



## Spring 2017

*Compact Currents* is a quarterly newsletter from the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact highlighting the progress of the Compact, the counties, and the municipalities in Southeast Florida.

# Regional Climate Action Plan

Revision Continues



Kim Brown, Miami-Dade County, and Lois Bush, Florida Department of Transportation, discuss sustainable communities and transportation with Ana Puszkina-Chevlin, City of Delray Beach.

The Compact continues to refresh the [Regional Climate Action Plan](#) (RCAP) by incorporating lessons learned over the past five years of regional implementation and engaging with citizens, municipalities, and various stakeholder groups in round-tables, workshops, and online surveys.

Last month, the Compact hosted an [open comment session](#) that drew more than 75 engaged citizens, government officials, and representatives from nonprofits and businesses. Attendees were encouraged to focus on equity as they reviewed the draft recommendations and share their ideas about how equity can be incorporated throughout the plan. The event provided an opportunity for the Compact to learn from these community members and understand their concerns and insights, as well as a forum for community members to engage in one-on-one discussions with local government officials from around the region.

The Compact will be preparing the draft RCAP 2.0 over the summer based on the extensive input received so far, and will provide another public comment period in late summer. Look for the final RCAP 2.0 at the [9th Annual Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summit](#) in Fort Lauderdale on December 14-15, 2017.

*"Thank you so much for organizing the climate action plan session. I don't think it's an exaggeration to say it was one of the most well-organized public meetings I've ever attended! And thank you for taking the time to introduce me to people who were involved putting the plan together...Thanks a million!"*

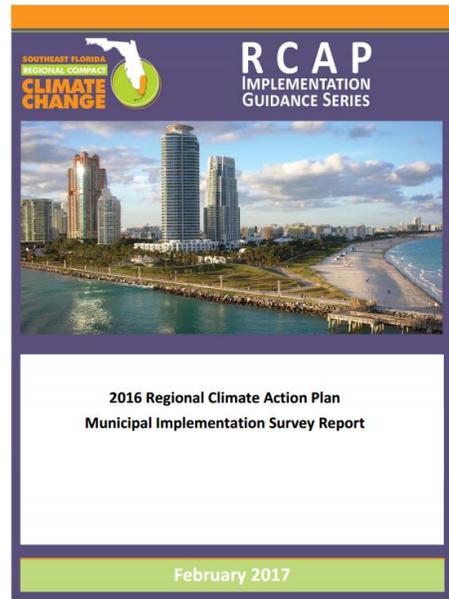
-Sara Ayers-Rigsby, MA, RPA,  
Florida Atlantic University Anthropology Department

## Compact Resources

### **RCAP Municipal Implementation Survey Report**

In 2014, the Compact conducted a Municipal Implementation Survey to determine how the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) recommendations were being implemented across Southeast Florida's Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties. A follow-up survey in late 2016 captured the progress-to-date on the implementation of the RCAP. The [2016 Municipal Implementation Survey Report](#) highlights the 9% increase in the RCAP implementation rate and examines implementation trends in and across the

Compact's 108 municipalities.



## Partner Updates

### Two New Municipalities Sign the Mayor's Climate Action Pledge

Support for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact and the Regional Climate Action Plan continues to grow as two more municipalities sign the [Mayors' Climate Action Pledge](#), joining 30 other cities and towns as [Compact municipal partners](#). The [City of Miami adopted a resolution](#) on April 11, 2017 and [Boca Raton City Council signed the Mayors' Pledge](#) at the city council meeting on May 23, 2017.



The **City of Hallandale Beach** participated in the beta version of [Resilience Dialogues](#) and received technical assistance from a team of local and national experts facilitated by the [Institute for Sustainable Communities](#) for two weeks earlier this year.

Resilience Dialogues is a public-private collaboration that builds climate-resilient communities through facilitated dialogues among scientists, practitioners, and community leaders that explore a community's risks from climate variability and change to create relevant solutions. The program is coordinated by the [U.S. Global Change Research Program](#) and the American Geophysical Union's [Thriving Earth Exchange](#).

*"The Resilience Dialogues provided the opportunity for Hallandale Beach team members to virtually connect with experts from across the entire country and it was an invaluable experience. Independently researching and compiling the amount and quality of information that was included in the summary document, particularly the list of resources available to communicate sea level rise information and risks to residents, would have been a monumental undertaking without the Dialogues. Furthermore, the Dialogues provided the platform for discussions pertaining to resiliency that city staff members may not otherwise have the opportunity to deliberate. The Dialogues set the stage for the city's upcoming Sustainability Action Planning process and served as a worthwhile jumping off point."*

-Sue Fassler, Hallandale Beach Green Initiatives Coordinator

Learn about Hallandale Beach's dialogue highlights, key lessons learned, and resources gained throughout the Resilience Dialogues in [this final report](#).

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**Boynton Beach** was the second Southeast Florida municipality chosen to receive technical assistance through the [Resilience Dialogues](#). Community leaders and a variety of local and national subject matter experts began engaging in their two-week dialogue. Boynton Beach will develop outreach,

engagement, and public education strategies, as well as address challenges familiar to other communities in the region, such as salt water intrusion and coastal adaptation. At the conclusion of the Resilience Dialogues, the city will receive a final report on the discussions, along with tools and resources to further advance Boynton Beach's community-resilience planning.

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**The City of Miami Beach** is [expanding stormwater systems and elevating roads](#) as part of its [Neighborhood Improvement Projects](#), which will invest \$500 million by 2022 in building resilience throughout residential neighborhoods. In April, the city [passed a resolution](#) allowing homeowners to tie their private property to the city's stormwater system at no cost.

In May, the city released an [adaptation calculator](#) so residents can determine the future elevation of roads renovated under the Neighborhood Improvement Projects, allowing homeowners to understand their personal property needs in relation to the construction. Using this calculator is one of the four steps the city is recommending residents take to engage in the improvement projects, in addition to getting an [elevation certificate](#) for private homes, scheduling a home site visit with the city engineer, and attending [city-hosted open house sessions in June](#) that will bring together a group of experts to answer community questions on sea level rise and flooding.

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**Broward County** is advancing a series of future conditions maps to support project planning and design. The first map is a wet season [groundwater table map](#) that provides the basis for licensing drainage and surface water management systems in accordance with realized and predicted changes in groundwater elevation through the year 2060. With approval by the Board of County Commissioners on May 23, this new wet season groundwater table map will become effective on July 1, 2017. This will ensure that drainage infrastructure provides the necessary level of flood protection for the lifetime of

the project—a significant advancement in Broward County’s resilience planning.

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**Monroe County** is advancing its resilience program by obtaining more [accurate elevation data for county roads and the ground level of county facilities](#). With this data, the county will be able to measure and evaluate low-lying areas, assess areas for sea level rise evaluation, and inform capital planning, which will allow the county to adjust road elevations in preparation for rising sea levels. The county will preserve the data, which will be captured using mobile, terrestrial, and aerial LiDAR collection methods, for potential use in state and federal hazard mitigation and flood reduction grant programs.

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### **Miami Chamber of Commerce Sea Level Rise Solutions Conference**



Panelists Jennifer Jurado, Rhonda Haag, Nichole Hefty, and Susy Torriente discuss sea rise solutions.

Photo credit: [Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce](#).

On May 5, more than 150 people from a range of business sectors attended the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce’s [Second Annual Sea Level Rise Solutions Conference](#). Attendees participated in panels focusing on building solutions and business opportunities and the latest work of the Compact.

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## National Adaptation Forum

Adaptation professionals from across the U.S. gathered in Saint Paul, Minnesota for the biennial [National Adaptation Forum](#) held May 9-11. Southeast Florida is a national leader in climate change and sea level rise adaptation, and many Compact Steering Committee members and local experts hosted workshops or spoke at sessions. Jennifer Jurado (Broward County), Jim Murley (Miami-Dade County), and Nancy Gassman (City of Fort Lauderdale) spoke on a [panel about coordinating efforts](#) across Southeast Florida. Samantha Danchuk (Broward County), Katie Hagemann (Miami-Dade County), Jason Liechty (Broward County), and Sonia Chao (University of Miami) [hosted a workshop](#) on duplicating the Compact's [Resilient Redesign](#). The Institute for Sustainable Communities also gathered Compact members and partners before the forum to discuss successes, challenges, and opportunities with other regional entities accelerating climate work across the country.

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## The City of Fort Lauderdale's Transportation Summit



ISC's Nancy Schneider moderates a panel with Jeffrey Huber, Staff Steering Committee Member Rhonda Haag, and Jeralee Anderson. Photo credit: Jason Leidy, [Middle River Arts Photography](#).

The [City of Fort Lauderdale's 6th Annual Transportation Summit](#) brought

together more than 100 transportation industry experts and influencers to explore the role of data and technology in realizing the city's vision for a safe, connected, and sustainable community. Through the full day of panels and presentations, participants learned about innovations and best practices in transportation design and construction. [Access the collection of these best practices here.](#)

The summit provided clear examples of how locals are leading the way in improving the sustainability and resiliency of Southeast Florida communities, while also recognizing it takes many partners and disciplines to reach our collective goals.

[Nancy Schneider](#), senior program officer for the [Institute for Sustainable Communities](#) and staff to the Compact Staff Steering Committee, moderated a panel on greening and stress-proofing projects. Panelist [Rhonda Haag](#), Compact Staff Steering Committee member and Monroe County sustainability manager, presented Monroe County's framework for dealing with county roads that need to be adapted to sea level rise, and projects planned for two neighborhoods to help prevent tidal flooding.

Participants also learned about low-impact development strategies that combine ecological, landscape, urban, and architectural design, and were introduced to the [Greenroads Rating System®](#), a tool for measuring and managing sustainability on transportation projects for streets, highways, bridges, rails, trails, and more. Attendees were treated to a sneak peek of the downtown [Fort Lauderdale Brightline station](#), set to begin intercity express train service this summer.

## News

In March, **The Kresge Foundation's Board of Trustees** [visited key allies and grantees in Miami and Miami Beach](#) who are working to make their communities more resilient to threats posed by climate change. The trustees, staff, and guests learned about some of the most pressing challenges connected to sea-level rise — including king tides, the contamination of freshwater drinking aquifers, evolving threats to public health, and protecting vulnerable populations — and the actions being taken by the [Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact](#) to develop and implement cross-cutting solutions. With the support of the Kresge Foundation, the Compact looks beyond party lines to bring together Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe, and Palm Beach Counties to reduce heat-trapping emissions and help communities adapt to changes in climate.

## Upcoming Events



[9th Annual Southeast Florida](#)

[Regional Climate Leadership Summit](#)



Broward County will host this year's Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summit on December 14-15 at the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale.

This year's summit will focus on "The Business of Resilience" to engage the business and wider community in critical discussions on adaptation, climate and energy solutions, and resilience.

**[Sponsorships are now available!](#)**

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**[The Compact Calendar](#)** is the central location for climate change events happening in Southeast Florida, so [check back regularly](#) for updates. Have an upcoming you would like to share with the public? [Submit your event](#) to the Compact Calendar.

## Job Opportunity

[Florida International University](#) is seeking applications for the [Director of the Sea Level Solutions Center](#) (SLSC). The SLSC Director will work with local, regional, national, and international partners; funding organizations; and government entities to secure extramural funding to transform the SLSC into an internationally recognized thought and solution leader.

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