

## **National Adaptation Forum – Tribal Session Proceedings**

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Following is a synthesis of the notes taken during these workgroup sessions, as well as a summary of key next steps. *\*\*These notes have been synthesized to reduce duplication of comments and present a clear idea of what was discussed and next steps. If you would like to review the raw notes, please email Kathy Lynn at [kathy@uoregon.edu](mailto:kathy@uoregon.edu).*

## **Federal-Tribal Engagement Working Group Notes**

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### **Climate Science Centers (CSC) and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC)**

- There is a lack of clarity about what CSCs and LCCs are and how they are relevant to tribes
- There is a need for increased grant coordination between LCCs and tribal governments
  - Cost-shares are often prohibitive in tribal ability to apply for funds
- There is currently limited tribal involvement to identify tribal needs for climate science and support
  - Tribes need some successful examples of collaboration to inform and encourage them to be involved
- Support for facilitating two-way climate science needs/use
  - CSCs and LCCs often ask for tribal knowledge without strategies/protections for how knowledge is shared.
- Role of BIA in CSCs and LCCs
  - Increase BIA involvement and money in climate change activities
  - Encourage the BIA to be more than just a coordinator between LCCs/CSCs and tribes
- Structure of CSCs/LCCs is diffuse and can be challenging for tribal engagement
  - Some CSCs/LCCs are not culturally acclimated and have no operating budget to meaningfully engage tribes.
  - Limited communication from LCCs to Tribes
  - Tribes are hesitant to “represent” other tribes in steering committee context offered by some LCCs/CSCs
  - In one region, the USDA Forest Service has engaged tribes within the LCC
  - Southeast CSC—FWS/USDA liaison is a good model
- There is a need for CSC and LCCs to be culturally knowledgeable/educated
  - Learn how to communicate with tribes
  - Build an understanding of tribal governments and the trust responsibility

### ***CSC/LCC Needs and Actions (considerations for a future briefing paper)***

- Clarify purpose/opportunities for tribes to engage in CSC/LCCs
  - Improve CSC/LCC engagement with tribes, so that tribes’ needs are understood when designing grant opportunities
- Tribes have an opportunity to engage proactively and demand, assert or request desired outcomes
- Sustained funding for tribal engagement in CSCs/LCCs and funding for technical assessments to use science/data. Consider that cost-shares may be prohibitive to tribes.
- Support and protect the role of TEK in climate science, studies and assessments
- Rank tribal science priorities in order to guide CSC and LCC action moving forward
- Create pathways for accountability to monitor and ensure meaningful tribal engagement in CSC and LCC activities.

## **Agency Policies and Programs**

### **Tribal Working Group Notes from the 2013 National Adaptation Forum - Not for distribution**

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- There are numerous agency policies and programs and a need to track and compare climate adaptation policies and programs to identify what is most relevant to tribes.
  - Connect mandates to needs and resources that are tied to tribal missions.
- Need for more funding for tribal engagement
  - Tribes aren't seeing any of the BIA funding for climate change because it is so limited
- There is a need for more technical assistance for tribes addressing climate concerns
- Policy—End to stovepiping

#### Federal Policy Needs/Actions

- Large-scale (Federal budgeting) work to develop capacity and infrastructure
- Develop continuous funding stream
- Develop sustained infrastructure and capacity to enable climate adaptation funding continuity
- Educate federal agencies on tribal governance and sovereignty and on how to climate change impacts tribes on- and off-reservation.
- Strengthen legislative and administrative mechanisms for meaningful government to government relationships and consultation
- Link tools and resources to policy mandates to clarify what's important (e.g. consultation)
- Need for legislation strengthening the effectiveness of government to government relationships
- Fed Agencies **all** have trust responsibilities, this needs to be emphasized within federal structure
  - Educate federal players on issues (e.g., on- and off-reservation cultural resources)
- Connections aren't between federal efforts and tribal needs
- More clarity on understanding consultation notices and opportunities

#### **Climate Science, Research and Vulnerability Assessments**

- Evaluate economic situation relative to costs of climate change (local/ National /Global)
- Foster more concerted efforts to increase access of science and tools
  - Not enough time with limited tribal capacity
- Use existing data and information to assess impacts
- National level vulnerability assessment (at least flood risks) is needed
- Connect to environmental justice; tribal concerns about disproportionate impacts
  - e.g. Maricopa county has dozens of flood warning systems; On tribal land in the territory (est. 60k acres), there are only 2.
- Need for different climate scenarios for region and vulnerability assessments
- Need capacity to distill data; having data isn't useful without the capacity to utilize it
  - Who are external partners that can help distill data?
- Overwhelming amount of resources/data—tribes need a how-to guide for adaptation planning
  - How-to of integrating and adaptation plan with existing resource management plans
- Expert resources and/or clearinghouse to facilitate spread of adaptation planning/consolidate data
- Refine data to be applicable to specific tribal programs (water quality, wildlife, forests, etc)
- Training/capacity for tribal staff to prepare vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans
- Funding—resources to help tribal staff prepare/draft a proposal and get funding to build capacity
- Technical capacity to explain climate change challenges to funders
- Follow on successes with QA/QC procedures for labs
- Funding/Support for tribes to do science (e.g. weather stations and water gauges) and emergency management (e.g. warning systems)

#### *Monitoring*

- Monitor data gaps—is there the equipment and staff available to gather consistent data

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- Tribes need additional federal funding (e.g. FS, BIA) that supports monitoring plans. This would provide federal support for tribes to understand and monitor changes to foods/species/habitat/vegetation inventories

*National Climate Assessment*

- Lack of tribal impacts in the fisheries chapter
- Some tribes are not aware of the National Climate Assessment
- Transportation and environmental chapter of NCA didn't address tribes at all

## **Traditional Ecological Knowledge – Working Group Notes**

### *Understanding the role of TEK in climate change efforts*

- Impacts on Traditional Foods – Protection, loss and recovery from floods/ natural disaster
- Anticipates impacts on agriculture in arid environments
  - Corn as traditional food and cultural resource
- Provides knowledge and ways to survive past environmental change → people used to move to adapt—but are now restricted by reservation boundaries
- Community participation in documenting change in environment offers unique and valuable data and perspective
- Highlights values and priorities for what is at risk and want to protect of the future
- Identifies culturally sensitive species and ways to protect and manage
- Informs management priorities and strategies
- Identifies what changes are new unprecedented and not typical
- Can help identify what parts of landscape can be resilient from past (how landscape changed over time)
- TK in adaptation planning depends on who views information, who's adaptation plan, tribal or non-tribal
- It's Important to recognize that there are many knowledge(s) just as there are people(s) and some are not shareable
- TK can be licensed to require tribal involvement in order to prevent unethical use
- TK values of a holistic view can be useful and shared with adaptation planning
- Researchers should know boundaries and what is shareable. Researchers must have respect and integrity and values of community. Accountability structures need to be put in place
- Traditional Knowledge can be alternative to Western knowledge, i.e. resilience and values and goals can be different than what Western knowledge expects.
- Adaptation planning specific focus to local concerns and challenges
- TEK has local knowledge of environmental conditions/communities
- TK helps identify possible environmental range of options and goals results; TK helps identify values
- Identify background and prior environmental conditions
- TK is held under tribal jurisdiction, this is critical to maintaining integrity of TEK and tribal rights
- Is holistic and multiple parts which can't be separated
- Youth education and teaching and passing on traditional teachings are vital components of TEK use in the face of climate change
- Focus portions of TK and share only knowledge that's pertinent and that take is willing to share
- TK can have a role in climate change adaptation planning
- TEK can create interest in climate change within tribal communities; TK has credibility with tribal community that may not have trust in Western science
- Climate change affects central parts of TEK such as ceremony timing, gathering times, subsistence and gardening timing, and the health/behavior of wildlife and plants.
- TEK provides a record of what used to exist and may be threatened; One can't know what is lost if it was never known
- Tribal leaders engaged by using TEK

### *Role of TEK—is critical*

- TEK gives knowledge of the landscape and change over time and how to manage and protect into the future
- Inter-generational learning—past—present—future: TEK leads to community-based solutions

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### *TEK and vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategies*

- Identify what is important and at risk and plan to protect and manage
- Biological assessments to create scenarios on impacts to engage community
- Can merge cultural/social impacts with biological impacts
- Knowledge of past change and events: long view of the environment
- TEK can illustrate how people have responded to change in the past and can inform planning for adaptation (emergencies, disasters, drought, fire, flood)
- Helps identify priorities for management and what is vulnerable (why tribes do what they do—resource management)
- Stories on coping to change provide context to past changes, and cultural guidelines for adaptation
- TEK can identify priority areas and locations for resources
- Adaptation—utilizing TEK approaches to restoration and protection of resources
- Social science methods (ethnographic, surveys) used to capture priorities of tribal community
- Ecosystem functions and tribal priorities into documents and management plans as revised and adopted and updated
- Can connect with values and communities—human element (not just science)
- Helps identify priorities and impacts to communities
- Observations of change over time
- Fills gaps in what is not being studied
- First foods (ceremonies) and how they manage resources using science—food security
- Holistic approach to resources (not just monetary value)
- Stewardship as the goal of TEK led climate change planning projects
- Co-management over lands and resources
- Document changes, particularly for culturally important species such traditional foods, medicines
- Capture oral traditions on traditional management
- A way to incorporate local knowledge and culture/history into planning documents
  - Seasonal rounds and cultural practices (songs, stories, ceremonies all document history)
- Collaborate with cultural resources staff with environmental/science program
- Can reconnect with tribal people to past or traditional ways of life
- TEK can identify goals, priorities and is often holistic and ecosystem based (not just single-species management)

### *Protection of TEK*

- TEK is decisional—not necessarily shared (e.g., sacred sites and cultural resources)
- Share aggregate data, not specifics
- Accept that TEK is decisional and “proof” is not needed
- Ensure that information is vetted with leaders and community on what is shared and with whom
- Each tribe needs to determine what they will share
- Intellectual property rights and legal protection of information
- Use agreements with participants to dictate use of information and with whom it is shared

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### **Partnerships, Funding and Resources – Working Group Notes**

#### *Processes*

- Engage tribes early and often
- Ensure follow-through from agencies
- Develop sustained infrastructure and capacity to enable climate adaptation continuity
- Prepare for extremes, negate semantics of climate change

#### *Structures*

- Develop regional groups and tribes for coordinated and standardized assessments
- Regional tribal climate change networks to share information, collaborate on projects and act as an educational resources for agencies and others
- Large-scale federal climate adaptation advocacy

#### *Tools*

- Some tribes are engaged, but grossly insufficient
- Hook tribes with funding opportunities
- Feds need to be more aggressive with outreach
- Choose tribal individual/umbrella groups to adequately engage tribes
- Ensure that tribal priorities are documented and prioritized over federal priorities
- I sheer number of tribes makes engagement daunting
- Educate federal agencies about how tribal governance works and how sovereignty is manifested to individual tribes
- Regional tribal climate change networks

#### *Organizational Partnerships*

- Unlock the maze of federal climate programs to foster partnerships (and use good models)
  - The maze of federal programs and conflicting advice and data make identifying partners difficult
- USDA Forest Landscape Restoration Program Conservation Act
  - Potential model and funding opportunity?
- What are the other federal programs most relevant and useful to tribes?
- When science is available, create a “dial-up” opportunities for tribes to access and utilize data
- Develop a clearinghouse of information and resources
- USGS/NRCS/FWS: Agency funding structures are different so it is difficult to partner

*Potential Partner Agencies and Programs (this list includes those mentioned during the Forum and is not intended to be a comprehensive list.)*

- ONR - <http://www.ournaturalresources.org/>
- NCAI - <http://www.ncai.org/>
- NAFWS - <http://www.nafws.org/>
- NIDIS - <http://cpo.noaa.gov/ClimatePrograms/ClimateSocietalInteractionsCSI/NIDISProgram.aspx>
- CRITFC - <http://www.critfc.org/>
- USET - <http://www.usetinc.org/AboutUSET/USET-Tribes.aspx>
- GLIFWC - <http://www.glifwc.org/>
- CLIMAS - <http://www.climas.arizona.edu/>
- NOAA - <http://www.noaa.gov/>

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- Regional Integrated Science and Assessment (RISAs) - <http://cpo.noaa.gov/ClimatePrograms/ClimateSocietalInteractionsCSI/RISAProgram.aspx>
- Climate Science Centers - <http://www.doi.gov/csc/index.cfm>
- Landscape Conservation Cooperatives - <http://www.doi.gov/lcc/index.cfm>
- USDA Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program: <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLRP/>
- National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON): <http://www.neoninc.org/>
- NRCS - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/national/home/>
- USEPA - <http://www.epa.gov/>
- BIA - <http://www.bia.gov/>
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium—Local Environmental Observers: <http://www.anthctoday.org/> and <http://www.anthc.org/chs/ces/climate/leo/>
- ICLEI - <http://www.icleiusa.org/>
- Nature Serve - <http://www.natureserve.org/>
- Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals: <http://www4.nau.edu/tribalclimatechange/>
- PNW Tribal Climate Change Network: <http://tribalclimate.uoregon.edu/>
- Manajawin Project: <http://ri.ijc.org/project/9073>
- Green Corps - [http://www.greencorps.org/sites/default/files/anniv\\_page/index.html](http://www.greencorps.org/sites/default/files/anniv_page/index.html)
- National Fish Habitat Partnership - <http://fishhabitat.org/news/us-fws-announces-2012-funded-projects>
- National Phenology Network - <https://www.usanpn.org/>

### *Other Partner Entities*

- Engage with large scale National advocacy groups
- Work with existing networks and sources
- Local/Regional Governments
- Foundations
- NGO's
- Partner w/International Indigenous groups

### *Capacity*

- Need tribal capacity to carry out climate projects
- Internal ⇔ external: create collaboration between internal and external capacity
  - Do we have the expertise? What data do we need? who can fulfill the expertise gaps?
- Grant writing capacity varies by tribe
- Consortia to leverage capacity/resources collaborations. Who is leading understanding support needs for tribes? How can we share resources?
- Cultural training for agencies to understand tribes and vice versa (e.g. AK and Forest Service)
- Agency tribal liaisons need to connect at national level to coordinate working with tribes
- Agencies to accommodate cultural differences (tribes operate on different time scales and individual tribes operate differently).
- EPA different capacity of tribes versus states, leaving tribes in an inequitable position by having only one set of standards/expectations (which may cater to state government over tribal)
  - What are funding streams for EPA webinars?
- Intertribal or tribal capacity sharing to effectively distribute knowledge and know-how
  - Who/which tribes can provide capacity to tribes that don't have it?
- Capacity for data interpretation needs bolstered

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- Proprietary information calls for confidentiality agreements
- Need a lot of capacity—because a lot of tribes and geography
- Huge amount of planning is required to integrate climate into resource management plans. This creates capacity/financial burden to start and sustain. Where will capacity for this come from?
- “Climate change college” – curriculum
- Barrier—relationships with nontribal entities/agencies

### *Other Notes*

- Inter-agency (tribal) outreach liaison to help tribes navigate federal climate programs
- Integrate information at all levels (sector, department)
- Adaptation outpaced by development/climate change
- Get businesses economy of area and see what changes they can make to benefit environment while still making a profit; engagement with private parties to invite collaboration
- Focusing on cultural connections as basis of how to prioritize adaptation strategies
  - E.g. Trees for baskets → high priority or streams and fisheries
- How to plan for a different future or to modify (genetics) to adapt
  - Persistence/past, different future, or modification
- Barriers: regulatory limits on coal which could provide tribal money for climate

### **Funding**

- Bureau of Indian Affairs funding
  - Press BIA and Congress for more and stable climate change funding
  - Barriers: Not enough BIA interior funding
  - Increase BIA and money in climate initiatives/Fight for more BIA funding
  - Stable funding BIA –90 [?] based on 16% of land
- Funding needs are near, mid and long term needs: Stable funding, and grants tailored to tribal needs
- Grants not set up right or tribes can't access
- Great diversity of needs by tribes
- Most tribes haven't started planning
- Need for sustainability of funding and leveraging of resources
- EPA has a tribal set aside (but is mostly grants), but the USDA does not
- Funding—needs to be a priority because there is a lot of need from tribes plus agencies are mandated to fulfill obligations to tribes
- Encourage policy decision regarding increasing USDA funding to set aside for tribes
- Need flexibility of funding
- Each partner brings something different to the (state, fed, tribe, municipality)—need a team funding approach to tackle problems
- Examples of Tribal Solutions:
  - Fond Du Lac—GAP work plan includes climate
  - 1854—EPA grant lakes restoration
  - Tulalip—ANA grant
  - EPA grants—upland landscape
  - Carbon budget/Carbon credits
  - Give funds to intertribal organizations that could then help tribes
  - Partner with consultants to improve grant access
  - TWS [?] Draft Letter to NAFWS meeting
  - Spatial planning? Technicians may not have knowledge. Need training opportunities.
  - Create a one stop shop for grants and support tribal needs for grant writing

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**ACTIONS: Foster opportunities for tribes to work together to leverage resources/expertise**

- Make partnerships a priority: Identify Partners (NGOs, fed agencies, university, etc., other tribes) with capacity/expertise to distill climate change information for tribes, AND make connections.
- Build internal tribal capacity by hiring tribal climate change staff or training existing staff
- Create/disseminate how-to guides help tribes get started and steps to take
- Foster training/knowledge sharing