

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**  
**DRAFT – For Discussion at NCADAC Meeting – September 27, 2012**

**Engagement around NCA Draft Review and Sustained Assessment**  
*Last revised September 24, 2012*

In June 2012, the NCADAC asked its Engagement and Communication Working Group to bring to the September 2012 meeting a recommended plan for the release of the Draft 2013 Report and for outreach by NCADAC and NCA staff during the public comment period. The following is a suggested proposal for activities during this public comment period, focusing on the draft review and the sustained assessment process.

1. **PUBLICATION.** The announcement of the release of the Draft 2013 Report will be via a Federal Register Notice. The draft itself and the website for collecting comments will be available through the USGCRP and NOAA websites.
  
2. **PURPOSE.** Outreach in association with the public comment period will allow the NCA to actively engage scientists and users of assessment information in conversations around the draft NCA report and sustained assessment process. The intent is not to engage the media, the intent is to engage members of the public interested in hearing about or participating in the sustained assessment process. The outreach activities will:
  - a. Familiarize people with the National Climate Assessment, including the process used to compile the synthesis report and the longer-term vision of a sustained assessment process
  - b. Frame the information about the draft report and findings, including the report findings, key messages, chapters, traceable accounts, and graphics
  - c. Explain the value of the sustained assessment process and the role of continuing engagement in the process
  - d. Introduce the official online commenting process and deadlines
  - e. Discuss the types of comments that will be of highest value for report authors and the NCADAC
  - f. Explain how comments on the report will be addressed in the final version of the 2013 report and used to inform the sustained assessment process
  - g. Emphasize the transparency of this process and our desire to receive comments on both the process and the product of the assessment
  - h. Hold public meetings in multiple regions of the United States
  - i. Engage individuals and communities that have not been a target of previous NCA activities, including outreach to specific sectors and in regions where ongoing participation is less likely without such outreach
  - j. Explain the intent of the sustained assessment to re-engage with scientific and user communities that have already been involved in technical input documents and chapter development
  - k. Discuss the ways in which engagement with a broad community has already informed and improved the Draft 2013 Report and sustained assessment process



- d. Example “frequently asked questions” (and answers) about the process and content of the report and the sustained assessment process
  - e. Where to refer questions or comments that the speaker cannot answer
  - f. NCA speakers (authors, staff, NCADAC members) will be given a briefing prior to public events on how to handle questions and answers.
6. INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS. The NCADAC Working Group on Engagement and Communication and NCA staff will develop informational materials to be used during the public comment period. These materials will be approved by the NCADAC Chairs and will include:
- a. The Federal Register Notice
  - b. Website content introducing the review document
  - c. Simple handouts about the NCA and the 2013 Draft Report
  - d. A standard slide show introducing the NCA, the 2013 report writing and review process, and the sustained assessment process
7. EVENTS. Several types of events will be planned during the public comment period; all will adhere to the guidance and use the materials described above. Types of events to be planned include:
- a. Professional society events: Oral or poster sessions and opportunities for providing NCA-related printed materials
  - b. “Town hall” events: Meetings held in various regions and open to the public, with targeted invitations to the communities described above in 2.h and 2.i.
    - i. Town halls would be organized primarily by USGCRP agencies and the INCA Working Group, with support from NCA staff; additional support may come from NCAnet partners, previous contributors to the NCA process (e.g., technical input authors), and other targeted communities
    - ii. In some cases, town halls may be part of an existing event hosted by professional societies, industry or municipal groups and associations, universities, NGOs, or USGCRP agencies or sponsored programs (e.g., RISAs); in such cases, the approach will be designed in partnership with local “host” organizations
    - iii. In general, the meetings would focus on the describing the sustained assessment process and providing an overview of draft findings for the region and one or a few sectors of interest; the planners would work with local networks to design meetings on topics that are likely to be viewed as relevant in the region
    - iv. Reports from such events would consist of a short overview of themes from the discussions, and would ultimately be posted on the NCA website and provided to the NCADAC and report authors; participants would be reminded that these reports do not constitute official comments on the report
  - c. Targeted in-person or webcast briefings: Primarily for federal agency staff, Congressional committee staff, or other small groups of expert reviewers