

# Webinar Summary Report: Tribal and Indigenous Communities National Chapter

## Introduction

The Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4), currently in development, will assess the science of climate change and its impacts across the United States. It will document climate change-related impacts and responses for various sectors and regions, with the goal of better informing public and private decision-making at all levels.

To ensure that the assessment is informed by and useful to stakeholders, engagement activities were planned for many of the 17 NCA4 National Chapters. These webinars provided stakeholders an opportunity to provide input to and exchange ideas with the chapter author team on key message formulation, share relevant resources, and give individual feedback on issues of importance to the chapter topic.

## Webinar Structure

National Chapter webinars were organized and hosted by the coordinating lead authors (CLA) and chapter leads (CL) with coordination from NCA4 staff from the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP). Invitations to the webinars were distributed by the hosts, author team, and USGRP staff to their stakeholder networks.

## Tribal and Indigenous Communities Engagement Webinar

On April 11, 2017, the NCA4 Tribal and Indigenous Communities chapter team held a public engagement webinar. The objectives of the webinar were to gather input from stakeholders, to help inform the writing and development of NCA4, and to raise awareness of the process and timeline for NCA4.

## Chapter Author Team

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## Overview and Topics of Discussion

Lesley Jantarasami, one of the chapter's Coordinating Lead Authors and Chapter Leads, gave an overview of USGCRP, past NCA and USGCRP products that addressed tribal and indigenous concerns, and the structure of NCA4. Jantarasami spoke about past and future outreach opportunities for NCA4 and its tribal components, and gave examples of the input that has been received from tribal mini-grants funded by BIA.

Rachael Novak, the other Coordinating Lead Author and Chapter Lead for the chapter, then presented on the draft NCA4 Tribal and Indigenous Communities chapter outline with a request for feedback. It was also noted that much of the chapter's content derives from the synthesis published as a US Forest Service General Technical Report, "Climate change and indigenous peoples: a synthesis of current impacts and experiences." The proposed outline of the chapter (subject to change as the chapter is developed) was presented as follows:

- Section 1: Overview of national "state of the sector" as it relates to climate change, including:
  - Building upon NCA3, using the Climate Science Special Report as scientific foundation
  - Stressors and trends
  - What's new since NCA3 and the Climate and Health Assessment
- Section 2: Regional roll-up to national level
  - Climate, Culture, Health
  - Water Resources
  - Economy and Livelihoods
  - Built Environment
  - Disaster Management
  - Relocation
- Section 3: National-scale Key Messages (KM)
  - KM #1: Tribal Livelihoods & Economies are at Risk
  - KM #2: Tribal Culture, Health & Well-Being are at Risk
  - KM #3: There are challenges and opportunities along the path to sustainable, culturally appropriate tribal adaptation

Rachael Novak then spoke about areas of cross-chapter collaboration, including tribal and/or indigenous

community-related climate impacts that could be addressed in regional chapters. Novak also spoke about the potential for inclusion of tribal and indigenous elements in the international chapter (e.g., transboundary issues), as well as key sectors that related to tribal and indigenous climate vulnerabilities, including the following grouped by topic area:

1. Issues related to economic and cultural dependencies on:
  - Agriculture
  - Water
  - Energy
  - Forests / Ecosystems
  - Coastal / Oceans & Marine Resources
2. Issues related to access and adaptive capacity (disparities):
  - Built Environment
  - Transportation
  - Health
3. Tribal responses to climate risk:
  - Adaptation

Novak then ended with some take-home messages, including that tribal issues will be integrated throughout NCA4, as will observations and projections of, as well as impacts from and adaptation to climate change as they relate to tribal and indigenous communities. She concluded with some ways to engage with the NCA process, including sessions at professional society meetings, the public comment period, and the website specifically designed for stakeholders to provide ideas, resources, case studies, etc. on an ongoing basis: <http://www.globalchange.gov/content/nca4-outline>.

Guiding questions were then presented to help frame the discussion:

- How can this chapter be of most use to you?
- Are there additional topics this author team should consider, keeping in mind the general scope of this chapter and page limitations?
- What additional information resources are important for the author team to be aware of?
- Thoughts about potential case study ideas?
  - Relocation issues in the Southeast and Alaska: emerging themes
  - Examples of how Traditional Knowledges have been applied for climate change adaptation

## Key Takeaways

Participants raised questions and provided comments regarding regional connections, research gaps and needs, and technical support. There was also an acknowledgement from stakeholders about the difficulty of addressing the regional and local nature of tribal and indigenous concerns in a national-scale chapter. Key takeaways from each of these are listed below.

Key topics to be included:

- Climate impacts on tribal community health

- Climate impacts on migration of tribal communities
- Research capacity of tribes as a vulnerability and opportunity

Questions raised:

- Who is the audience of this chapter?
- How can tribes be even more engaged in the NCA4 process, and how can this be built upon for the future?