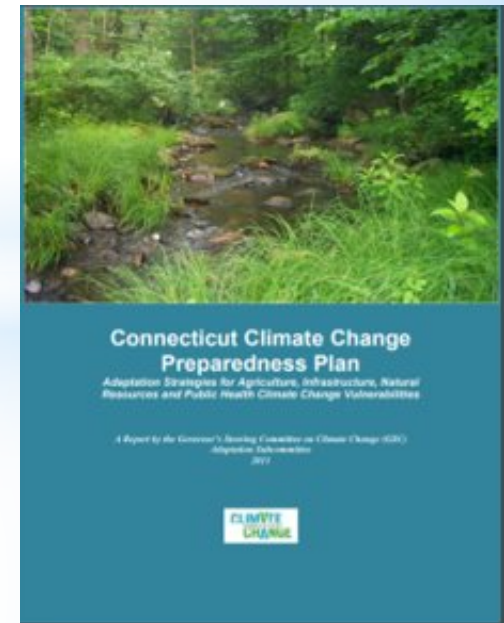


Connecticut Department of Public Health
Keeping Connecticut Healthy



2011 Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan

- Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change
- Contains a set of Public Health Adaption Recommendations



Foundational Work

Public Health Workgroup Recommendations to the Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan

In 2011, DPH coordinated with four other state agencies as part of the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change to develop a preparedness plan for the state culminating in eighteen recommendations specific to three action areas for public health:

- **Best Management Practices:**
 1. Consider the needs of vulnerable populations in climate change adaptation planning.
 2. Evaluate ozone non-attainment alert systems.
 3. Evaluate current early extreme weather events warning system and emergency response plans.
 4. Continue to develop and update all municipal emergency preparedness plans for extreme weather events.
 5. Develop cooling station best management practices.
 6. Develop criteria for school closings and outdoor play during extreme heat events.

- **Research, Monitoring and Education:**
 1. Educate other sectors of state government about public health climate change impacts and adaptation.
 2. Educate local health department staff on climate change impacts.
 3. Develop educational materials concerning poor air quality.
 4. Continue to monitor health ailments caused by ozone non-attainment.
 5. Assist local health departments with climate change adaptation.
 6. Incorporate climate change preparedness strategies into public health education.
 7. Develop a database of morbidity and mortality caused by climate change.
 8. Intensify vector associated disease monitoring.
 9. Increase airborne pollen monitoring.

- **Policy, Regulation, and Funding.**
 1. Develop legislation to allow regulatory agencies to respond to extreme heat conditions in occupational settings.
 2. Continue to support funding to provide for adequate updates to municipal sewage infrastructure.
 3. Support funding to provide for adequate updates to municipal water infrastructure.

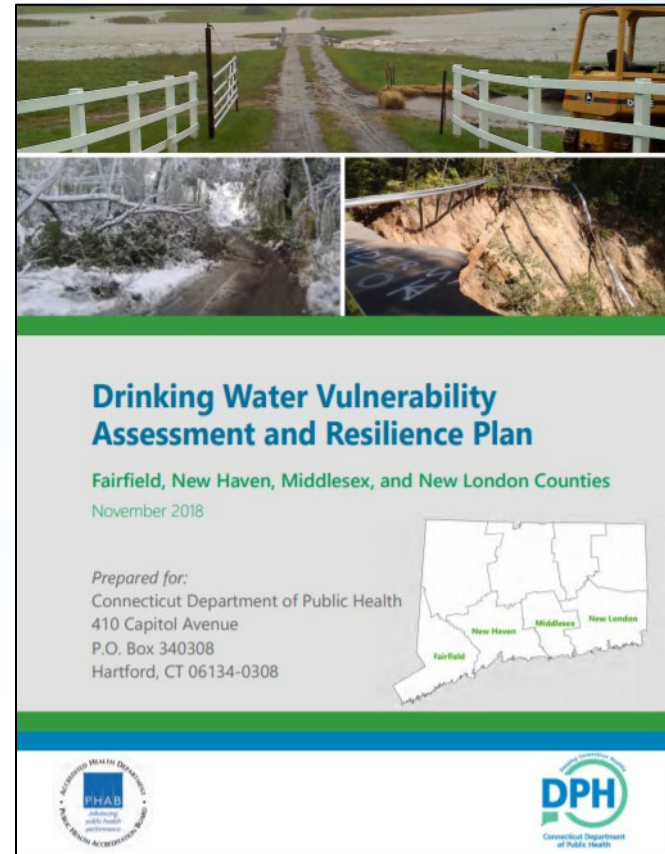
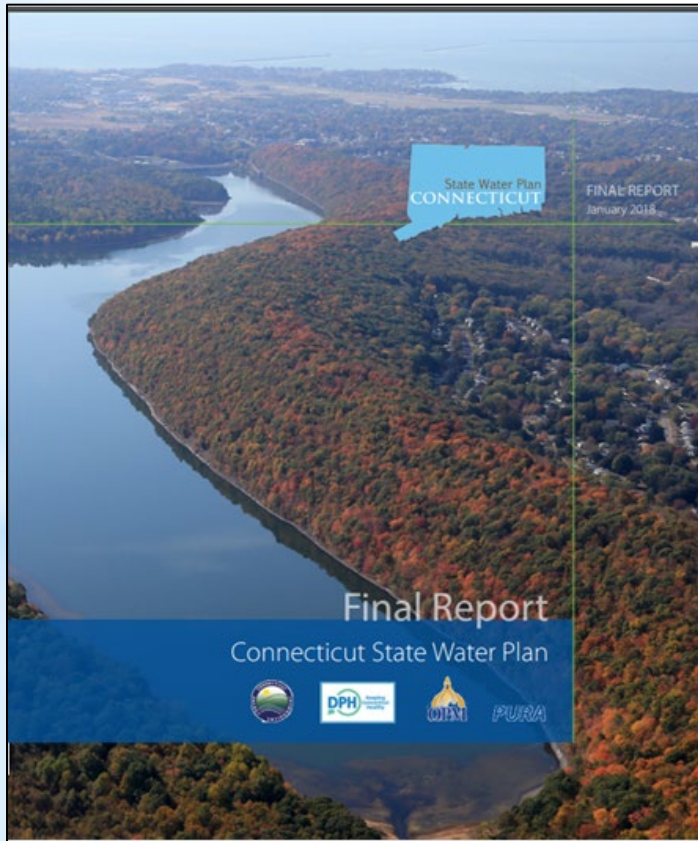
State Agencies Fostering Resilience (SAFR) Council

State Agencies Fostering Resilience (SAFR) is tasked with creating a resilience roadmap for the state and includes representatives from nine state agencies.

Governor Malloy established SAFR Council through Executive Order 50

Governor Lamont signed Executive Order No. 3 that includes climate change mitigation and adaptation provisions and continues SAFR as a subcommittee to the Governor's Council on Climate Change.

Climate Change and Connecticut Drinking Water



Connecticut State Health Assessment 2019



Connecticut Department of Public Health
Keeping Connecticut Healthy



State Health Assessment Process

What is a State Health Assessment?

- A collaborative process of collecting and analyzing data and information for use in:
 - Educating and mobilizing communities
 - Developing priorities
 - Garnering resources or using resources in different ways
 - Adopting or revising policies
 - Planning actions to improve health

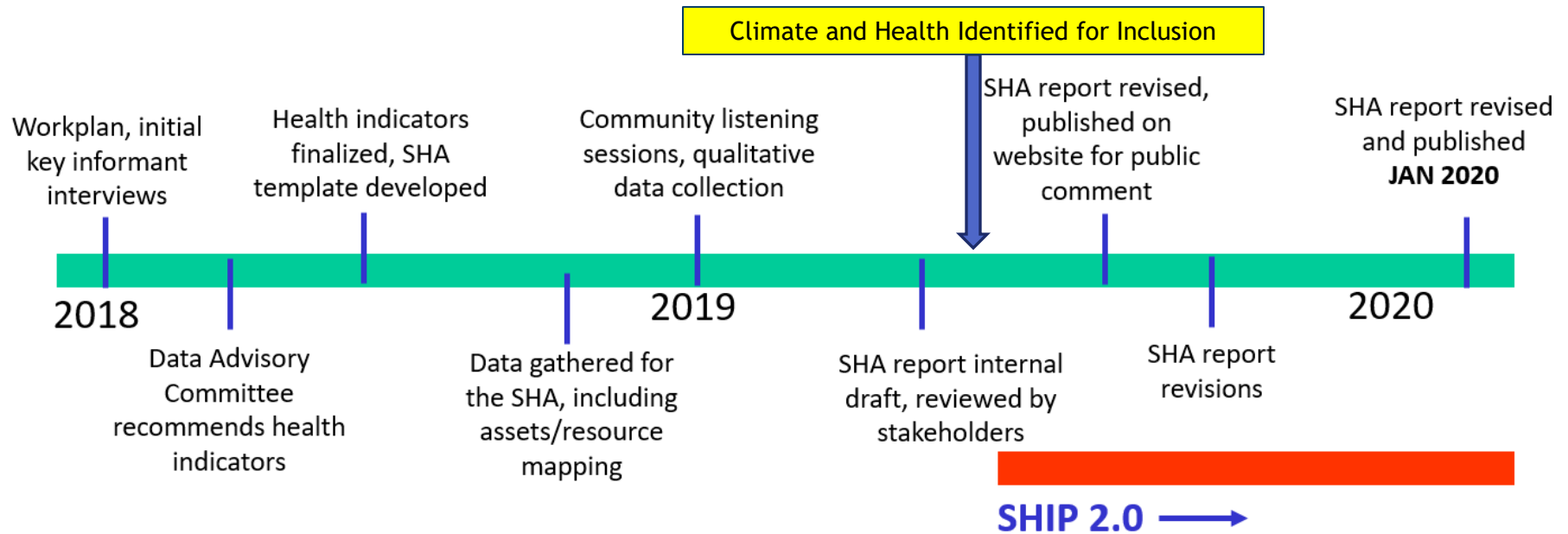
DPH Connecticut Department
of Public Health

Healthy Connecticut 2020



State Health Assessment Process

Proposed Timeline for Developing the SHA 2.0

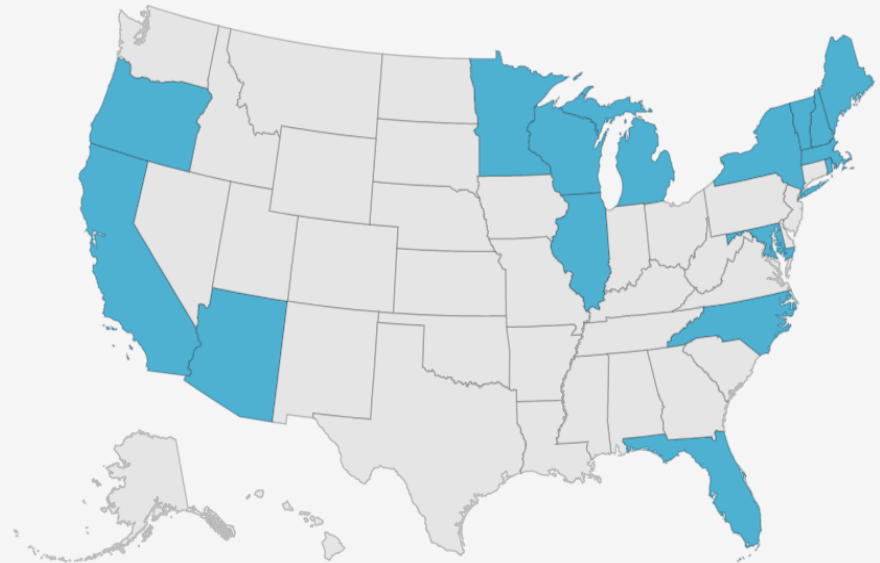


CDC Support to States to Address Climate and Health

- Since 2010, CDC has funded 18 state and local health departments to address local impacts of climate change on health.

Climate-Ready States & Cities Initiative Grantees

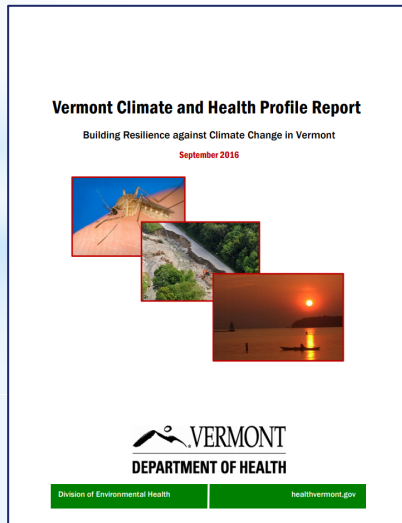
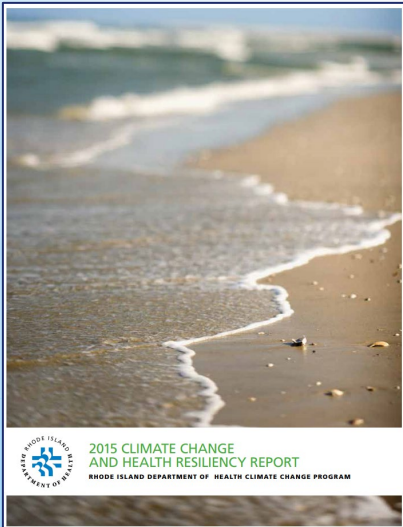
Currently Funded States & Cities



Select a State

Arizona

Go



Climate and Health



CHAPTER 8: Climate & Health

350

INTRODUCTION

The climate of Connecticut is changing and these changes pose risks to the health of our populations. Rates of Emergency Department (ED) utilization for heat-related illness are associated with annual rates of extreme heat days and differences in ED visit rates for heat-related illness are evident between race/ethnicity groups in our state. Another outcome associated with increasing temperatures globally is rates of infection with the pathogen *Vibrio*, and these rates have been on the rise in our state since the mid-1990s.

National assessments recognize populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change to include those with low income, some communities of color, as well as numerous other distinct vulnerable populations. National standards identify a vulnerability assessment as a necessary first step for state health departments to address the health impacts of climate change. Currently, those state health departments that undertake such assessments have dedicated programmatic support from CDC to address the health impacts of climate change in their populations.

Although DPH did a preliminary assessment of the health impacts of climate change in Connecticut at the beginning of this decade, our agency has not yet conducted a more detailed assessment to identify populations most vulnerable to climate change, nor does DPH have a dedicated program focused on climate and health. Coordination with other state agencies, local health directors, Connecticut universities, and non-governmental stakeholders will be important for addressing the impacts of climate change in Connecticut.

Governor's Council on Climate Change Public Health and Safety Work Group



Connecticut Department of Public Health
Keeping Connecticut Healthy



Executive Order No. 3

- Signed on September 3, 2019
- Expands the responsibilities of the Governor's Council on Climate Change, increases its membership, and directs the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to evaluate pathways to transition to a 100 percent clean energy grid by 2040.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT
SECRETARY OF THE STATE

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

2019 SEP -3 P 1:36

NED LAMONT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 3

WHEREAS, there is overwhelming evidence and scientific consensus that man-made greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are causing an overall rise in global temperatures, affecting global climate now, and profoundly affecting global climate in the future; and

WHEREAS, the increased intensity of weather events, rising sea levels, and ecological disturbances caused by climate change, including Tropical Storm Irene and Superstorm Sandy, continue to put Connecticut residents, businesses, infrastructure, and cultural and natural resources at risk; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act and the 2018 Act Concerning Climate Change Planning and Resiliency, Connecticut seeks to substantially decarbonize electricity generation, the transportation system, and thermal energy for buildings, in an effort to cut GHG emissions to 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, to 45 percent below 2001 levels by 2030 and to 80 percent below 2001 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change produced the April 2010 report, *The Impacts of Climate Change on Connecticut Agriculture, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Public Health*, which predicted that climate change would have a significant negative impact on agriculture, infrastructure, natural resources, and public health, and produced the 2011 report, *Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan*, which recommended climate adaptation strategies for the State; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Climate Change, established on April 22, 2015 by Executive Order No. 46, released a report in December 2018, *Building a Low Carbon Future for Connecticut: Achieving a 45% GHG reduction by 2030*, which set forth meaningful strategies to ensure the state meets its mandatory GHG reduction targets; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 50, issued on October 26, 2015, established a new State Agencies Fostering Resilience Council, which was tasked with, among other things, collaborating on the creation of a Statewide Resilience Roadmap based on the best climate impact research and data, and assisting in the creation of state policy on Disaster Resilience by using science-based, forward looking risk analysis; and

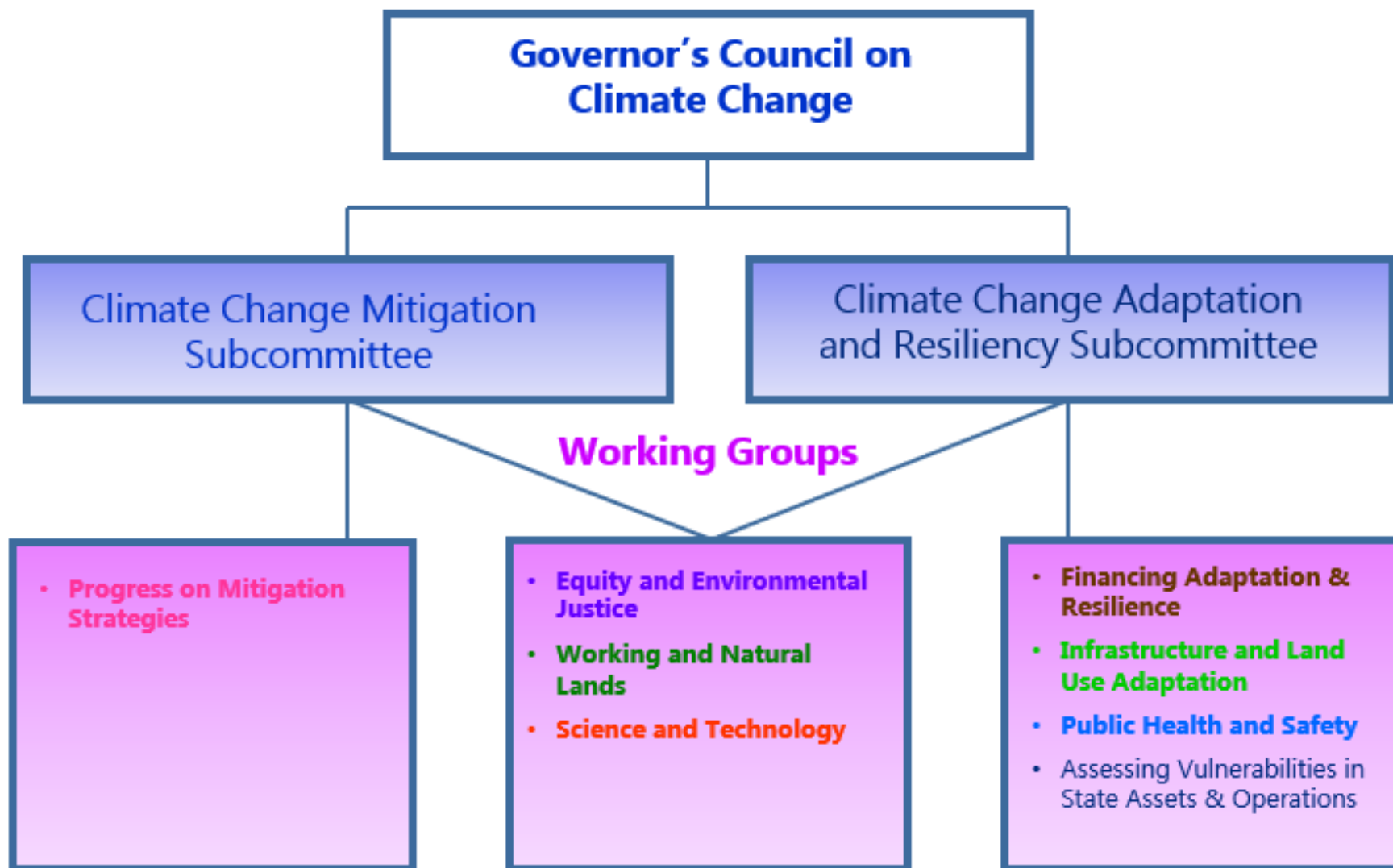
WHEREAS, the Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on January 21, 2016, established that rising temperatures and precipitation, reduced snow pack, rising sea levels, and increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases and invasive

Executive Order 3 Objectives

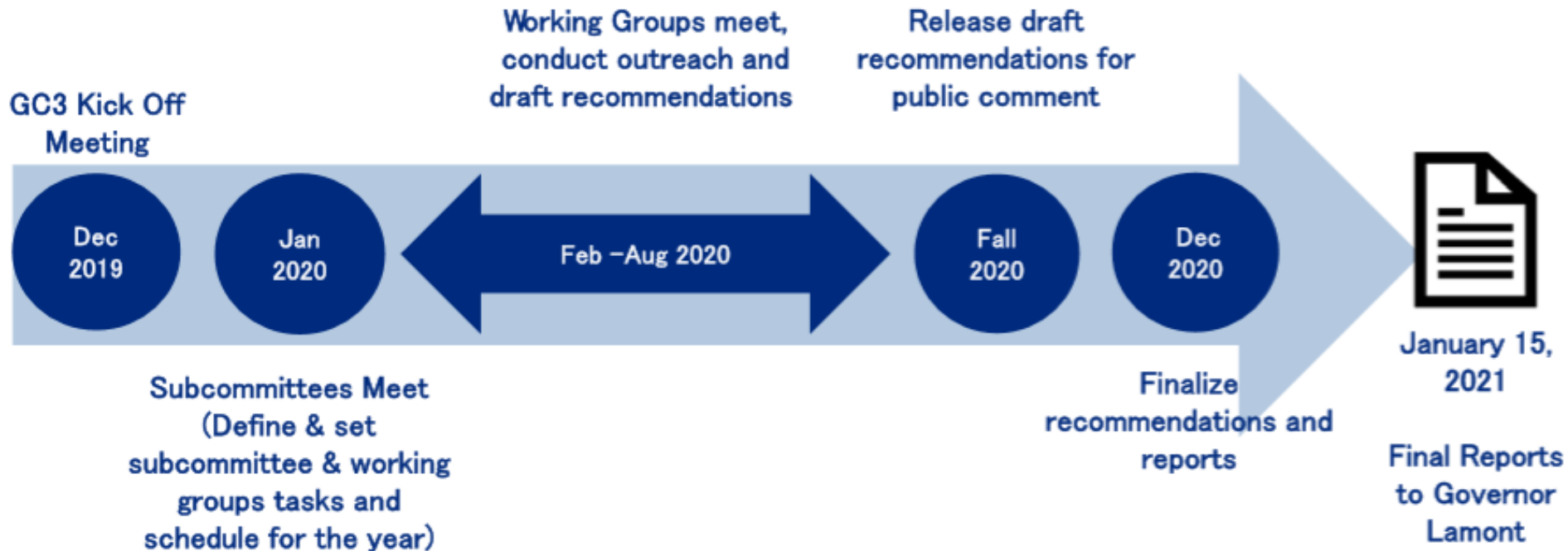
Develop and implement adaptation strategies to assess and prepare for the impacts of climate change in areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, natural resources, and public health. This includes tasks such as:

- developing framework for conducting an **inventory of vulnerable assets and operations**;
- **revising and updating the statewide Adaptation and Resilience Plan**; and
- reporting on the **alignment of climate change adaptation** strategies incorporated into **state agency planning processes and documents**.

GC3 Structure



Overall Timeline



Two Phase GC3 Process

- GC3 reporting process will continue through the end of 2021
- *Phase 1* interim reports provided to the Governor with initial recommendations by **January 15, 2021**
- *Phase 2* final report and recommendations provided by **December 31, 2021**



Public Health & Safety Work Group

- The Public Health and Safety Work Group represents over 40 public health professionals, academic researchers, climate resilience planners, health equity and environmental justice representatives, and environmental consultants. It is co-lead by Lori Mathieu, DPH Branch Chief and Laura Hayes, DPH Epidemiologist, on behalf of DPH Deputy Commissioner Heather Aaron.
- Our scope is the suite of planning and implementation actions needed to address present-day and foreseeable threats to the protection and improvement of the health and safety of all people of Connecticut associated with climate change, with a focus on health equity.
- Key components are assessments to identify vulnerable populations, projections of future disease burden, assessments of suitable intervention for health impacts of greatest concern, coordination to facilitate implementation of recommended actions, and review of intervention effectiveness.

Health Impact Domains	Water-borne Illnesses
Temp-related Illness and Death	Nutrition and Food Safety
Extreme Events	Mental Health
Air Quality Impacts	Vector-borne Diseases

Public Health & Safety Work Group

Update and Statement of Scope

- The Public Health and Safety Work Group developed a draft report for the GC3 in early August of 2020.
- The report is organized around 3 sections:
 - Statement of Scope
 - Review and Synthesis and 2011 Preparedness Report Recommendations
 - Statements of Health Impacts for 7 specific Domains, Statements of Vulnerable Populations, and 31 Recommendations for Adaptation and Resilience Actions to Address the Needs of Vulnerable Populations
- The final version of the report for public comment will be available on September 22, 2020.

