

**The 17<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Society and Resource Management:  
Integrating Conservation and Sustainable Living  
Madison, Wisconsin, June 4-8, 2011**

Emily Cloyd (NCA Public Participation and Engagement Coordinator) organized and led a listening session on the National Climate Assessment at the International Symposium on Society and Resource Management on June 7, 2011. Following a brief overview of the NCA, Ms. Cloyd and Julie Maldonado (NCA Engagement Assistant) facilitated a lengthy discussion focusing on a two-way flow for stakeholder participation and engagement, receiving feedback on how the Assessment can be most useful to the social science community and highlighting opportunities for social scientists to engage with the Assessment. The approximately 15 participants included practitioners, researchers, and academics from across social sciences and resource management fields.

Major themes highlighted during the discussion included the following:

- **There is a need for clear and consistent messaging on the definitions of terms**, such as mitigation and adaptation, in the federal context that also scales down to state agencies, municipalities, etc. It is important to define terms so people know what those terms mean, even if they are coming from different perspectives.
- **Developing an indicator system that is useful and understandable.** Look at indicators being used and marry some of those indicator systems, with indicators that can be tracked over time. By 2013, we could explain what we would like in an indicator system, with the longer-term focus being how to roll-up physical, ecological, and societal indicators into a reportable index. The NCA is currently trying to separate out what indicators they would like to have and what data would need to be developed to get there. Indicators should be shaped to target primary audiences (Congress, decision-makers) and include what people care about.
- **Engaging multiple levels of decision-makers** (from local to national scales). People at the local level should be able to look at what is going on in their region and use the 2013 NCA Report to make decisions. The NCA could utilize what some cities are doing (e.g., Chicago) to learn about best practices, as well as looking at such entities as the mayoral consortium and the hundreds of cities that signed on to the climate initiative. One way to balance the amount of information is through the web-based deployment; case studies could be indexed online so people can look at what is most relevant to them.
- **Using scenarios to frame the impacts of climate change on cultural resources.** Look to develop scenarios that include public input, engage with regional scenarios, and integrate cultural components, as opposed to relying solely on top-down research data. For example, one listener is involved in a project looking at how climate change is affecting tribal life ways and culture in Wisconsin.
- **Creating an evaluation plan for the Assessment that focuses on both scientific quality and user responses.** Use logic models to frame the evaluation and then have

an evaluation feedback loop on how people are using the assessment; this system would achieve measurable outcomes, while filling in information gaps (e.g., good resources include the Wisconsin Extension and NOAA in Charleston). Aim to build this system in over time by asking people online how and why they are using the NCA information and how useful they found it. Three pieces to evaluate success include: (1) if there is a product; (2) review by science community to approve of the quality of science used; and (3) how the user community uses the assessment to answer their questions and how they perceive the Assessment as relevant and legitimate.

- **Ways for the NCA to engage with social scientists and professional societies**, including (1) creating a working group within the ISSRM Board; (2) establishing and build capacity out to the NCA's network-of-networks in both a bottom-up and top-down manner; and (3) disseminating a list of how people can become involved, which is currently being done through the NCA's Request for Information.
- **Using case studies to show real world examples of climate change impacts and human responses.** People can actually see what is going on, instead of just relying on numbers, and case studies can be used for teaching mechanisms (e.g., collaborate with programs like Project Learning Tree).
- **The most useful means of getting information to people** includes providing NCA findings in a variety of online formats, including searchable databases and maps. Specifically, in the shorter-term the NCA could create a searchable database that includes an archive of everything that went into assessment, including the grey-literature, and in the longer-term could create a geographical mapping system where people could click on a region to find case studies in which they are interested (e.g., humandimensions.gov developed tool for grey-literature searches that could be replicated or developed). Use climate.gov to guide people to a single point of entry. Also, make key messages consistent for people (e.g., current FAQs, communications, and engagement).
- **Suggestions for additional topics to address in the NCA products and ongoing process** include: local economies and livelihoods (which is already included in tribal lands and rural sections), adding "co-managed land" to tribal lands because also have ceded territories, and adding extractive issues for tribal groups.