

1 **Investigating the recommendations and governmental actions to**
2 **address the emerging risks of vector-borne diseases in Canada’s**
3 **changing climate: A scoping review**

4 Renée Schryer ^{1¶}, Michala Norman ^{1¶}, Manisha A. Kulkarni ¹

5 ¹ School of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada

6 ¶ These authors contributed equally to this work.

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51 **Abstract**

52 Climate change is expected to increase the risks associated with vector-borne diseases, and its
53 implications for human health are already observed across Canada. The objective of this review
54 was to investigate the recommended adaptation strategies related to the risks associated with
55 vector-borne diseases and examine how various levels of government in Canada are executing
56 these recommended actions in their climate change adaptation plans. A combined methodology
57 was employed, consisting of two distinct searches to examine both the recommended
58 adaptation strategies in the peer-reviewed literature and the adaptation actions from
59 governmental sources in the grey literature. Relevant sources were identified across four
60 databases (Embase, Medline, Scopus, Global Health), as well as national, subnational, and
61 municipal governmental websites across Canada. Data were categorized into eight (8) specific
62 adaptation categories based on previously established frameworks. Data were also collected on
63 which vector-borne diseases were referenced, the vulnerable population groups considered,
64 and the inclusion of a One Health focus. A total of 194 peer-reviewed articles and 87 grey
65 literature sources were reviewed, which contained a total of 582 adaptation recommendations
66 and 178 adaptation actions. The most frequently proposed adaptation strategies related to the
67 following categories: *Management, Planning, and Policy, Information and Research, and*
68 *Warning and Observation Systems*. Our findings revealed a strong alignment between the
69 recommended strategies and the adaptation measures being implemented. However, notable
70 discrepancies were present among the adaptation categories of *Practice and Behaviour* and
71 *Laboratory Methods and Other Tools*, revealing gaps across the literature and potential
72 opportunities for further action. While many recommended strategies are being incorporated into
73 actions across Canada, significant regional variability and gaps remain. We advocate for an
74 increased investment in adaptation measures targeting vector-borne diseases and a greater
75 integration of the One Health approach in subnational and municipal plans.
76

77 **Introduction**

78 The effects of climate change on human and natural systems are predicted to have a significant
79 impact on human health globally, including in North America (1,2). One of the projected health
80 impacts is the emergence and increase in incidence of vector-borne diseases (VBDs).
81 Substantial evidence has underscored the role of rising temperatures, altered precipitation
82 patterns, and extreme weather events in influencing vector distributions (1,2). These changing
83 conditions are expanding habitable areas for vectors such as ticks and mosquitoes, among
84 other changes, further accentuating the potential impact on public health (1,2). In Canada, these
85 climate impacts are already being observed, with data linking the northward expansion of tick
86 vector species to rising temperatures, and the subsequent rise in the incidence of Lyme disease
87 (3,4).
88

89 Scientific findings from the Synthesis Report (SYR) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
90 Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) show that the global surface temperature has
91 increased by approximately 1.1°C during 2011-2020 in comparison to 1850-1900 (5). Based on
92 the historic and current data on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, these global warming
93 changes have been primarily influenced by human activities (5). Global responses to reduce the
94 impacts of climate change on health include mitigation actions to reduce GHG emissions, and
95 adaptation actions to reduce health risks by reducing population exposures and enhancing
96 resilience (6). Despite advancements in adaptation planning and implementation across various
97 sectors and regions, the success of these efforts is largely dependent on the capacity and
98 efficiency of governance and decision-making processes, as emphasized by the IPCC (6).
99

100 Trends have indicated that Canada is warming at a rate that exceeds the global average (7). As
101 the world's second-largest country, Canada encompasses a vast array of geographies and
102 environments (7). Consequently, the impacts of climate change and the associated risks of
103 VBDs are expected to vary significantly across its diverse regions (7). While recognizing the
104 inequities in health system access and outcomes across provinces and territories in Canada, it
105 is crucial to understand the various adaptation measures designed to mitigate climate risks and
106 reduce vulnerability (6). Identifying key populations at risk remains complex, compounded by
107 the multi-jurisdictional nature of government, presenting an opportunity to develop targeted
108 responses that address specific regional needs and vulnerabilities (6,7).

109
110 To address these foci, we conducted a scoping review to investigate the recommended
111 adaptation strategies to address the emerging risks of VBDs in the context of climate change
112 and examine how various levels of government across Canada are incorporating these
113 strategies into their climate change adaptation plans. The question guiding this scoping review
114 was, "What adaptation strategies are being recommended to effectively mitigate the emerging
115 risks associated with VBDs in Canada, and how are governments incorporating these
116 recommendations into their climate change adaptation plans?". Additionally, we sought to
117 investigate the integration of a One Health approach and the consideration of vulnerable
118 populations in adaptation actions, as outlined in the following sub-questions:

- 119 1. How are governmental adaptation plans strengthening efforts in a multisectoral and
120 interdisciplinary approach through the emerging paradigm, One Health?
 - 121 2. Are governmental adaptation plans specifically including a consideration for health
122 equity or populations who may be at increased risk for VBDs?
- 123

124 **Methods**

125 We conducted a comprehensive scoping review employing a combined methodology of two
126 distinct searches to examine both peer-reviewed and grey literature, with an aim to meet our
127 outlined research objectives. We adhered to the methodology outlined in the PRISMA-ScR
128 extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR) (8). The protocol for this review was registered on
129 OSF Registries on July 10, 2024 (<https://osf.io/9dbjg>).

130

131 **Eligibility criteria and search strategy**

132 The peer-review literature search identified recommended vector-borne disease specific climate
133 change adaptation strategies. These recommendations were derived from both qualitative and
134 intervention studies, consisting of plans, strategies, or actions suggested or proposed from a
135 subject matter- expertise perspective. A search was conducted on July 18, 2023, across the
136 following databases to identify relevant sources: Embase, Medline, Scopus, Global Health. The
137 search queries for each database are shown in the Supplementary Information (S1 Table).
138 Articles were included and excluded based on the criteria outlined in Table 1.

139

140 **Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for peer-reviewed literature.**

Category	Inclusion	Exclusion
Concept	- Articles on climate change AND recommended adaptation strategies to adapt to emerging risks posed by VBDs.	- Articles on climate change AND recommended adaptation strategies that do not consider VBDs. - Articles with recommended strategies

	- Articles on tick-borne OR mosquito-borne diseases (ex. Lyme, West Nile).	that do not explicitly mention climate change.
Source of Evidence	- Primary research; reviews; scholarly literature, commentaries, conference proceedings, editorials, reports, essays, and case studies.	
Language	- Articles in English.	- Articles in other languages.
Publication Year	- Articles published during any time period.	- No restriction.
Publication Status	- Online articles published or in-press.	- Pre-print articles.
Geography	- Articles where the geographical focus is clearly a North American or global context.	- Articles where the geographic focus is a non-North American country.

141
 142 For the grey literature, searches were conducted to identify current documents and plans from
 143 governments across Canada. Climate change adaptation plan documents with a consideration
 144 of VBDs were examined across governmental websites based on the inclusion and exclusion
 145 criteria in Table 2. Proposed climate change adaptation initiatives from multiple levels of
 146 government were investigated, including national, subnational, and the ten largest population
 147 centers (see Table 3 for a summary of the specific regions and corresponding two-letter
 148 abbreviations). A Level 1 search, conducted internally through the governmental website, or a
 149 Level 2 search, conducted through Advanced Google, was employed and recorded for each
 150 region shown in the Supplementary Information (S2 Table). Search terms were relevant to the
 151 concepts of climate change, adaptation and VBDs.

152 **Table 2. inclusion and exclusion criteria for grey literature.**

Category	Inclusion	Exclusion
Concept	- Documents published (internally or externally) on a national, provincial, or municipal level website that highlight VBDs or infectious diseases in their climate change policy and adaptation plans. - Governmental documents on tick-borne OR mosquito-borne diseases with outlined adaptation strategies or actions.	- Documents published (internally or externally) on a national, provincial, or municipal level website that do not highlight VBDs or infectious diseases in their climate change policy and adaptation plans. - Documents with outlined adaptation strategies or actions that do not explicitly mention climate change.
Source of Evidence	- Documents in URL or PDF format.	

Language	- Articles in English.	- Articles in other languages.
Publication Year	- Articles published during any time period.	- No restriction.
Publication Status	- Public documents.	- Documents that are inaccessible to the public.
Geography	- Articles where the geographical focus is clearly related to a Canadian context.	- Articles where the geographic focus is not related to a Canadian context.

154
155 **Table 3. Summary of regions and corresponding abbreviations included for grey**
156 **literature.**

National Level	Subnational Level	Municipal Level
Canada (CA)	Alberta (AB) British Columbia (BC) Manitoba (MB) New Brunswick (NB) Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) Northwest Territories (NT) Nova Scotia (NS) Nunavut (NU) Ontario (ON) Prince Edward Island (PE) Quebec (QC) Saskatchewan (SK) Yukon (YT)	Toronto Montreal Vancouver Calgary Edmonton Ottawa Winnipeg Quebec City Hamilton Kitchener

157
158 Extracted data included adaptation strategies classified by a recommendation (peer-reviewed
159 literature) or an action (grey literature), which were organized into eight (8) discrete categories.
160 These categories were initially established using the existing titles outlined in the original
161 framework by Austin et al. (2015); to these, the categories *Laboratory Methods and Tools* and
162 *Physical Infrastructure*, were constructed based on the analysis by Biagini et al. (2014). Lastly,
163 *Other Strategies* were incorporated as an additional category to capture the full range of
164 adaptation options within the literature (9,10). See Table 4 for a comprehensive description of
165 each category. As an example, recommendations or actions involving the implementation of
166 vector control strategies, use of biological or chemical management techniques or personal
167 protective measures, were categorized under *Practice and Behaviour*. Additional data on the
168 specific VBDs mentioned, considered vulnerable population groups, and discussions
169 surrounding the concept of One Health were also collected.

170
171 **Table 4. Defined categories for adaptation strategies with examples.**

Adaptation Category	Examples
1) <i>Management, Planning and Policy</i>	- Legislation and policies - Use of frameworks - General funding or investments - Collaboration or coordination - Development of new working groups

2) <i>Practice and Behaviour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vector control mechanisms (ticks or mosquitos) - Reduction of standing water - Personal protection
3) <i>Information and Research</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing an evidence base - Development of research programs - Communication tools - Identifying research priorities
4) <i>Capacity Building</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training or education in any form - Investments in public health and institutions - Building community or healthcare capacity
5) <i>Physical Infrastructure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revegetation - Park or landscape management
6) <i>Warning and Observation Systems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring and surveillance systems for VBDs, vectors, climate or weather - Early warning systems
7) <i>Laboratory Methods and Other Tools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing molecular methods for vector control - Diagnostic testing - Development or use of modeling tools
8) <i>Other Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any other strategies not aligning with the above categories

172

173 **Screening and study selection**

174 Peer-reviewed search results were imported into Covidence software (Veritas Health
 175 Innovation, Melbourne, Australia; available at www.covidence.org) to screen and manage the
 176 results of the search. The titles and abstracts of each article were screened and considered for
 177 full-text review by two independent reviewers to determine their adherence to the inclusion
 178 criteria. Any conflicts were resolved through discussions with a third reviewer. Microsoft Excel
 179 was used to systematically record information from sources identified by the grey literature
 180 search.

181

182 **Data extraction**

183 Information extracted from sources included study characteristics, geographic focus, article
 184 type, type of VBDs mentioned, discussion of One Health, and adaptation strategies. For the
 185 grey literature search, the data extraction procedure additionally included the respective level of
 186 government, the webpage searched to locate the source or document, and the hyperlink (if
 187 applicable).

188

189 **Results**

190 **Search results**

191 From the peer-reviewed literature search, 2970 sources were imported for screening, and 1101
 192 duplicates were removed. A total of 1869 studies were screened for title and abstract, and 284
 193 full-text studies were assessed for eligibility. Out of these, 90 studies were removed; most did
 194 not include VBDs or recommended adaptation strategies (n=24) or were outside of the
 195 geographic scope (n=20). A total of 194 peer-reviewed articles were included, consisting of
 196 primary research (23.83%), reviews (48.19%), books or chapters from scholarly literature
 197 (7.25%), and other sources (20.73%) such as commentaries, conference proceedings,

198 editorials, reports, essays, and case studies. The geographical distribution of these sources was
199 as follows: Canada (20.7%), the United States (20.2%), North America as a whole (1.6%),
200 global (41.2%) or a combination of multiple regions (16.58%). See Fig 1 for a detailed summary
201 of the PRISMA flow chart.

202

203 **Fig 1. PRISMA flow chart.**

204

205 From the grey literature search, 87 relevant documents and sources were identified from
206 selected governmental websites. Within these sources, 20 were national (23.0%), 41 were
207 subnational (47.1%), 22 were municipal (25.3%), and 4 were regional (4.6%). A summary of
208 these results is presented below in Fig 2.

209

210 **Fig 2. Summarized search results by proportion (%) from grey literature sources.**

211 Percentage distribution by A) Level of government (n=87) B) Province/territory (n=40) C)
212 Municipal region (n=23). Subnational region abbreviations: Alberta (AB), British Columbia (BC),
213 Manitoba (MB), Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), Northwest Territories (NT), Nova Scotia
214 (NS), Nunavut (NU), Ontario (ON), Prince Edward Island (PE), Quebec (QC), Saskatchewan
215 (SK), and Yukon (YT).

216

217 Based on the adaptation classification system, 582 recommendations were extracted from the
218 peer-reviewed articles, and 178 adaptation actions were extracted from the sources and
219 documents from the grey literature search. Fig 3 presents a comparison of the proportions of
220 these adaptation strategies across each of the eight adaptation categories previously described.
221 See the Supplementary Information for a complete summary of the extracted recommendations
222 (S3 Table) and actions (S4 Table) from the peer-reviewed and grey literature.

223

224 **Fig 3. Comparison of the proportion of climate change adaptation recommendations 225 related to VBDs for total number of entries by category for peer-reviewed and grey 226 literature.**

227

228 **Types of VBDs**

229 The types of VBDs referenced in the adaptation strategies differed greatly between peer-
230 reviewed and grey literature (see Fig 4). This finding corresponds to the inclusion of North
231 American-focused and global articles in the peer-reviewed literature search, while the grey
232 literature search targeted specific Canadian geographies. Peer-reviewed sources emphasized a
233 wide range of non-endemic VBDs (to Canada), addressing both tick- and mosquito-borne
234 diseases including Dengue (n=90), West Nile fever (n=90), Malaria (n=90), Lyme disease
235 (n=77), Chikungunya (n=51), Yellow Fever (n=43), Zika (n=41), Leishmaniasis (n=17), Chagas
236 (n=12), Schistosomiasis (n=12), among others (n=100). In contrast, grey literature focused more
237 broadly on VBDs (n=59) without a specific reference to a particular disease among the
238 adaptation actions outlined in governmental plans. Notably, the most frequently cited endemic
239 VBDs in grey literature were Lyme disease (n=32) and West Nile virus (n=26).

240

241 **Fig 4. Types of VBDs referenced A) Peer-reviewed literature and B) Grey literature.**

242

243 **The Consideration for Vulnerable Populations and Health Equity**

244 Discussions highlighting the importance of considering vulnerable populations and health equity
245 in climate change adaptation for VBDs were present in 74 (38.1%) peer-reviewed sources and
246 38 (43.7%) governmental documents from the grey literature. There was a diverse range of
247 vulnerable groups mentioned across these discussions (see Fig 5). In the peer-reviewed
248 literature, the most frequently cited groups included older adults and seniors (n=22), children

249 and youth (n=22), those with low-income (n=22), vulnerable populations in general (n=19), and
250 those living in urban, rural or remote regions (n=15). In contrast, governmental actions from the
251 grey literature focused more on vulnerable populations in general (n=12), Indigenous
252 communities (n=10), those with health conditions or disabilities (n=9), older adults and seniors
253 (=8), and children and youth (n=8).

254
255 **Fig 5. Vulnerable populations mentioned in peer-reviewed vs. grey literature vs. by**
256 **group.**
257

258 **Category #1: *Management, Planning and Policy***

259 Adaptation strategies classified in Category #1 include those related to management, planning,
260 or policy such as legislation, funding, or collaborative groups. This category was the most
261 frequently recommended among peer-reviewed articles, present in 131 (67.53%) of the included
262 sources. The most prevalent recommendations included multi-sectoral collaboration and
263 coordination with an emphasis on partnerships, cooperative effort between stakeholders,
264 networking among public health jurisdictions, and accountability in governmental institutions
265 (11–33). Recommendations in this category also largely focused on investing in planning or
266 development, financial incentives or funding, and the allocation of resources to climate change
267 adaptation efforts (2, 14, 15, 24, 30, 34–39). Other notable recommendations focused on
268 monitoring and evaluating activities, adopting a One Health approach, and improving political
269 commitment to actions (12, 19, 21–23, 25–27, 40–49).

270
271 This category was also most frequently cited among the grey literature, present in 60 (68.97% of
272 the included sources. Multisectoral or multidisciplinary collaboration and coordination was
273 largely represented in the proposed and executed plans across all governmental levels (50–62).
274 National-level initiatives focused on a collaborative approach with respect to targeted
275 investment in Lyme disease initiatives (60). Provincial and territorial (NB, NT, ON) and municipal
276 (Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg) strategies highlighted fostering partnerships with non-
277 governmental organizations, agencies, and intuitions in their adaptation actions (50–53, 58, 63).
278 Other adaptation plans related to this category involved consultation with diverse stakeholders
279 to address climate change related risks (55, 59, 60). Funding relevant climate change adaptation
280 plans were primarily discussed by the federal government (CA) (62, 64–66).

281 282 **Category #2: *Practice and Behaviour***

283 Recommendations relating to the practices and behaviours to address VBDs, such as direct
284 vector control methods, were present in 66 (34.02%) of the included peer-reviewed articles.
285 Most of these recommendations centered on control measures to reduce vector populations and
286 human exposures for both endemic and non-endemic VBDs (16, 17, 24, 43, 67–77). These
287 strategies involved the application of pesticides and biological control agents, indoor residual
288 spraying, and the use of insecticide-treated nets (16, 17, 24, 43, 67–77). Developing more
289 effective disease prevention strategies by combining vector control measures via integrated
290 vector management was also highlighted as a strategy (33, 78–82). Additionally,
291 recommendations emphasized the need to link control efforts with surveillance data to inform
292 public health activities and respond to risks related to VBDs (62, 64–66, 83).

293
294 From the grey literature search, this category was discussed in 8 (9.2%) of the included
295 documents and sources. These initiatives involved engaging and partnering with stakeholders to
296 enhance existing policies and practices (Edmonton) and adapting to climate-related threats by
297 identifying risks and assessing vulnerability to VBDs (Pilot Infectious Disease Impact and
298 Response Systems program, CA) (84). Other activities largely discussed preventing disease

299 transmission, equity-based adaptation strategies, targeted practices for Lyme disease, and
300 promoting risk management (55,85–87).

301

302 **Category #3: Information and Research**

303 The category of *Information and Research*, defined as any recommendation that centers around
304 the need for specific research or evidence generation, and the creation and dissemination of
305 information, was the second most prevalent category, present in 126 (64%) of included peer-
306 reviewed sources. These recommendations were primarily focused on developing
307 communication strategies, conducting vulnerability and risk assessments, and improving
308 research to understand the distribution of vectors and transmission of VBDs
309 (9,11,16,17,21,26,28,29,36,46,49,88–112). Recommended strategies proposed the creation of
310 transparent, educational, and evidence-based messaging to communicate relevant information
311 about VBDs to the public (14,20,37,45,76,80–82,84,85,90–92,113–116). The implementation of
312 various assessments was recommended to assess the vulnerability and risk of populations
313 associated with climate change impacts (9,11,26,28,36,49,88–99). These sources also
314 recommended research aimed to understand environmental factors that influence vector
315 distribution and disease transmission (9,11,26,28,36,49,88–99).

316

317 This category was also the second most frequently discussed in 40 (45.98%) of included
318 documents and sources from the grey literature. The assessment of the local health risks of
319 climate change was conducted both on the subnational level (BC, NB, NT) and the municipal
320 level (Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, Kitchener) which included a primary focus on the
321 understanding of Lyme disease, vulnerable populations, and identifying favourable climate
322 conditions (50,51,117–124). Establishing priorities for future research were also highlighted by
323 NB and NT (117,125). NT emphasized investing and committing to interdisciplinary and wildlife-
324 focused research to build an evidence base on the impacts of VBDs in the context of climate
325 change (120,126,127). Activities to support research activities included building research groups
326 (such as the Canadian Centre for Climate Services, Climate Science 2050, the Infectious
327 Disease and Climate Change Program, and Lyme Disease Research Network), developing
328 research tools, and strengthening research more broadly (54,86). Many reports also identified
329 the need for future research (CA, NS, YT, Vancouver, Hamilton) in the following areas: best
330 practices for VBDs, climate data, Lyme disease (including genetics, prevention, and control),
331 and impacts of climate change on wildlife (52,54,56,60,61,63,84,86,128–130). Communication
332 improvements and commitments to sharing information about the issue were reported by CA,
333 NT, Toronto, Hamilton, and focused on communication modalities (such as radio, Service
334 Canada centres, social media, publications, plain-language summaries, online central
335 repositories, and other existing channels) to connect with a wide range of audiences including
336 Indigenous communities, governmental stakeholders, academic partners, and marginalized and
337 racialized groups (121,127,128,131,132). The federal government (CA) also developed
338 education materials for Lyme disease (Canadian Federal Framework) and made commitments
339 to supporting the generation of similar materials (86).

340

341 **Category #4: Capacity Building**

342 Recommendations surrounding *Capacity Building* included education, training, and building
343 healthcare or public health capacity, and were present in 70 (36.08%) included peer-reviewed
344 sources. The most frequent recommendations centered on educating the public and healthcare
345 professionals on VBDs and climate change while working to strengthen health systems
346 (2,10,14,16,22,23,27,37,42,50–52,68,69,71,76,78,82,89,93–109,116). Suggested strategies
347 were directed towards the general public which involved educating and raising awareness about
348 VBDs and general health impacts of climate change (2,17,24,28,69,70,72,92,97,112,133–141).
349 Education for healthcare professionals included the previous, in addition to enhancing

350 engagement in health research and policy evaluation to address climate change
351 (2,38,43,70,90,97,106,133,138,141–147). Strengthening health systems and public health
352 infrastructure was also recommended to respond to climate changing risks and for monitoring
353 vectors and VBDs (11,15,23,43,69,89,97,99,102,138,143,148,149).

354
355 This category was also discussed in 25 (28.74%) included grey literature sources. Activities for
356 enhancing education for the public and healthcare professionals were discussed and
357 implemented by both provinces (ON, SK) and municipalities (Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton), with
358 a focus on raising awareness of the health and other impacts of climate change, Lyme disease,
359 and other VBDs (51,58,128,150,151). Building capacity by empowering youth and engaging
360 them in climate change related actions were also included in initiatives in subnational level plans
361 (YT) (56,63,152). Other initiatives at the subnational and municipal level involved commitments
362 to increase public awareness and providing education and outreach materials to communities
363 (NT, YT, Montreal, Ottawa) (65,123,126,152,153).

364 365 **Category #5: Physical Infrastructure**

366 The category of *Physical Infrastructure* included any recommendations with a focus on
367 managing, designing, or adapting physical infrastructure including urban areas or parks. These
368 were present in 15 (7.73%) of the included peer-reviewed articles. These strategies primarily
369 focused on environmental water management and urban or housing design
370 (15,18,23,41,49,134,135,140,154,155). It was suggested that infrastructure should be designed
371 and adapted to respond to flooding and rising sea levels to control mosquito breeding sites
372 (23,49,134,135,140,155). Housing quality and air conditioning was also a recommended
373 strategy in urban design for preventing exposure from VBDs (15,18,41,154).

374
375 This category was discussed in 3 (3.45%) of the grey literature sources. These activities
376 involved contributing to climate change related community land-use planning (Atlantic Region
377 Adaptation Science Adaptation Science Activities, NB) and building climate-resilience via
378 investments in infrastructure (NT) (64,117).

379 380 **Category #6: Warning and Observation Systems**

381 Recommendations relating to *Warning and Observation Systems* were present in 103 (53.09%)
382 included peer-reviewed articles. These included strong emphasis on recommendations to
383 develop and utilize early warning systems (EWS), with an emphasis on a global warning and
384 response network (2,16,22,31,75,96,103,135,139,140,144,156–164). It was also recommended
385 that surveillance be enhanced through increased investment and improvement, particularly in
386 outbreak investigations. Suggestions involved updating systems, tailoring approaches to
387 specific contexts, and extending the duration of surveillance efforts, with a focus on nationalizing
388 these practices and ensuring actionable results
389 (16,19,21,22,24,34,36,38,41,47,72,88,90,97,99,106,109,111,112,138,144,148,149,162,165–
390 172). Recommended areas for enhanced surveillance include animal and wildlife, global,
391 baseline, occupational, entry points (such as seaports and airports), and the effectiveness of
392 interventions (29,43,46,73,76,105,113,163,173–175). Suggested methods surrounding
393 surveillance involved passive or citizen-driven, community or population-based, disease-specific
394 approaches, and the use of new technologies (115,176,177). It was proposed that surveillance
395 efforts should be integrated, combining traditional vector and vector-borne disease monitoring
396 with environmental and veterinary surveillance
397 (17,19,24,29,34,43,73,75,91,96,102,107,144,155,164,178–183). Furthermore, incorporating
398 new technologies, including artificial intelligence, was highlighted as a means to advance
399 surveillance initiatives (2,68,77,102,105,145,184–189).

400

401 This category was discussed in 34 (39.08%) of included documents and sources from the grey
402 literature. Activities and plans outlined strategies for enhancing monitoring by detailing
403 improvements, expansions, focus areas, and refinements. CA, NB, and ON discussed how
404 monitoring programs were being improved via increasing accessibility, enhancing activities, and
405 incorporating a One Health lens (50,58,84,86,132,190). Expanding surveillance programs is
406 being accomplished by focusing on cross-jurisdictional (CA, ON), nationalized (National
407 Microbiology Laboratory, National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System, National Lyme
408 Disease medical surveillance, CA), and expanded surveillance networks (QC) (4,59,87). Many
409 jurisdictions highlighted the monitoring of specific climate change and indicators of VBDs. This
410 included surveillance of specific species of concern (NT), emerging human and wildlife diseases
411 (NT), suitable habitat areas (NT, SK), VBDs and vectors (NL, NT, SK, YT, NL, Toronto),
412 meteorological and climate related factors (CA, QC), sentinel animals (CA), cases of disease
413 (Ottawa, CA), and economic costs associated with VBDs (CA)
414 (4,51,54,86,120,121,127,130,132,150,191–197). Other reported aspects of surveillance
415 included coordinated approaches and responses in surveillance networks (NB), considering
416 health risks (NB, Kitchener), frequent reporting and alert systems (NT), established annual
417 surveillance activities (SK), and including specific communities (e.g., Indigenous) in monitoring
418 and surveillance efforts (CA, YT, YT/NT/NU) (50,54,117,124,126,191–193,198,199).

419

420 **Category #7: Laboratory Methods and Other Tools**

421 Recommendations relating to *Laboratory Methods and Other Tools*, which broadly included any
422 methods related to laboratory activities, field research, clinical diagnosis and management, and
423 other tools related to VBDs, were present in 62 (31.96%) included sources from peer-reviewed
424 literature. Recommendations in this category highlighted the need to develop new genetic and
425 laboratory technology, insecticides, vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics
426 (2,41,82,90,104,105,108,171,200,201). There was also emphasis on developing and utilizing
427 tools such as 3D visualization, mapping, GIS, remote sensing, and other methods such as
428 wastewater detection for VBDs (16,21,74,109,168,175,185,187,202–204). Designing and
429 implementing tools for decision making and reporting were also strongly highlighted
430 (2,40,42,172,205–207). Other recommendations included the use of machine learning and
431 artificial intelligence to understand vectors, transmission cycles, and analyze relevant data
432 (2,104,111,143,169,208,209).

433

434 This category was also discussed in 8 (9.2%) of the included grey literature sources. Identified
435 activities included the provision of resources and tools (from the federal government to local
436 public health professionals), and the development of new diagnostic and laboratory
437 technologies at the national level (4,84). Additional specific disease interventions included
438 developments in mosquito and larvae trapping methods for West Nile Virus and laboratory
439 diagnostics for Lyme disease, both from the national level (CA) (86,132).

440

441 **Category #8: Other Strategies**

442 Other strategies that were not identified under the previous categories were present in 9
443 (4.64%) included peer-reviewed articles. These recommendations included the consideration of
444 equity in adaptation strategies, such as minimizing risks for vulnerable populations and
445 addressing socio-cultural barriers to adaptation, in addition to the formal recognition of climate
446 change adaptation co-benefits (102,210,211).

447

448 This category was not recorded in any of the included sources from the grey literature.

449

450 **Utilization of a One Health Lens**

451 In the peer-reviewed literature, 24 (12.4%) sources recommended adopting a One Health
452 approach. Similarly, in the grey literature, 8 (9.2%) governmental plans emphasized the use of a
453 One Health framework. Of these, the majority (87.5%) were referenced at the federal level (CA),
454 while 1 (12.5%) plan mentioned One Health the provincial/territorial level (ON).

455 **Discussion**

456 **Concordance and Discordance of Recommendations and Governmental Actions**

457 This review highlights the extensive range of existing recommendations for climate change
458 adaptation in response to the emerging risks presented by VBDs. Notably, it identifies that
459 federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments across Canada are actively recognizing
460 and addressing these risks in their climate change adaptation plans. Both the proposed
461 recommendations and implemented actions consistently fell into three key categories:
462 *Management, Planning, and Policy* (Category #1), *Information and Research* (Category #2), and
463 *Warning and Observation Systems* (Category #3). At a broader level, there is a clear alignment
464 between the recommended strategies and the adaptation measures being undertaken by
465 governments across various levels in Canada (Fig 2).

466
467 The largest discrepancies between the recommendations and the implemented actions were
468 found within *Practice and Behaviour* (Category #2), and *Laboratory Methods and Other Tools*
469 (Category #7). The portion of recommendations in these areas are not reflected equally in the
470 adaptation actions. A notable gap in Canada's adaptation plans is the lack of detailed
471 environmental control mechanisms and specific targets for VBDs under Category #2. Although
472 the literature offers recommendations for both methods (e.g. chemical and biological control)
473 and targets (e.g. mosquito breeding sites, mosquito replication, introduction of novel agents),
474 these were not incorporated into the reviewed governmental adaptation plans. Similarly, specific
475 actions relating to promoting individual measures, particularly in occupational settings, were
476 missing. While environmental control activities may be taking place, their integration into
477 outlined climate change adaptation plans was notably absent. Moreover, the reviewed
478 adaptation plans did not address the use of novel technologies for monitoring and predicting the
479 spread of VBDs (Category #7), another key area emphasized in the literature. Numerous
480 sources recommend employing predictive modeling, remote sensing, GIS, AI, machine learning,
481 mapping technologies, and 3D visualizations to better understand and predict the dynamics of
482 VBDs. As these technologies become more widespread, particularly the use of AI, it will be
483 worth observing whether their inclusion in adaptation plans increases over time.

484
485 The reviewed literature also underscored the need for strong management in climate change
486 adaptation, particularly regarding leadership, advocacy, and collaboration across leadership
487 groups, accountability, and responsibility. While these elements are crucial for driving
488 meaningful action, they were notably absent from the governmental plans examined.
489 Additionally, the literature calls for a range of both targeted and broad research initiatives,
490 including studies on weather and climate, new tool development, and research specific to VBDs.
491 While research may not necessarily be conducted at the governmental level, this area is still
492 underrepresented in the current adaptation plans.

493
494 The literature also highlights the importance of robust information gathering to inform effective
495 adaptation strategies. This includes conducting geographic analyses, evaluating adaptation
496 capacity costs, assessing health impacts, and analyzing communication strategies—none of
497 which are explicitly addressed in the existing plans. Although education is featured in many
498 plans, specific recommendations for educating patients and policymakers about the impact of

499 climate change on VBDs are missing, as are recommendations related to capacity building,
500 particularly in vulnerable regions.

501
502 In terms of physical environmental controls, the literature advocates for improving sanitation,
503 managing environmental water, and using prescribed burns to reduce tick populations. A
504 broader focus on structural elements, such as urban design and improving living conditions for
505 migrant populations, is also recommended but not incorporated into the adaptation plans.
506 Additionally, various surveillance approaches are highlighted in the literature, including
507 combinations of surveillance systems and modalities. For instance, three studies recommended
508 passive or citizen-based surveillance interventions, yet these methods are not explicitly
509 identified in any governmental plans.

510 **Characterizing the Landscape of Canadian Adaptation Actions**

511 **Regional Differences**

513 In examining climate change adaptation plans at the national, subnational, and municipal levels,
514 there was an uneven distribution across regions spanning multiple areas. Notably, there was a
515 relative overrepresentation from the territories (YT/NT/NU), which accounted for over 30% of all
516 provincial and territorial documents. This aligns with the well-documented uneven distribution of
517 rising temperatures across Canada, with northern regions, including YT/NT/NU, experiencing
518 the most significant warming (7,212)). These findings, along with the establishment of the Pan-
519 Territorial Adaptation Partnership, provide strong evidence that these regions are taking
520 collective action and are committed to implementing practical adaptation measures in response
521 to emerging climate-related threats (199).

522
523 Among other regions, adaptation plans from Atlantic Canada had the second most recorded
524 sources (22%), followed by the Prairie provinces (19.5%), Central Canada (ON, QC) (14.6%),
525 and the West Coast (7.3%).

526 **Endemic vs. Non-Endemic VBDs in Canada**

528 As expected, the majority of VBDs cited in the peer-reviewed literature were non-endemic, as
529 much of the research (41.2%) focused on North American and global regions outside of
530 Canada. Notably, several studies included research from the southeastern U.S., a region
531 particularly vulnerable to VBDs due to its year-round high temperatures and humid
532 environments, which increase the risk of exposure and have facilitated the establishment of
533 invasive vector species (213). While Canada's current climate does not support vectors for
534 many of these diseases, this finding may also be a concern for the potential introduction or
535 establishment of non-endemic VBDs as conditions change (206).

536
537 In contrast, the VBDs highlighted in governmental plans and adaptation strategies primarily
538 reflect those currently endemic to Canada, such as Lyme disease and West Nile virus (214).
539 However, most governmental plans (51.6%) addressed VBDs in broad or general terms, without
540 specifying which diseases their interventions target. It remains unclear whether these
541 governments are taking a comprehensive, proactive approach to monitoring and preparing for
542 VBDs, or if they are inadequately prepared for the emerging threats in their regions. Further
543 examination of these adaptation plans is needed to better understand the level of preparedness
544 across different regions of Canada.

545 **The Representation of Indigenous Communities**

547 A well-represented population within the grey literature were Indigenous communities,
548 appearing in nearly half (38.46%) of the governmental action plans that specified groups beyond
549 vulnerable populations in general. This aligns with Canada's national commitment and efforts to

550 achieve reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through active involvement and partnership
551 (215). According to the 2021 Census by Statistics Canada, over 1.8 million people in Canada
552 identify as Indigenous making up 5% of the country's total population (216). Indigenous
553 populations, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis are an important group to consider as
554 climate change poses unique threats to their natural resources, ecosystems, and cultural
555 practices (126). This focus on Indigenous communities in climate change adaptation strategies
556 is consistent with the findings of our study. Indigenous populations are disproportionately
557 affected by environmental changes, as climate change threatens traditional food systems,
558 hunting and fishing practices, and their overall livelihoods (126). Consequently, it is critical for
559 adaptation strategies to prioritize these communities in order to uphold health equity and
560 address the specific vulnerabilities they face. This recognition in the grey literature reflects a
561 growing awareness of the need to include Indigenous perspectives and leadership in developing
562 effective climate adaptation actions.

563 564 **One Health**

565 Given the need for collaboration in climate change responses, it is important to examine how
566 the
567 One Health paradigm, an emerging multisectoral and interdisciplinary approach, has been
568 integrated into existing adaptation plans (217). However, only a small proportion of the reviewed
569 plans (9.2%) explicitly mentioned One Health, with 7 out of 8 (87%) of these initiatives being
570 conducted at the national level. This representation at the national level could be attributed to
571 the nature of the documents retrieved, as federal reports tend to focus on broad, overarching
572 strategies, whereas provincial, territorial, and municipal documents typically emphasize specific
573 actions or initiatives. It may also reflect Canada's current position as a "leader in One Health"
574 (217).

575
576 The One Health approach is intrinsically linked to the most cited category, *Management,*
577 *Planning, and Policy* (Category #1), where several provincial and territorial plans (NB, ON, YT)
578 and municipal plans (Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Quebec City) incorporated multidisciplinary
579 or collaborative action. While these plans may already be applying One Health principles
580 without explicitly stating it, they could benefit from formalizing a One Health strategy to provide
581 more clear structure and coordination for planning and execution.

582
583 Additionally, One Health is highly relevant to *Information and Research* (Category #3), which is
584 well represented in adaptation plans across the country (NT, ON, SK, YT, Montreal, Hamilton,
585 Toronto, Ottawa). The approach also underpins the category of *Warning and Observation*
586 *Systems* (Category #6), particularly in the development, improvement, and expansion of
587 surveillance efforts and networks, where One Health principles are critical to a comprehensive
588 response.

589 590 **Scope and Limitations**

591 This review takes a comprehensive approach to assess recommended adaptation strategies
592 and governmental actions for addressing the emerging risks by VBDs; however, several
593 limitations should be acknowledged. First, while we grouped adaptation strategies using
594 established frameworks previously used in the literature, data often spanned multiple
595 categories, which our review does not entirely capture. While the reported frequencies offer
596 insight into the relative distribution within each category, they should not be used as standalone
597 metrics for interpretation.

598
599 Additionally, the geographic scope was limited to Canada, and municipalities were selected
600 based on population size. Sources were included only if they were available in English, which

601 may have excluded relevant documents if they were only available in French. While our search
602 strategy focused on sources explicitly linking adaptation, VBDs, and climate change, this may
603 potentially overlooked relevant recommendations and actions that did not explicitly mention
604 climate change adaptation. This may explain gaps, particularly in Practice and Behaviour
605 (Category #2), where ongoing activities such as vector surveillance may have been excluded.
606 When interpreting the findings of this review, it is also important to recognize that the absence of
607 identified actions or plans from internal and advanced searches does not necessarily imply that
608 such actions are not being undertaken.

609

610 **Conclusions**

611 This review provides valuable insights into Canada's response strategies related to climate
612 change and VBDs, highlighting discrepancies between what is being recommended in the
613 literature and the ways in which governments are integrating these recommendations into their
614 climate change action plans.

615 It is apparent that, coordinated, evidence-based adaptation strategies across all levels of
616 government are essential to effectively address the impacts of VBDs and climate change on
617 health. Our review demonstrates that while many recommended strategies are being
618 incorporated into actions and plans across Canada, there are significant regional variabilities
619 and gaps which remain in certain adaptation areas. To strengthen Canada's response and
620 preparedness, we suggest increased investment in adaptation measures targeting emerging
621 risks of VBDs and broader integration of the One Health approach in subnational and municipal
622 plans. Further research could expand our search to other countries to identify global trends in
623 implementation and investigate the effectiveness of the proposed and implemented adaptation
624 actions.

625

626 **Supporting Information**

627 **S1 Table. Search query for each database used to identify peer-reviewed articles.**

628 (DOCX)

629 **S2 Table. Conducted search for each region used to identify grey literature documents.**

630 (DOCX)

631 **S3 Table. Detailed summary of peer-reviewed literature results of recommended climate
632 change adaptation strategies relating to VBDs.**

633 (DOCX)

634 **S4 Table. Detailed summary of grey literature results of climate change adaptation
635 actions relating to VBDs.**

636 (DOCX)

637

638 **Author Contributions**

639 **Conceptualization:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman, Manisha Kulkarni.

640 **Data Curation:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

641 **Formal Analysis:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

642 **Funding Acquisition:** Manisha Kulkarni.

643 **Investigation:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

644 **Methodology:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

645 **Project Administration:** Manisha Kulkarni.

646 **Resources:** Manisha Kulkarni.

647 **Software:** Manisha Kulkarni.

648 **Supervision:** Manisha Kulkarni.

649 **Validation:** Manisha Kulkarni.

650 **Visualization:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

651 **Writing- Original Draft Preparation:** Renée Schryer, Michala Norman.

652 **Writing- Review & Editing:** Manisha Kulkarni.

653

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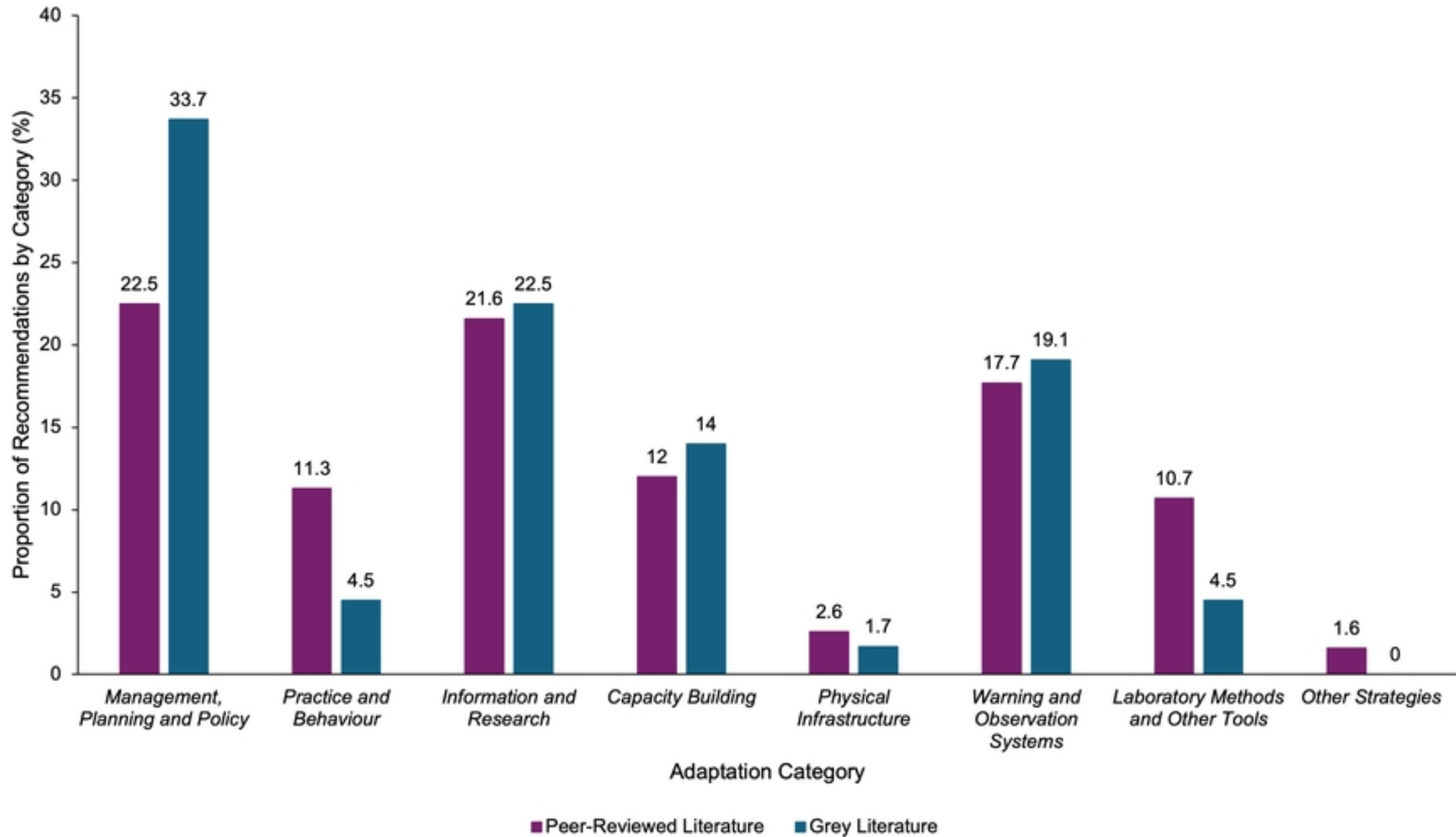
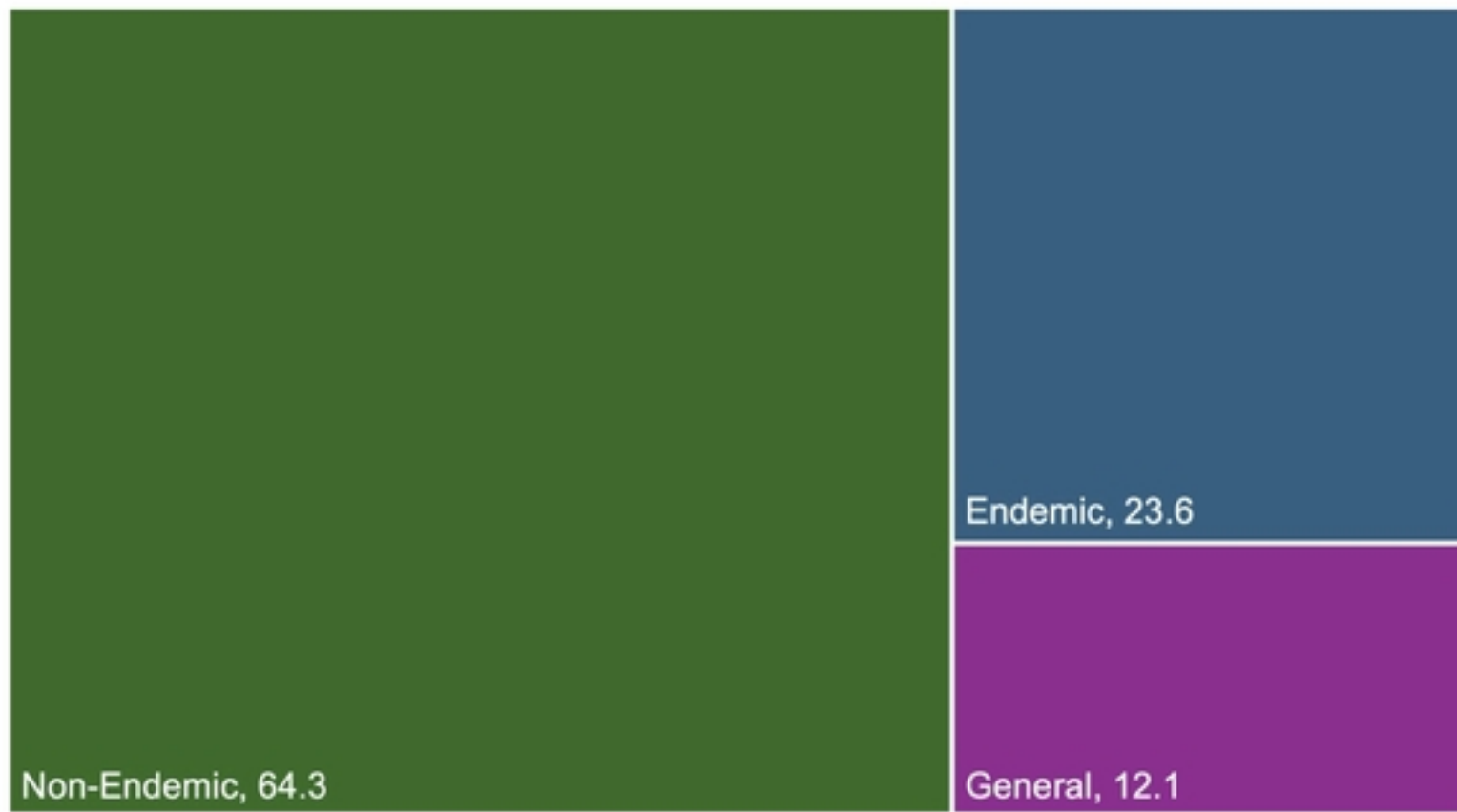


Figure 3

A)



B)

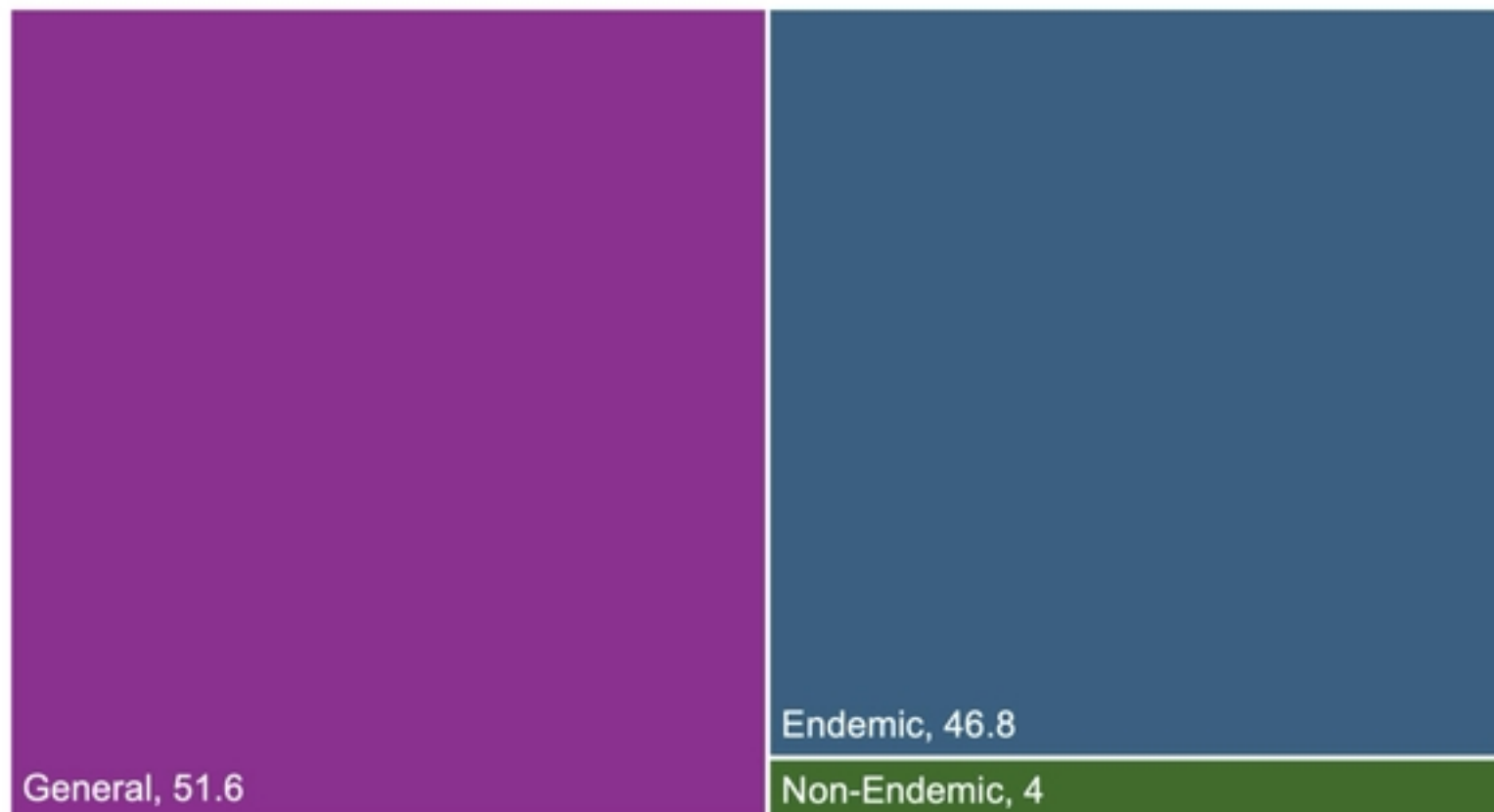


Figure 4

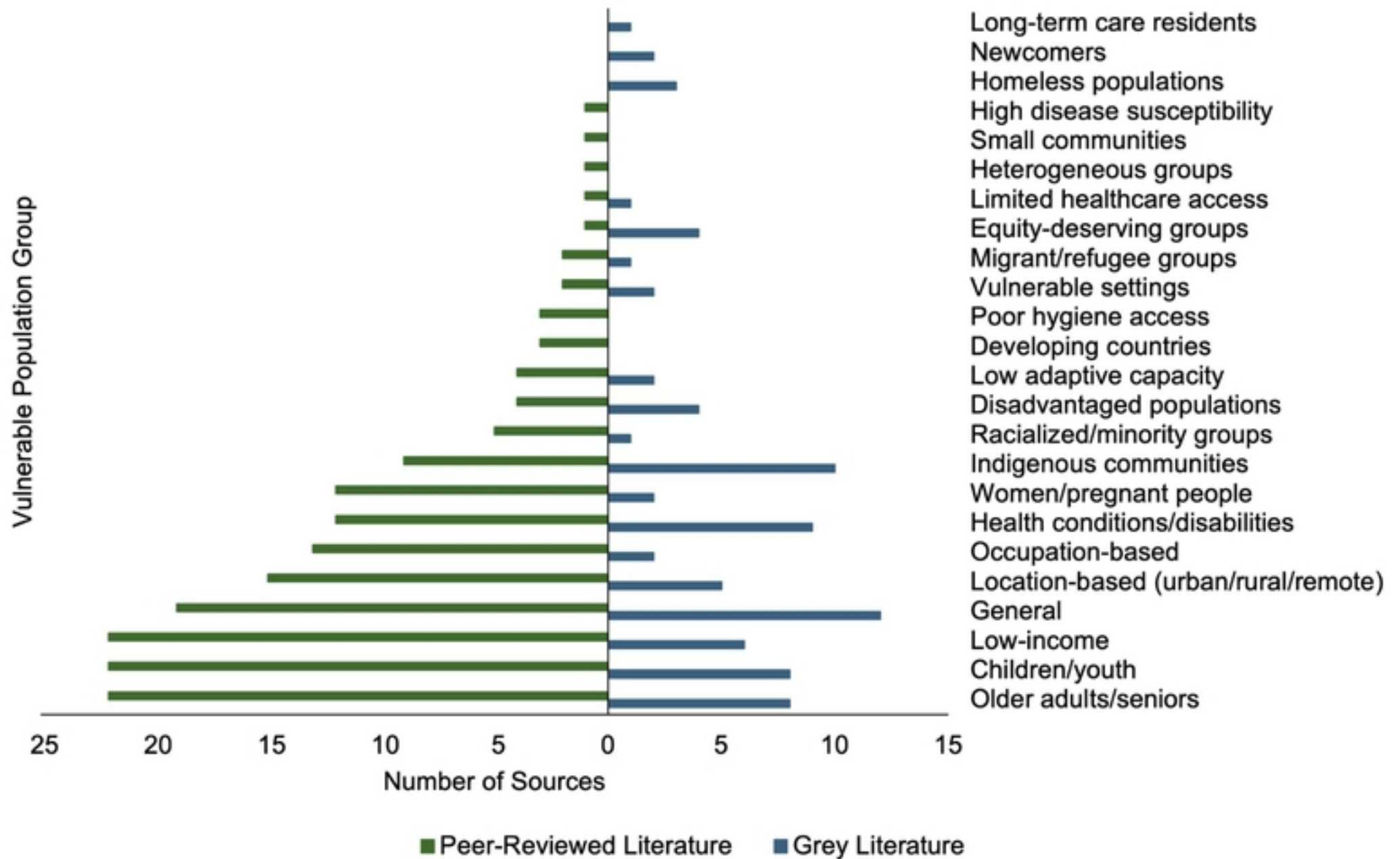


Figure 5

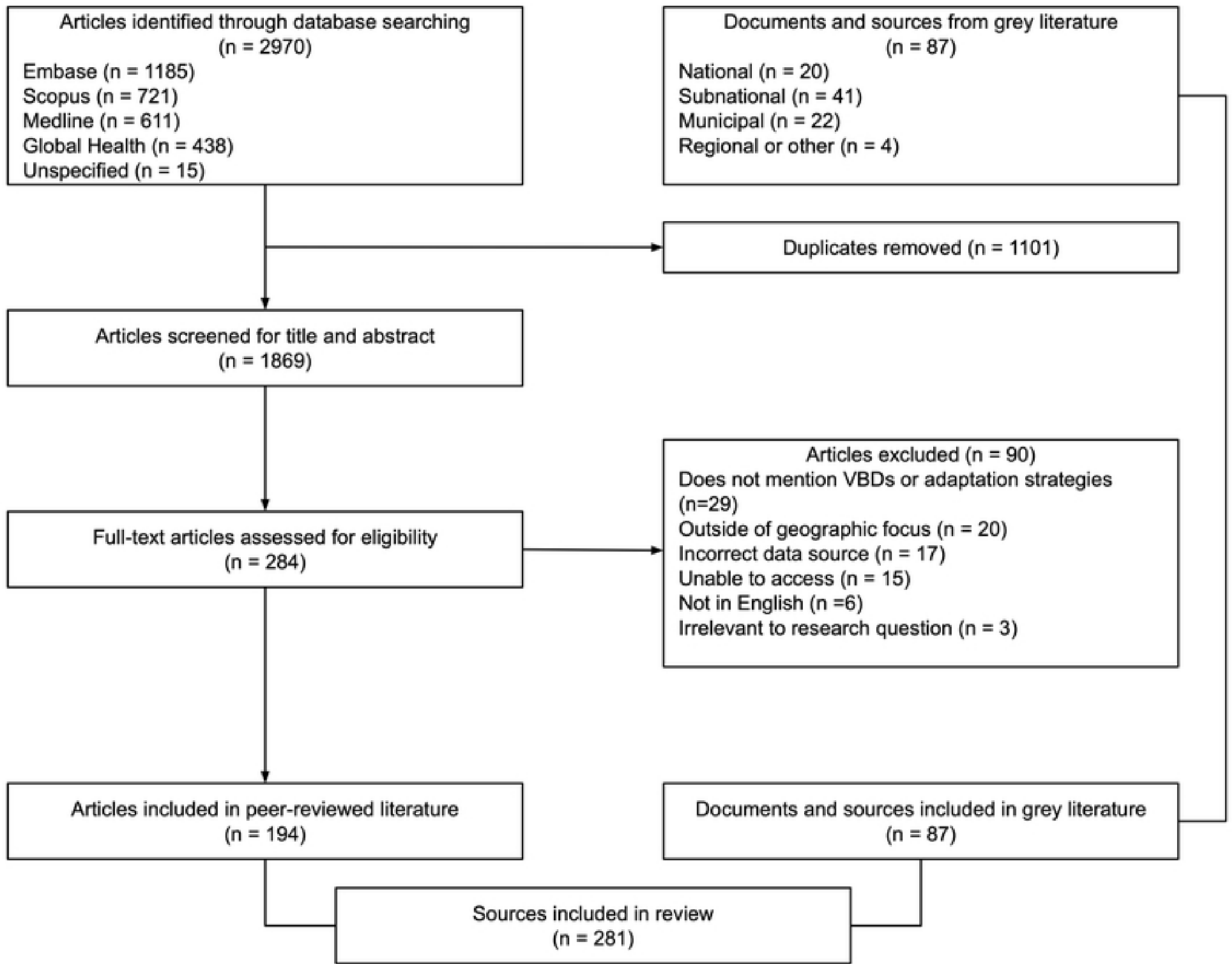
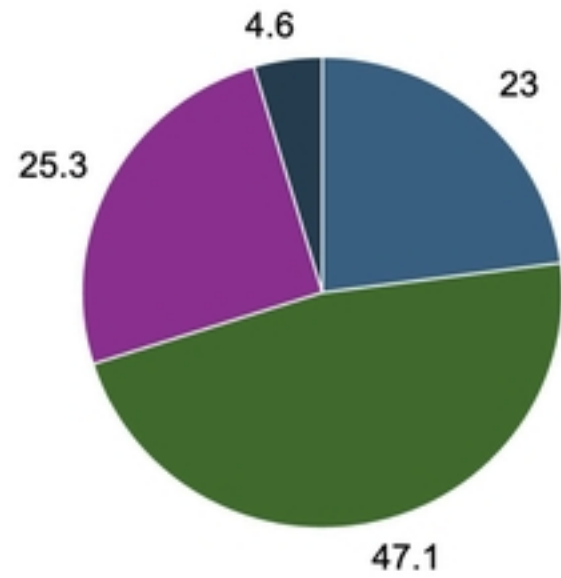
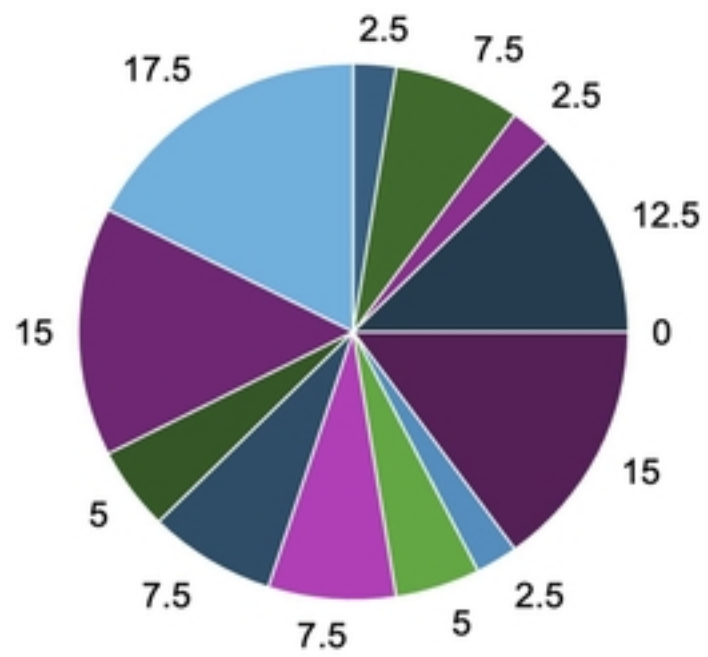


Figure 1

A) Federal Provincial/Territorial Municipal Regional



B)



C)

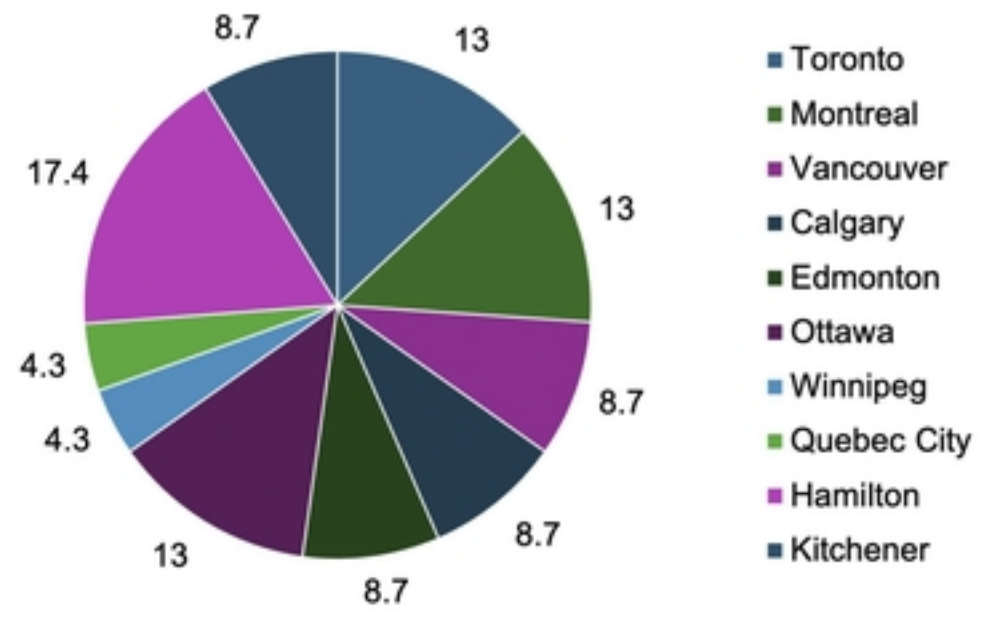


Figure 2