



WEBINAR SERIES
SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT'S
UNIFIED SEA LEVEL RISE PROJECTION

Understanding, Applying, and Considering the Context of the Third Regional Update

SPEAKER LIST

WEBINAR 1

Southeast Florida's 2019 Unified Sea Level Projection: The Foundations



DR. SAMANTHA DANCHUK

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Dr. Samantha Danchuk is the Assistant Director of the Environmental Planning & Community Resilience Division of Broward County where she leads the implementation of the County's Climate Action Plan and the Energy and Sustainability program activities. This year, the Division has focused on continuing to develop science-based policy to support resilient redevelopment and increasing renewable energy installations. Most recently, the flood risk management study with the US Army Corps of Engineers was completed to develop a regional seawall and coastal flood barrier standard for minimum elevation. With expertise in coastal engineering, she serves as a technical resource for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, the four-county climate and adaptation strategy collaborative and chairs NOAA's Climate and Marine Resources Task Force. She served as staff liaison to develop the unified sea level rise projection update and provided support for the Resilient Redesign and Regional Climate Action Plan workshops. Dr. Danchuk earned a doctorate from Louisiana State University, a Master's from UC Berkeley and a bachelor's of science from Florida State University in the fields of environmental engineering and computational fluid dynamics (coastal modeling).

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DR. NANCY GASSMAN

*Asst. Public Works Director, Sustainability Division
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Dr. Nancy J. Gassman received her Ph.D. from the University of Miami researching a variety of issues impacting coastal ecosystems. Her public service started with Broward County, Florida, in 1995 working on integrated water resources planning. She transitioned to directing the county's environmental monitoring program, including fostering construction of a LEED-certified environmental chemistry laboratory. Her main focus from 2009-2013 was supporting the development and implementation of Broward County's Climate Change Action Plan and managing the County's Energy and Sustainability Program. She has been a major contributor to developing technical tools for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact including the Unified Sea Level Rise Projection for Southeast Florida. In January 2014, she joined the City of Fort Lauderdale. As the Assistant Public Works Director for Sustainability, she provides program oversight for Fleet Services; Solid Waste and Recycling; Stormwater Operations; Environmental and Regulatory Affairs; and Sustainability and Climate Resilience. In her current role, she is implementing sustainability, climate mitigation and adaptation strategies within government operations and throughout the City. She regularly presents on the City's integration of sustainability and resiliency into the organizational culture, infrastructure master plans, ordinances and policies.



DR. ROBERT KOPP

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Dr. Robert Kopp is a climate scientist who serves at Rutgers University as Director of the Rutgers Institute of Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences and a Professor in the Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences. His research focuses on past and future sea-level change, on the interactions between physical climate change and the economy, and on the use of climate risk information in decision making. He is an author of the Fourth National Climate Assessment and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's forthcoming Sixth Assessment Report, as well as a director of the Climate Impact Lab. He is a fellow of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and a recipient of AGU's James B. Macelwane and William Gilbert Medals and the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA)'s Sir Nicholas Shackleton Medal.



DR. JAYANTHA OBEYSEKERA

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Dr. Jayantha Obeysekera is a Research Professor and Director of the Sea Level Solutions Center at Florida International University. Previously, Dr. Obeysekera served as a member of the federal advisory committee which directed the development of the National Climate Assessment in 2014. He was also a co-author of the sea level rise projections report published by NOAA for the National Climate Assessment and served as a member of the Coastal Assessment Regional Scenario Working Group associated with the Department of Defense in the United States. Dr. Obeysekera has published over 55 research articles in numerous peer-reviewed journals and is a recipient of the 2015 Norman Medal of the American Society of Civil Engineers for a technical paper that makes a definitive contribution in engineering. Dr. Obeysekera holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from University of Sri Lanka, a master's from University of Roorkee, India, and a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University with specialization in water resources.

WEBINAR 2

Applying the 2019 Southeast Florida Unified Sea Level Projection: Best Practices & Successful Implementation



KATELYN CUCINOTTA

*Environmental Analyst, Office of Resilience
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Katelyn Cucinotta is an analyst for Palm Beach County's Office of Resilience with a background in coastal conservation, wildlife policy, renewable energy, and environmental science. Throughout her studies, Katelyn focused on anthropogenic impacts on the marine environment, climate change, and how to effectively communicate scientific concepts. After working for the federal government, non-profits, academia, and the corporate sector, Katelyn is thrilled to be putting her knowledge and passion to work in the County she calls home. For the Office of Resilience, Katelyn focuses on coastal adaptation, developing a countywide Resilience Action Plan, and geospatial studies. Katelyn holds a bachelor's of science in Environmental Science and Policy with a minor in Geospatial Science from the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and a master's of art in Marine and Coastal Studies from Nova Southeastern University.



RHONDA HAAG

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Rhonda Haag is the Sustainability Director and acts as the Chief Resilience Officer for Monroe County, located in the fabulous Florida Keys. She has been with the County for nine years and leads the County's resiliency and sustainability efforts to help prepare the County and its coastal communities for the effects of sea level rise in what is one of the most vulnerable regions in the country. To assist in these efforts, Ms. Haag serves as an active member of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Steering Committee. She also leads the County's environmental canal restoration program, restoring the numerous canals in the Keys that do not meet State water quality standards. She also leads the county's marine debris removal efforts for canals that have been affected by hurricanes. She serves as advisor to the Florida Keys National

Marine Sanctuary Canal Advisory Subcommittee. Ms. Haag's experience includes previous service with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida Water Management District, where she served in several roles including Service Center Director, Everglades Outreach Manager, and Contracts Manager. Ms. Haag is committed to improving the marine environment in the Keys, providing for the future livability of residents in these vulnerable island communities and ensuring the resilience efforts of the County continue to remain in the forefront and ahead of the cumulative effects of climate change.



DR. MARJOLIJN HAASNOOT

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Dr. Marjolijn Haasnoot is an environmental scientist specializing in water management, climate adaptation, integrated assessment modeling and decision-making under deep uncertainty. Over the past 20 years she's worked on research and consultancy projects assessing impacts of climate change, sea level rise, socio-economic developments and alternative management options to develop robust and adaptive plans. She has worked on projects related to water management and planning in the USA, New Zealand, UK, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania, and Russia. She developed the dynamic adaptive policy pathways method to support decision making uncertain change. Marjolijn was one of the founders of the Society for Decision Making under Deep Uncertainty. Marjolijn is a lead author for Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC (chapters Europe and Cities and settlements by the sea).



ALISON HIGGINS

Sustainability Coordinator
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Alison Higgins is a Sustainability Coordinator with the City of Key West, a role she's held for eight year. Prior to this, she spent 14 years at the Nature Conservancy. From biodiesel to solar to greywater to wet floodproofing, Alison gets to help keep her community above the high water line for as long as possible. She holds a master's in Environment and Community from Antioch.



DR. JENNIFER JURADO

*Chief Resilience Officer and Division Director, Environmental Planning and
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Dr. Jennifer Jurado is Broward County’s Chief Resilience Officer and Director of the Environmental Planning and Community Resilience Division where she oversees county-wide climate resiliency initiatives, water resource policy and planning, environmental monitoring, shoreline protection, and marine resources programs. She has been a key figure in the advancement of multijurisdictional initiatives with a focus on sustainable water resource management, sea level rise adaptation planning, and progressive policy initiatives. Today, her efforts are largely focused on holistic adaptation through planning, regulation, and infrastructure retrofit. Dr. Jurado plays a lead role in the organization and advancement of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, a four-county collaboration focused on regional climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, and co-leads the Compact’s water resources and economic resilience work groups. She currently serves on the board of directors for the American Society of Adaptation Professionals and the American Geophysical Union’s Thriving Earth Exchange. Dr. Jurado is a graduate of the University of Miami, with a bachelor’s of science in Marine Science and Biology, and a Ph.D. in Marine Biology and Fisheries.



AMY KNOWLES

*Chief Resilience Officer
City of Miami Beach*
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Amy Knowles joined the City of Miami Beach in January of 2016. As the Chief Resilience Officer, Amy leads strategic and resilience planning and works across city departments and stakeholders. Her resilience planning includes Resilient305, a unique resilience strategy for Greater Miami and the Beaches, and the Miami Beach Strategic Plan through the Lens of Resilience, both unanimously adopted by the City of Miami Beach in 2019. Recent innovative projects include the Urban Land Institute Panel on Stormwater Management and Climate Adaptation, the Business Case Analysis of the Stormwater Program, and working with the City’s Floodplain Manager on the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System. Amy participates in work of the Southeast Florida Climate Compact, and countywide planning.

Ms. Knowles holds a master's of business administration from the University of Miami and a bachelor's of art in Environmental Studies from Binghamton University in New York. Ms. Knowles is a graduate of Leadership ICMA, the University of Virginia Senior Executive Institute, and the Harvard Kennedy School's executive program.



AKINTUNDE OWOSINA, P.E.

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Akintunde Owosina, P.E is the chief of the Hydrology and Hydraulics Bureau at the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). He is a civil and environmental engineer by training with over 30 years of international and local, private sector and government experience in water resources and numerical modeling. He oversees a program with over 80 engineers and scientists responsible for data acquisition and quality control, numerical modeling, hydraulics and hydrology analyses in support of the Districts mission. He has guided technical teams responsible for evaluating several key initiatives ranging from Everglades Restorations, regional water supply planning, development of operating plans and strategies for flood control infrastructure and assessing the effects of sea level rise on agency assets and mission. He is an alumnus of the University of Lagos, Nigeria and Utah State University, and is a registered professional engineer in the state of Florida.



ELIZABETH WHEATON

Director, Environment and Sustainability Department

City of Miami Beach

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Elizabeth Wheaton has been working with the City of Miami Beach since 2008. Over the last ten years, she has served in the Public Works Department, Building Department, and the Office of the Mayor and Commission. In 2015, the Environment & Sustainability Department was created and Elizabeth was appointed as the Director. The Environment & Sustainability Department focuses on climate change mitigation and adaptation through the lens of sustainability, environmental resources management, and urban forestry. In 2014, Elizabeth was selected to participate in The Miami Foundation’s Class VIII Miami Fellows Program, a prestigious leadership program focused on community engagement and impact. Most recently, Elizabeth was selected to participate in the Harvard Business School’s Young American Leader’s program. Elizabeth graduated from the University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science with a master’s in Marine Affairs and Policy and now serves on the RSMAS Alumni Board.

WEBINAR 3

Southeast Florida's 2019 Unified Sea Level Projection: Considering the Current Context



YOCA ARDITI-ROCHA

Executive Director

The CLEO Institute

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Yoca Arditi-Rocha is the Executive Director of the CLEO Institute where she works to drive climate action through community engagement and education. Before joining CLEO, she was the founder and executive director of No Planeta B, a consultancy with an advocacy core, which specialized in carbon footprint inventories, climate action planning, sustainable events, climate literacy and corporate environmental capacity training in Latin America. She has participated in past United Nations climate negotiation conference of parties and has served as the sustainability advisor for several schools, colleges, and organizations in the region. Yoca is passionate about solving the climate crisis and is considered an influencer in this field frequently invited as a keynote speaker to a variety of forums from conferences, to high level meetings, to radio and TV networks like NPR, Telemundo, NBC6, ABC, and others. Yoca recently received the “Legendary Women in Sustainability Award” by the Ford Motor Company in 2019. An international sustainability professional with over 15 years of experience, Arditi-Rocha holds a degree in corporate sustainability from the Institute of Global Sustainability at the University of Vermont and a master's degree in Liberal Arts from Harvard University in Sustainability. She is an Al Gore trained Climate Change presenter, an active member of the International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP), a mentor for new trainees at the Climate Reality Project, and a US Green Building Council certified LEED-Green Associate.



DR. FRANCES COLÓN

President

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Dr. Frances Colón is the former Deputy Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State at the U.S. State Department. As a science diplomat in Washington D.C. from 2006 - 2017, Dr. Colón promoted integration of science and technology into foreign policy dialogues, global advancement of women in science, and coordinated climate change policy for President Obama’s Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas. Dr. Colón earned her Ph.D. in Neuroscience in 2004 from Brandeis University and her B.S. in Biology in 1997 from the University of Puerto Rico. She currently specializes in advising on science policy and evidence-based decision-making for local and foreign governments. As an Open Society Foundations 2019 Leadership in Government Fellow, Dr. Colón worked to catalyze policy action to counter the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities in Florida. Dr. Colón is a 2020 Yale Public Voices on the Climate Crisis Fellow, and a member of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, New Voices Project, the Roundtable on Science and Technology for Sustainability, and the Global Science Diplomacy Roundtable.



SASHA FORBES, AICP

Director of Community Collaboration and Policy, Healthy People & Thriving Communities

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Sasha Forbes is the Director of Community Collaboration and Policy, Healthy people & Thriving Communities at the Natural Resources Defense Council. She supports people and community-centered development with equity, justice and the environment at heart. She collaborates with national and community partners on issues such as affordable housing and community control, especially in the face of displacement and gentrification, equitable transit and equitable park-oriented development, and collaborative cross-sector engagement. Sasha works on the Strong, Prosperous and Resilient Communities Challenge ([SPARCC](#)), a national initiative focused on influencing policies, practices and investments that center racial equity, build a culture of health, address current environmental challenges and prepare for a changing climate. Sasha holds a master’s degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Florida. She is based in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.



WHITNEY GRAY

*Administrator, Florida Resilient Coastlines Program
Florida Department of Environmental Protection*

Whitney Gray currently serves as the Administrator of the Florida Resilient Coastlines Program in the Florida Coastal Office of the Department of the Environment, where she works to bring sea level rise resilience planning to the forefront of the department’s activity for the long-term benefit of the people and ecosystems of Florida. She first worked on climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning with the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. Previously, Whitney served as Sea Level Rise Coordinator for both the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Sea Grant, specializing in the effects of sea level rise on coastal ecosystems. She coordinated an internal climate change seminar series, “Florida Adapts,” and served as a subject matter expert on species action plans during the Imperiled Species Management Planning process. Whitney holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Florida, where she studied zoology and systems ecology.



KATHERINE HAGEMANN

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Katherine Hagemann is the Resilience Program Manager for Adaptation within the Office of Resilience at Miami-Dade County. Her work focuses primarily on climate change and adaptation to sea level rise. Before moving to Miami she also worked on coastal climate adaptation during the post-Sandy Rebuild by Design and National Disaster Resilience competitions. She earned her master’s of Environmental Science from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Science where she studied how cities can use a hybrid of grey and green infrastructure to adapt to rising sea levels and reduce flood risks.



DR. SUSANNE MOSER

Director and Principal Researcher
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Dr. Susanne C. Moser is a geographer who works nationally and internationally as an independent scholar and consultant from a base in western Massachusetts. Her work with government agencies, non-profits, foundations, and other researchers and consultants focuses on adaptation to climate change, science-policy interactions, effective climate change communication, and psycho-social resilience in the face of the traumatic and transformative challenges associated with climate change. Susi is the editor of two award-winning edited volumes, one on successful adaptation to climate change; the other on how to communicate climate change. She is a prolific writer, an inspiring speaker and has served on scientific advisory boards for Future Earth, the International Science Council, the US National Research Council and has contributed to the IPCC and US national climate assessments. She holds a Ph.D. from Clark University.



JIM MURLEY

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James F. Murley was appointed Chief Resilience Officer for Miami-Dade County by Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez in November 2015. Miami-Dade County, in partnership with the Cities of Miami Beach and Miami, joined the international 100 Resilient Cities network in May 2016. Jim previously served as Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs under Governor LawtonChiles and was appointed Chair of the Florida Energy and Climate Commission by Governor Charlie Crist. Additionally, he served as Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Florida, spent over 10 years with Florida Atlantic University overseeing research on urban and environmental issues, and served as Executive Director of the South Florida Regional Planning Council. Jim is a founding member of the American Society for Adaptation Professionals and Resiliency Florida, a Board member of The Florida Ocean Alliance and the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association. He is also a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.