



## Climate Change Symposium Statement 2013

Our human impact on the atmosphere is producing a changing global climate system that is affecting the great array of living organisms on the planet. This rich and interconnected biodiversity is fundamental to healthy ecosystems and sustains us economically, socially, culturally and spiritually, providing vital ecological services such as carbon storage, water, flood and erosion control, plant and animal habitat and the resources and environments necessary to human well-being. Yet, despite their core role, community, species and genetic diversity are declining at an alarming rate. This rate of biodiversity decline is recognized as one of the most serious environmental issues facing humanity.

A major commitment by citizens, educators, government and business is urgently needed to reduce the loss of biodiversity. Of special importance is the threat that changing climate poses for native species. For example, forest biodiversity under the new emerging climate will be a combination of native and new species. Biodiversity monitoring programs at the community level can make important contributions to understanding such changes and their implications for society.

This Symposium concludes that community monitoring is essential to combating the continuing rate of biodiversity loss, supporting greater educational programs, identifying research, policy and planning needs and sustaining strong, adaptive and resilient communities.

This Symposium is a call for community action by all levels of society.

**Quote:** Margaret Mead creed that “never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has”.