FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 2, 2013
Contact: Dr. Lara Hansen, [lara@ecoadapt.org], (206) 201-3834

More than an assessment, a roadmap to solutions
The State of Adaptation in the United States

Earlier this year the first draft of the National Climate Assessment was released. It underlines the many effects climate change is having on our country and may instill in readers the sense that we should be doing something about these effects.

However unlike the weather, about which it has been complained that much is said but nothing ever done, there is action underway to address the effects of climate change in our communities and ecosystems across the country. The State of Adaptation in the United States, a synthesis commissioned and supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and undertaken by EcoAdapt, the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington's College of the Environment, the Georgetown Climate Center at Georgetown University, and the University of California-Davis, provides examples of societal responses to climate change in our planning and management of cities, agriculture and natural resources. These examples include regulatory measures, management strategies and information sharing.

In addition to the activities already underway, which could serve as models for others wishing to address climate change in their own communities, The State of Adaptation in the United States also identifies the gaps that need to be filled to better prepare society for climate change, as well as actions that could fill those gaps.

Recommended next steps include:

1. The Inaugural National Adaptation Forum: Action Today for a Better Tomorrow. Being held this week in Denver! It will serve as a capacity-building opportunity and has a meeting flow designed to increase cross-sectoral linkages among adaptation practitioners. Participants include >500 governmental, NGO, academic, and private sector representatives.
2. The American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP). Launching in 2013, this society aims to organize and support the needs of climate change adaptation professionals – in academia, public, and the private and non-profit sectors – working on adaptation from national to local scales and within or across multiple sectors. This group plans to use the National Adaptation Forum as an opportunity for its first public convening.
3. Take stock of existing guidance: direct people to what is already available through websites such as the Adaptation Clearinghouse (georgetownclimate.org/adaptation/clearinghouse)
and the Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange (cakex.org), assess the efficacy of the tools, and create what is still needed.

4. **Climate change adaptation marketing.** Most people don’t know what adaptation is by name and many don’t know what it is even when you explain it. It needs to be made understandable, approachable, and embraceable.

5. **Kick-start adaptation implementation** (especially at the state and local level). Provide incentives to implement more challenging or experimental approaches that include mechanisms for assessing efficacy through monitoring and evaluation.

6. **Identify Pathways for Success.** This includes an analysis and synthesis of technical mechanisms (including project, process, and monitoring design), legal mechanisms, and metrics of success for effective adaptation. From this good replicable models of successful adaptation can be developed.

7. **Move the climate change agenda beyond its current perception as being an environmental issue.** Make it central to good planning and management for social and economic sustainability and well-being. This includes efforts to broaden the scope of climate change adaptation to show cross-sectoral linkages and the synergies that evolve through multi-sectoral cooperation.

What are the authors want you to know about The State of Adaptation in the United States:

“From Sandy and extreme weather to droughts to rising sea-levels, it’s tough to ignore the changes that are happening to our climate – changes that we know will only accelerate over time,” said Vicki Arroyo, Executive Director of the Georgetown Climate Center and one of the report’s authors. “While forward-thinking communities are already making adjustments and planning for a different future, there is still a big gap between planning and action. We need more focus on implementation of policy changes if we are to protect our communities. This report highlights some of the important actions that governments and the public can take to help prepare for impacts that are now inevitable.”

**Dr. Louise Jackson, Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Land, Air and Water Resources, University of California** “Agricultural planning for climate change in the US has focused on farm practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and on crop vulnerabilities to new environmental stresses or pests. These approaches have failed to address the full range of challenges and opportunities faced by farmers and rural communities, and how the sustainable food movement along with new land use strategies to preserve farmland can jointly contribute to climate change adaptation, food security, and other essential ecosystem services.”

“Climate change is something you can plan on and it something forward thinkers are starting to plan for,” said Dr. Lara Hansen, Chief Scientist and Executive Director, EcoAdapt. “The State of Adaptation in the United States shows you where to find the emerging new ideas, as well as where the opportunities exist to leap-frog the process ahead more quickly so we can all benefit from this innovative, early learning.”

**Dr. Amy Snover, Director, Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington:** “I’m heartened by growing efforts around the country to identify and prepare for the impacts of climate change. These
efforts draw attention to the fact that we have - right now - the knowledge, data, and tools necessary for understanding local impacts and developing local strategies for building climate resilience. Preparing for the inevitable impacts of our changing climate, and strengthening our resilience to variability and extremes, are the key challenges of this decade.”

To download a copy of this report please visit:
ecoadapt.org/data/documents/TheStateofAdaptationintheUnitedStates2013.pdf

Author contact information:
Vicki Arroyo, Georgetown Climate Center: 202-661-6566; arroyo@law.georgetown.edu
Lara Hansen, EcoAdapt: 206-201-3834; lara@ecoadapt.org
Louise Jackson, University of California, Davis: 530-754-9116; lejackson@ucdavis.edu
Amy Snover, University of Washington: 206-221-0222; aksnover@uw.edu

About EcoAdapt
EcoAdapt has one goal - creating a robust future in the face of climate change. EcoAdapt provides support, training, and assistance to make conservation and management less vulnerable and more Climate Savvy. EcoAdapt was founded by a team of some of the earliest adaptation thinkers and practitioners in the field and continues to lead the field in bridging the gap between climate science and management decision-making. www.ecoadapt.org

About the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society. More information is at www.macfound.org.