

Preface

Similar to what is seen in other parts of the world, there are clear signs of the impacts of climate change to Latin American countries. The region, where a substantial portion of the world's biological diversity can be found, hosts a wide range of ecosystems including rainforests (especially, but not only in the Amazon region) and semi-arid zones. The disruption of natural ecosystems is one of the main causes of biodiversity and ecosystem losses in Latin America, a proportion of which is due to human-induced climate change.

According to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change in Latin America is likely to contribute towards altering coastal and marine ecosystems, with mangrove degradation being observed on the north coast of South America, for instance.

In addition, AR5 mentions the fact that significant trends in precipitation and temperature have been observed in Central America (CA) and South America (SA) and that changes in climate variability and in extreme events have severely affected the region.

The above state of affairs illustrates the need for a better understanding of how climate change affects the Latin American region, and for the identification of processes, methods and tools which may help the countries in the region to adapt. There is also a perceived need to showcase successful examples of how to cope with the social, economic and political problems posed by climate change in Latin America.

This book, which contains a set of papers presented at the Symposium on Climate Change Adaptation in Latin America, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November 2016, plus some additional ones, serves the purpose of showcasing experiences from research, field projects and best practice in climate change adaptation in Latin American countries—with examples from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Uruguay—which may be useful or implemented in other countries and regions. A further aim of this book is to document and disseminate the wealth of experiences available today.

This book is structured in two main parts. Part I addresses the connections and impacts of climate change to ecosystems. It entails a set of papers which describe current and future impacts of climate change to fauna, flora and landscapes.

Part II is concerned with the socio-economic aspects of climate change adaptation. As one of the most vulnerable regions in the world, Latin America is especially affected by a variety of social problems, as a result of climate change. Part II describes some of these issues and examines some ways they may be overcome.

A short, final chapter presents some perspectives on climate change in Latin America and outlines some of the research needs seen in the region.

We thank the authors for their willingness to share their knowledge, know-how and experiences, as well as the many peer reviewers, which have helped us to ensure the quality of the manuscripts.

Enjoy your reading!

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Walter Leal Filho
Leonardo Esteves de Freitas

Climate Change Adaptation in Latin America

Managing Vulnerability, Fostering Resilience

Leal Filho, W.; Esteves Freitas, L. (Eds.)

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