

**NCSE's 13th National Conference on Disasters and Environment:
Science, Preparedness and Resilience**
Post Conference Follow-up Activities and Dissemination

Final Report

Submitted by the National Council for Science and the Environment
to the US Department of Energy

The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) received \$15,000 from the US Department of Energy to support post-conference activities of the 13th National Conference on the theme of Disasters and the Environment: Science, Preparedness and Resilience, held on January 15-17, 2013 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC. Over 1,000 participants from the scientific, emergency response, policy, conservation, and business communities, as well as federal and local government officials, and international entities attended the event.

The conference developed actionable outcomes that constructively advance the science behind decision-making on environmental disasters, with an intended result of more prepared and resilient communities in light of a changing climate.

Disasters and Environment topic was addressed through six organizing themes: Cascading Disasters; Intersection of the Built and Natural Environments; Disasters as Mechanisms of Ecosystem Change; Rethinking Recovery and Expanding the Vision of Mitigation; Human Behavior and its Consequences; and "No Regrets" Resilience. The program featured eight plenary sessions, 24 symposia and 23 breakout workshops and addressed pivotal issues surrounding disasters and environment including lifeline services, the energy, climate, hazard nexus, grid collapse, community vulnerability, and natural resource management. Sessions, symposia and workshops were conducted by over 200 distinguished thought leaders, scientists, government officials, policy experts and international speakers throughout the three day event.

Following the conference, NCSE prepared a set of recommendations and results from the workshops and disseminated the results to universities, organizations and agencies, the business community. NCSE's national dissemination involved organized several targeted trips and meetings to disseminate significant findings to key stakeholder groups.

The Conference Program Summary Agenda

Tuesday, January 15, 2013	
Opening Keynote Addresses: Margareta Wahlström , Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations William Craig Fugate , Administrator, FEMA	
Plenary 1: Japan 2011: Cascading Disasters Moderator: Jon Hamilton , Correspondent, Science Desk, NPR	

• Tim Mousseau, Professor of Biological Sciences, University of South Carolina • Yoshimi Inaba, Chairman, Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. • Ichiro Fujisaki, Ambassador of Japan to the United States • Admiral Robert Willard (USN, Ret.), President and CEO, Institute of Nuclear Power Operations
Plenary 2: The Gulf Coast: Diverse Converging Issues Moderator: Admiral Thad Allen (USCG, Ret.), Senior VP, Booz Allen Hamilton • Marcia McNutt, Director, US Geological Survey • Bill Walker, Gulf of Mexico Alliance Management Team; Executive Director, Mississippi Dept. of Marine Resources • Bernard Goldstein, Chair, Coordinating Committee, Gulf Region Health Outreach Program • Nancy Rabalais, Director, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium
Plenary 3: Aridity and Drought and their Consequences Moderator: Veronica Johnson, News4 Meteorologist, NBC Washington • Margaret Hiza Redsteer, Research Scientist, US Geological Survey • Roger Pulwarty, Director, National Integrated Drought Information System, NOAA • Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD • Donald Wilhite, Professor of Applied Climate Science, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Lunch
Symposia A 1 International Roles in Environmental Emergencies 2 Tools to Identify Vulnerability (1) 3 Inundation Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 4 Preventing Catastrophic Losses to the Cascading Effects of Forest Fire 5 Lifeline Services at the Interface of the Built and Natural Environment 6 Ecosystem Impacts from Nuclear Energy: Lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima 7 Building a New Framework for Understanding and Mitigating Disaster Impacts on Ecosystems 8 Science and Strengthening Community Resiliency 9 Climate Change, Communities, and Risk: Research from the U.S. Global Change Research Program and National Climate Assessment 10 Applying Models of Human Behavior and Memory in Disasters Across Space and Time 11 Community-Led Responses and Recovery to Cascading Disasters Along the Gulf Coast 12 Florida: A Statewide Case Study of Alternative Approaches to Adaptation and Recovery
Symposia B 13 Tools to Identify Vulnerability (2) 14 Wildland Fire in a Changing Climate 15 Military Bases and their Communities 16 Creating Resilient Coastal Cities 17 Climate, Environment, and Readiness: Intersection of the Built and Natural Environment 18 Mapping a Path to Resilience: The Intersection of Environmental Disasters, Ecosystem Services,

and Security
19 The Arctic: Rapidly Changing Climate and Accident Potential
20 Learning from Disasters: Environmental Disasters as Teachable Moments
21 Informing Disaster Resilience Policy
22 Women and Climate Change Disaster Resilience: Local to Global Ecological Impacts and Strategies
23 No Regrets Resilience along the Gulf Coast
24 Unmeasured Consequences of Major Natural Disasters and Conflict
Keynote Address : Amanda Ripley , author of <i>The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes</i>
Wednesday, January 16, 2013
Opening Keynote Addresses: Mark Tercek , President and CEO, The Nature Conservancy and Jane Lubchenco , Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator, NOAA
Plenary 4: Feedbacks: Environmental Changes Driving Environmental Disasters Moderator: Heidi Cullen , Chief Climatologist, Climate Central • James Murley, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Planning Council • Chris Shore, Director, Natural Environment and Climate Issues, World Vision International • Kristie Ebi, Consulting Professor, Department of Medicine, Stanford University • Tom Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
Plenary 5: The "Human Factor" in Environmental Disasters Moderator: Andrew Revkin , Journalist and Senior Fellow for Environmental Understanding, Pace University • Kathleen Tierney, Director, Natural Hazards Research Institute, University of Colorado • Gerald Galloway, Research of Engineering, University of MD, College Park • David Kaufman, Director of Policy and Program Analysis, FEMA • Joe Ruiz, Humanitarian Relief Program Manager, UPS
Plenary 6: Environmental Disasters Driving Environmental Changes Moderator: Juliet Eilperin , National Environmental Reporter, The Washington Post • Gary Machlis, Science Advisor to the Director, National Park Service • Kathryn Sullivan, Deputy Administrator and Chief Scientist, NOAA • Amy Luers, Director, Climate Change, Skoll Global Threats Fund
Lunch
Breakout Workshops
John H. Chafee Memorial Lecture : James Lee Witt , Founder and Chairman, Witt Associates Reception
Thursday, January 17, 2013
Opening Keynote Address: Rowan Douglas , Chairman, Willis Research Network
Plenary 7: Building Resilient Communities

Moderator: Monica Brady-Myerov, Reporter, NPR • Susan Cutter, Director, Hazards & Vulnerability Research Institute, University of South Carolina • Nancy Kete, Managing Director, the Rockefeller Foundation • Joseph Fiksel, Executive Director, Center for Resilience, The Ohio State University • Nancy Kete, Managing Director, The Rockefeller Foundation • Gus Felix, , Global Head of Operational Risk Management, Citigroup
Plenary 8: No Regrets Resilience: Saving Money, Saving Lives Moderator: Frank Sesno, Director, School of Media and Public Affairs, The George Washington University • Russ Paulsen, Executive Director of Community Preparedness, American Red Cross • Howard Kunreuther, Professor, the Wharton School; Co-Director, Risk Management and Decision Processes Center, University of Pennsylvania • Ellis Stanley, Vice President, Western Emergency Management Services, Dewberry • Marget Arnold, Senior Specialist, The World Bank
Keynote Addresses: Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Co-Chair of the Congressional Hazards Caucus, and Nancy Lindborg, Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, USAID
Lunch, Student Mentoring Tables Organized
Conference Adjourns

Conference Impact and Dissemination Results

NCSE's conferences are outcome-oriented and deliberate in guiding the current state of knowledge well beyond the three-day event. The Disasters and Environment Conference presented new ideas, technologies, approaches, management practices and policies to address forecasting, preparing for, and responding to disasters in a changing climate. The conference successfully developed targeted and actionable science-based recommendations on each of the six theme issue areas, and catalyzed partnerships among organizations to encourage further dialogue and the development of creative solutions to mitigating disasters. The ultimate objective was to advance research, policy, science and management with the goal of safer and more resilient communities.

Following the conference, NCSE in coordination with the conference session leaders and its leadership group, NCSE released a list of recommendations for public dissemination. The intent of these outcomes was to share and circulate conference discussions with key stakeholder groups both domestically and internationally, including federal agencies, universities, businesses, scientific organizations and civil society groups. A complete list of recommendations can be found in attachment on the NCSE website.

Over the course of 2013, NCSE conducted numerous briefings and meetings with key stakeholder to disseminate conference findings. These included, but were not limited to:

Presentation of conference results at the Council of Environmental Deans and Directors (CEDD) conference in Pittsburgh, PA (June 17-19, 2013). Participants represented over 100 universities and colleges.

Presentation of conference results during meetings/sessions at the University of San Francisco, to the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, De Anza College, Skoll Global Threats Fund, ICLEI USA, and to the University of California at Berkeley (July 10-12, 2013)

Presentation of conference results at Yale University (August 9, 2013)

Presentation of conference results at Boston University (August 13, 2013)

Presentation of conference results during a meeting convened at Prairie State College, Illinois for six community colleges and at the University of Illinois, Chicago (September 25, 2013)

Presentation of conference results during meetings/sessions at Loyola Marymount University, University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, Irvine, and Pasadena City College (September 30 – October 2, 2013)

Presentation of conference results during meetings/sessions at Delaware State University, Temple University, Drexel University, University of Pennsylvania, Norwalk Community College, December 4-5, 2013 and a keynote presentation at the **Bridgewater State University** hosting the 12th Annual Undergraduate Symposium on Sustainability and the Environment in Bridgewater, MA on December 6, 2014.

Conference Website as an On-going Resource

After the event, NCSE continues to maintain a comprehensive and interactive conference website, where the public can access event resources including in-depth interviews with speakers, videos, reports, articles and additional materials related to the topic of disasters and environment. These resources may be found at www.disastersandenvironment.org.

Additional Notes

There were no changes in dissemination activities or allocation of funding of conference support from NCSE's original proposal to the US Department of Energy.