

Climate Change Information Resources

New York Metropolitan Region

(CCIR-NYC)



1

What are public agencies in the region doing to develop adaptations to a changing climate?

Key Points

Some public agencies in the New York tri-state metropolitan region have begun planning to help the region adapt to the impacts of climate change. This includes considering the environmental, human health, water management, and infrastructure issues associated with a changing regional climate.

Policies Developed by Public Agencies in Response to Climate Change

Many public agencies in the New York metropolitan region are starting to examine the role of adaptation in their programs. Public agencies at all levels (national, regional, state, county, metropolitan, and city) have begun to investigate plans or actions for adaptation to climate change. Much of what is happening now is focused on research and risk assessment. The research deals with a range of topics including human health, water management, and protection of the built and natural environment. Some examples of agency activities are outlined below.

- The Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) carries out numerous projects around the New York metropolitan region that aim to counteract beach erosion, reduce flood damage, and restore natural wetlands and estuaries, some of which explicitly include climate change. The Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation Study, for example, includes sea-level rise due to climate change in their models of future conditions.
- The New England States and Eastern Canadian Provinces created a Climate Change Action Plan which provides plans for the reduction of and/or adaptation to negative social, economic and environmental impacts of climate change. They outline the human-constructed infrastructure and natural resources that will be affected by regional climate change and make recommendations for assessments of damage and adaptations that will not increase greenhouse gas emissions further.
- The United States Forest Service Research and Development Division with the New Jersey Forestry Service have added \$610,000 to FY 2005 budget to focus on global climate change. These resources will fund improved observations of forest carbon stocks and flows, analysis and prediction of the likely effects of climate change on forest services, and development of management practices to both mitigate and adapt to expected climate change.
- Agencies in both New Jersey and New York have also created mandates or plans for adaptation to climate change. For example, the Division of Coastal Resources of the New York State Department of State and the New

York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Division of Wildlife and Marine Resources Bureau of Marine Resources released The New York State Salt Marsh Restoration and Monitoring Guidelines, which notes that sea-level rise due to global climate change threatens salt marshes. They suggest identifying and protecting low-lying areas to allow future landward migration of salt marshes. They describe methods of restoration that make wetlands more resilient to both sea level rise and natural disturbances. Also in New York State, the Long Island Sound Coastal Management Program of the Department of State created Executive Law §913, which states that developers must consider sea-level rise when siting and designing projects involving substantial public expenditures.

References

- Center for Clean Air Policy (2001). The New York Greenhouse Gas Task Force. <http://www.ccap.org/NYGHG.htm>
- Executive Office of Governor John G. Rowland (2004). Connecticut Climate Change: Fact Sheet. <http://www.ct.gov/gov/governor/cwp/view.asp?a=1551&Q=272224&PM=1>
- New England States and Eastern Canadian Provinces (2001) Regional Climate Change Action Plan. http://www.ctclimatechange.com/neg_rept.html
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (2003). Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change Activities. <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/gcc/gcc.htm>
- New York State Department of State and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (2000). The New York State Salt Marsh Restoration and Monitoring Guidelines. <http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/downloads/pdfs/saltmarsh.pdf>
- New York State Department of State (1999). Long Island Sound Coastal Policies. http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/downloads/pdfs/lis_cmp/Chap4.pdf
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (2004). Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation Study. <http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/fimp/reform.htm>
- United States Forest Service Research and Development Division (2004). New Jersey. <http://www.fs.fed.us/research/State%20Briefing%20Papers/02.23%20New%20Jersey.pdf>

Cynthia Rosenzweig, Goddard Institute for Space Studies (<http://www.giss.nasa.gov/>)

William Solecki, Hunter College, City University of New York (<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/>)