

ADAPT TO MITIGATE:

ACCOUNTING FOR MITIGATION IN U.S. ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE PROJECTS



STEPHANIE M. STERN, MICHAEL VANDENBERGH, & DAVID DANA

THE PROJECT

- TO ACHIEVE MITIGATION GOALS, ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE SHOULD ACCOUNT FOR AND CONTRIBUTE TO MITIGATION IN ADAPTATION ACTIVITIES AND POST-ADAPTATION COMMUNITIES TO:
 - AVOID NEGATIVE FEEDBACK LOOPS
 - REDUCE LONG TERM COSTS
 - ACCOUNT FOR INTRA- AND INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

RELOCATION OF ISLE DE ST. JEAN CHARLES TRIBE TO THE “NEW ISLE”

- 34 HOMES
- COMMUNITY CENTER
- PLANNED 500 HOMES
- 48.3 MILLION



OTHER EXAMPLES: CARBON IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION

- HARD FLOOD BARRIERS, STORAGE BASINS, DIVERSIONS
- WASTEWATER & STORM DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE
- INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TRANSPORTATION AND BUILDINGS
- INCREASED IRRIGATION, DEEPER WELLS, WATER REUSE, DESALINIZATION
- COOLING CENTERS, LANDLORD-TENANT REQUIREMENTS FOR AC

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC)

- LONGSTANDING RECOGNITION OF INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
- ADAPTATION ACTIVITIES -- ADAPTATION ACTIVITIES CAN INCREASE CARBON EMISSIONS
- POST-ADAPTATION INFRASTRUCTURE -- SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ADJUSTMENTS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO YIELD LOWER-CARBON POST-ADAPTATION COMMUNITIES
- THIRD AND FOURTH ASSESSMENT REPORT & OTHERS

CURRENT POLICIES FOR CARBON REDUCTION IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION

- NEPA GREENHOUSE GAS GUIDANCE (2023):
 - QUANTIFY REASONABLY FORESEEABLE GROSS AND NET EMISSIONS AND MONETIZE SOCIAL COSTS OF CARBON
- CLIMATE SMART INFRASTRUCTURE: OMB MEMORANDUM (2023):
“ENCOURAGING” AGENCIES TO REDUCE CARBON IN FEDERALLY FUNDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
 - ADOPT AGENCY BEST PRACTICES; ENCOURAGE USE OF CODES AND PERFORMANCE ENERGY STANDARDS; INFORMATION AND EXPERTISE SHARING; AGENCY CLIMATE ADAPTATION REPORTS (MEASURE BENEFITS)

CURRENT POLICIES FOR CARBON REDUCTION IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION

- NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: E.G. FEMA BRIC PROGRAM
- BENEFIT OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS: INCLUDES CARBON SEQUESTRATION (E.G., FEMA RESIDENTIAL BUYOUTS)

FIRST GENERATION OF ADAPT TO MITIGATE

- GREATER FOCUS ON CARBON BENEFITS FROM LOWER CARBON MATERIALS AND ENERGY SOURCES
- ONLY NEPA GUIDANCE REQUIRES ASSESSMENT OF CARBON COSTS (CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS)
- “DO BETTER”

SECOND GENERATION ADAPT TO MITIGATE: POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

#1 BETTER ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL CLIMATE GOAL

- NET ZERO EMISSIONS ECONOMY BY 2050
- HOW TO EVALUATE?
- RETROFIT READINESS

SECOND GENERATION ADAPT TO MITIGATE: POSSIBLE REFORMS

#2 COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

- INCLUDE NET CARBON AS A COST (OR BENEFIT) FOR MAJOR DISASTER RELIEF ADAPTATION PROJECTS
- STAFFORD ACT REQUIRES “COST EFFECTIVENESS”
- CAN “HAZARD MITIGATION” BROADLY DEFINED IN STAFFORD ACT BE READ TO INCLUDE CARBON MITIGATION?
- ISSUE: BLOCK ADAPTATION PROJECTS?
- PHASE-IN OR FUTURE STEP?

SECOND GENERATION ADAPT TO MITIGATE: POSSIBLE REFORMS

OFFSETS:

- SHOULD WE ALLOW OTHER STATE OR FEDERAL ACTIONS OR PROJECTS TO OFFSET ADAPTATION EMISSIONS?
- WOULD GOVERNMENT HAVE TAKEN “OFFSETTING” ACTION ANYWAY?

SECOND GENERATION ADAPT TO MITIGATE: POSSIBLE REFORMS

#3 DISASTER RELIEF GRANTS:

- SCORING OR RANKING ADAPTATION GRANT APPLICATIONS THAT INCLUDES CARBON MITIGATION
- INCREASING INCENTIVES FOR ADAPT TO MITIGATE (E.G., INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OFFERS INCREASED FUNDS)

SECOND GENERATION ADAPT TO MITIGATE: POSSIBLE REFORMS

#4 INSTITUTIONAL:

- AGENCY STAFF:
 - INCREASE TECHNICAL CARBON ACCOUNTING EXPERTISE
 - INTERAGENCY COORDINATION
- OIRA OR OTHER AGENCY: CARBON REVIEW FOR MAJOR ADAPTATION PROJECTS OVER CERTAIN \$ AMOUNT?

BASELINE GOAL: LOWER CARBON THAN WHAT?

- LOWER CARBON THAN CURRENT STATE?
- CARBON SET TO MAINTAIN A SPECIFIC TEMPERATURE RISE (PARIS AGREEMENT-2 DEGREES)?
- *COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL CLIMATE GOALS-NET ZERO CARBON BY 2050 (INCLUDING RETROFIT-READY)?

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

- COMMUNITY PREFERENCES & CO-PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE
- POSSIBLE RESISTANCE TO INCREASED COSTS
- BENEFITS ACCRUE TO CURRENT & FUTURE GENERATIONS