

NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TELEPHONE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 27, 2012

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2012 – NCADAC MEETING

WELCOME AND REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Dr. Jerry Melillo, Marine Biological Laboratory and NCADAC Chair

Jerry Melillo welcomed the participants to the NCADAC meeting. He asked the members to allow Kathy Jacobs and Anne Waple to speak during the meeting; the members agreed. Minutes from the June and August 2012 NCADAC meetings were brought forward for comments or corrections. No comments or corrections were noted, and the minutes from both meetings were accepted as written.

INTERNAL REVIEW PROGRESS AND UPDATE ON WEBINARS

Kathy Jacobs, Office of Science and Technology Policy and National Climate Assessment Director

Kathy Jacobs announced that a revised draft of the 2013 NCA Report was uploaded on September 27th, including 29 of 30 chapters. Since the September 5th draft, there have been significant changes in response to comments on many of the sectoral chapters received from the first set of informational webinars. All chapters will continue to be revised in advance of the final NCADAC review of the draft in November. The authors of the Climate Science chapter are making revisions in response to comments about sea level rise. The Water chapter authors are also making revisions and clarifications to ensure consistency with the Climate Science chapter. There has also been a discussion among authors and staff to resolve the treatment of carbon sink across various chapters (Ecosystems, Biogeochemical Cycles, Mitigation, etc.).

Dr. Melillo reminded NCADAC to please participate in the second set of informational webinars and send in comments. Kathy Jacobs noted that comments are welcome on all chapters, but requested that members do not send comments that were previously submitted. The focus for this review should be “showstopper” comments that would prevent members from signing off on release of report for public review, rather than detailed edits.

OVERALL SCHEDULE

Dr. Jerry Melillo, Marine Biological Laboratory and NCADAC Chair

Dr. Ann Waple, NOAA National Climatic Data Center

Kathy Jacobs confirmed the presence of a quorum on the call at this point in the meeting.

Jerry Melillo noted that, while the development of the draft report is on schedule as laid out over the past year, it would be wise to be prepared with alternate plans. Anne Waple presented several potential scenarios for review and release of public comment draft of report: one scenario for on-time delivery as scheduled for 1 December and alternate scenarios if there are any issues that need to be addressed before public release. The proposal is that at specific check-in points (see handout) the Co-

Chairs will consult with the ES and make decisions on whether to move to one of the alternative schedules.

In the first scenario, the report would still be on track for a November decision by the NCADAC to approve the draft and a Dec 1 release to the public for comments. In the second scenario, minor unresolved issues may still exist in early November, but NCADAC could still make a decision on the draft in the November meeting, followed by three additional weeks for moderate revisions before public release on Dec 20. The third timeline scenario covers the possibility that serious showstopper issues might be encountered later in October or November, preventing a NCADAC decision to approve the draft at the November NCADAC meeting. Under this third scenario, release of the draft to the public would be delayed until January to ensure that any issues could be addressed. Under this third scenario, there is a significant risk of not being able to make the 2013 release date.

Discussion

General support was expressed for the flexibility to make adjustments to the schedule in order to submit a high-quality report.

Decision

Dr. Melillo stated that the proposal was to delegate authority to the Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Executive Secretariat (ES), to make decisions over the next few months on the overall schedule in accordance with three scenarios. No objections were raised, and the proposal was approved by consensus.

SUSTAINED ASSESSMENT SPECIAL REPORT

Kathy Jacobs, Office of Science and Technology Policy and National Climate Assessment Director

In conversations with the Report integration Team and Executive Secretariat, it was suggested that the first special report of the sustained assessment focus on providing advice on conducting the sustained assessment. Kathy Jacobs noted that the advantages of a special report are that it could have a different tone from the focused science synthesis chapters in the 2013 NCA Report, and could go through a different review process. The decision requested for NCADAC at this meeting was whether to produce a special report on the sustained assessment, in addition to the shorter, focused chapter already in the 2013 NCA Report.

Kathy Jacobs presented for NCADAC discussion a draft outline and schedule for the development of the proposed special report on sustained assessment. The proposed report would come out in the spring of 2013, which would allow it to be referenced by the final version of the 2013 NCA Report. The suggested timeline would result in a completed special report by the middle of next year, with NCADAC approval planned by June 1, 2013. The proposed product would be a NCADAC product, and would be very focused on how to conduct the process of the sustained assessment. It would also be good to get the NRC to review the special report, because this report will inform support for the overall USGCRP strategic plan.

Discussion

Support was expressed for the idea of focusing the first special report of the sustained assessment on the sustained process. There is a fair amount of information that has already been generated that could

be included in the report, including materials that didn't fit into the Sustained Assessment chapter that was developed by the author team and some work products of the INCA Working Group. Gary Yohe, as a member of the NRC committee to advise the USGCRP, stated that he believes the committee would like to review the special report on sustained assessment.

Decision

Dr. Melillo stated that the proposal was to approve the development of a special report on the sustained assessment. No objections were raised, and the proposal to develop a report on the sustained assessment as the first special report of the sustained assessment process was approved by consensus.

Action

NCADAC members are asked to suggest names of authors for the special report to Kathy Jacobs.

DISCUSSION OF REMAINING NCADAC WORKING GROUPS

Kathy Jacobs, Office of Science and Technology Policy and National Climate Assessment Director

Kathy Jacobs gave a status summary for existing NCADAC working groups. The Scenarios working group has nearly finished its work and published its reports, though it will probably also be connected to or provide support for one or more interim products during the sustained assessment. The Indicators working group is seeking members, and will be increasing activity through the winter and spring of 2013, with the plan of producing a report in 2015. An interim report on international issues is being scoped by the International Working Group. The Report Integration Team may be discontinued, because it was put together for the short-term assignment of checking consistency across chapters. However, it may be reactivated in the spring 2013 for reviewing the revised report after the public comment period. The Engagement and Communication working group continues to be very active.

Several working groups, previously approved by NCADAC, will soon be started. Kathy Jacobs requested that if NCADAC members are contemplating volunteering or volunteering a colleague to please consider carefully which working groups they would most like to participate on. The three groups that will move forward soon (in addition to Indicators, which is expanding membership) are:

- Regional Capacity: Will provide support for regional teams and make sure they have a path forward for the sustained assessment process;
- Sectoral Capacity: Will provide support for sector and cross-cutting teams/topics and make sure they have a path forward to participate in the sustained assessment process;
- Decision Support, Adaptation, and Mitigation - focus on informing decisions and connections to the USGCRP Informing Decisions element

Discussion

There was a question about what happens if a member's time on the committee ends before the working group has completed its work. The DFOs explained that the members' terms last until 2014 and the NCADAC charter is on track to be renewed in early 2013 for another two years, until 2015. Given this, there should not be a problem with members' terms ending before the NCA Report is completed.

Action

Staff will send a list of working groups to the NCADAC.

PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Kathy Jacobs, Office of Science and Technology Policy and National Climate Assessment Director

Kathy Jacobs said that a decision requested is for NCADAC support of the approach for outreach and engagement with members of professional societies and the public during the public comment period for the Draft 2013 NCA Report. NCADAC, Co-Chairs, and Executive Secretariat have had a number of conversations about releasing the draft and engaging professional societies and the public during the public comment period. The recommended approach focuses on explaining the process leading to the draft, sharing initial high-level findings, and engaging them in conversations about the sustained assessment process and their interests in participating. NCADAC representatives will be instructed not to defend the content or conclusions of the report. The purpose of the “Town Meeting” approach is to explain what the NCA process is, provide some perspective on the draft outcomes, and discuss future engagements - without debates about the content of the draft. Members of the public may submit any comments on the content as part of the online process.

Prior to public events, NCADAC members, authors, and NCA staff will receive a briefing on report contents and how to handle questions. NCA representatives will present information about the report and process. There will always be someone from the NCA staff and a strong moderator at the town halls; the oversight committee for each meeting will include NCADAC, local/regional representatives, agency sponsors, and other interested parties.

Discussion

If NCADAC members are participating in other events where they might speak about the NCA, they should follow the same approach outlined for NCA events. While the plan is to have at least one in-person NCA event in each region, there can also be webinars and other types of events, as long as all of the events are based on the core set of materials.

Concern was expressed that the topic of climate change will draw out members of the public who may be combative. Kathy Jacobs mentioned that the NCA Office has run 70 public events so far and has not had any serious problems. The NCA staff and NCADAC include some very experienced communications and engagement experts who can help others be prepared.

There were several questions about what it means to “not engage in defending the report”. Cynthia Decker stated that the NCADAC Designated Federal Officials are working with the NOAA Office of General Counsel about what can and can not be said in respect to the draft report. Kathy Jacobs explained that the line between defense and discussion will be clearly defined. It is okay answer questions about the process of developing the report - who was involved, how the conclusions were reached, and what the conclusions mean in the context of the 2013 report and sustained process. However, NCA members should not engage in debates about whether the evidence presented is true or not. NCA representatives should plan to address question such as this responses like “thank you for your comments, please submit them via the official comment process”. NCA representatives may point to the traceable account as explanation of how the conclusion was reached.

There is a desire for senior, experienced people to participate in each event, and for moderators to receive training. Every NCA representative who is listed as a speaker will be required to attend a training session in advance. NCA will be providing training (via webinar, in person, or written) ahead of

each public event. The NCADAC includes several members who have a lot of experience running public meetings, and their input will be welcomed to the training.

There was a strong desire expressed by several NCADAC members that participants be trained. If there are NCADAC members who would like additional training in order to serve as part of a group who could lead events around the country, NCA should provide more extensive training in conjunction with the November NCADAC meeting. The NCADAC will be polled for interest in this as part of the sign-up for that meeting.

Decision

Dr. Melillo requested a decision on the overall approach to outreach and engagement with members of the public during the public comment period for the Draft 2013 NCA Report. No further discussion was brought forward, and the decision was approved by consensus.

Action

NCADAC members should tell Glynis Lough (glough@usgcrp.gov) if they are participating in other events where they might speak about the NCA, if they are interested in participating in coordinated engagement training to lead events around the country, or if they can facilitate or conduct such training.

REVIEW EDITORS

Kathy Jacobs, Office of Science and Technology Policy and National Climate Assessment Director

The role of review editors, as outlined in the roles and responsibilities document, is to review each chapter to ensure that comments received in the public comment period were properly addressed. This review of responses will occur in April-June 2013 (under the Scenario 1 timeline). Kathy Jacobs provided an update on the process of identifying individuals who may serve as review editors. The editor selection will begin soon, so that review editors can start to become familiar with the process. In order to ensure that they are independent from NCADAC and NCA, review editors cannot be authors or NCADAC members, and cannot be nominated by authors or NCADAC members. Review editors can be suggested by NRC, professional societies, or members of the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Dr. Kandis Wyatt, NOAA NCADAC Designated Federal Official

No public comments were registered or brought forward.

NCADAC CHARTER

Dr. Kandis Wyatt, NOAA NCADAC Designated Federal Official

Dr. Wyatt explained that NOAA is in the process of renewing the NCADAC charter by 2013. The charter was initially enacted in January 2011, and it must be renewed by January 2013. This is required since federal advisory committee charters cannot be longer than two years. No major changes to the charter are anticipated at this time.

CLOSING AND SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

Dr. Jerry Melillo, Marine Biological Laboratory and NCADAC Chair

Dr. Melillo reviewed the NCADAC consensus decisions made during the call:

- 1) Approved delegation of authority to the NCA Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Executive Secretariat, to make decisions on the timeline for release of the draft report for public comment. Decisions will be made at critical points in the next few months.
- 2) Approved development of special report on the sustained assessment process, and work will begin to expand the proposal.
- 3) Approved the approach to outreach and engagement during the public comment period.

Dr. Melillo encouraged participation on the next set of informational NCADAC webinars, which will be held October 2,3,4, and 8 to allow NCADAC to provide “showstopper” comments on the draft. The Co-Chairs and editors will be meeting in person October 10-12 to discuss revisions.

The meeting was adjourned at 5pm.

Non-Federal Members in attendance

Name	Affiliation
Daniel Abbasi	GameChange Capital, LLC
Virginia Armbrust	University of Washington
Rosina Bierbaum	PCAST, University of Michigan
James (Jim) Buizer	University of Arizona
Lynne Carter	Louisiana State University
F. Stuart (Terry) Chapin	University of Alaska
Camille Coley	Florida Atlantic University
Jan Dell	CH2MHill
Paul Fleming	Seattle Public Utilities
Guido Franco	California Energy Commission
David Gustafson	Monsanto Company
David Hales	Second Nature
Sharon Hays	CSC
Rattan Lal	Ohio State University
Jo-Ann Leong	University of Hawaii
Rezaul Mahmood	Western Kentucky University
Michael McGeehin	RTI International
Jerry Melillo	Marine Biological Laboratory
Phil Mote	Oregon State University
Jayantha Obeysekera	South Florida Water Management District
Lindene Patton	Zurich Financial Services
John Posey	East-West Gateway Council of Governments
Sara Pryor	Indiana University
Terese (T.C.) Richmond	Van Ness Feldman GordonDerr
Dick Schmalensee	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Henry (Gerry) Schwartz	HGS Consultants, LLC
Joel Smith	Stratus Consulting
Gary Yohe	Wesleyan University

Federal Members in attendance

Name	Affiliation
Virginia Burkett	U.S. Department of the Interior
John Hall	Department of Defense
Alice Hill	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Susan Julius	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Pat Jacobberger-Jellison	NASA
Thomas Karl	NOAA/Subcommittee on Global Change Research
Susan Ruffo	White House Council on Environmental Quality
Arthur Rypinski	U.S. Department of Transportation
Margaret Walsh	U.S. Department of Agriculture

USGCRP, NOAA, and NCA Staff in attendance

Name	Affiliation
Susan Aragon-Long	USGCRP (USGS)
Ralph Cantral	USGCRP (NOAA)
Sarah Champion	NOAA
Emily Cloyd	USGCRP
Cynthia Decker	NOAA
Matt Erickson	USGCRP
Bryce Golden-Chen	USGCRP
Kathy Jacobs	USGCRP (OSTP)
Fred Lipschultz	USGCRP (NASA)
Clark Lind	NOAA
Glynis Lough	USGCRP
Anne Waple	NOAA
Kandis Wyatt	NOAA

Other attendees

Name	Affiliation
Jordan Nicholls	Climate Science Watch
Nick Sundt	WWF
Claudia Nierenberg	NOAA