

# RISA Meeting Debrief



RISA Monthly Call  
November 7, 2019



## Moving towards a mature RISA Network



# Strengthening collaborations across the RISA Network to address key topic areas



# The Big Takeaways

1. **Rise to the challenge** Climate Impacts are expanding; localities are increasingly looking to build resilience.
2. **Keep What Works** Bottom-up, combined research, engagement, program management, evaluation model of RISA is a good one - stick with it.
  - a. Added transaction costs and competition among teams if funding model becomes too reliant on multiple sources of funding.
  - b. Targeted network funding calls could increase diversity of expertise, greater efficiency in testing methodologies, and potentially more focus to priority themes/areas. Process for calls important.
  - c. Opportunities as well as challenges of expanding RISA with additional funding, including around shaping priorities, equity considerations, and potential for increased capacity
3. **Be the Change** Considerations of equity, socioeconomic outcomes, and catalyzing transformational change to respond to climate change are becoming more important in our work, and urgent across the nation. The way we integrate these concerns and balance competing demands deserves attention.
  - a. Interest in building capacity within the network for work with communities/partners where issues of equity are forefront (e.g. trainings, professional development opportunities on equity for RISA community)?
4. **Strengthen Collaboration** Need to facilitate more opportunities for sharing and peer learning across the Network. As discussed during the meeting, we could expand collaboration in the areas of: evaluation, adaptation planning, extreme events, and tools & methods of engagement with less capacity partners.
5. **Cultivate Community and Identity** Feeling part of a network and sharing information/experience is important
6. **Build the Base** Need to cultivate external constituencies that can help communicate the value of RISA (e.g. water/flooding management, civil engineering, emergency management, native communities).
7. **Evaluate & Improve** Understanding what is working and not working to inform adaptation progress; evaluating RISA approaches as well as adaptation actions/policies being taken in the regions



## Moving towards a mature RISA Network

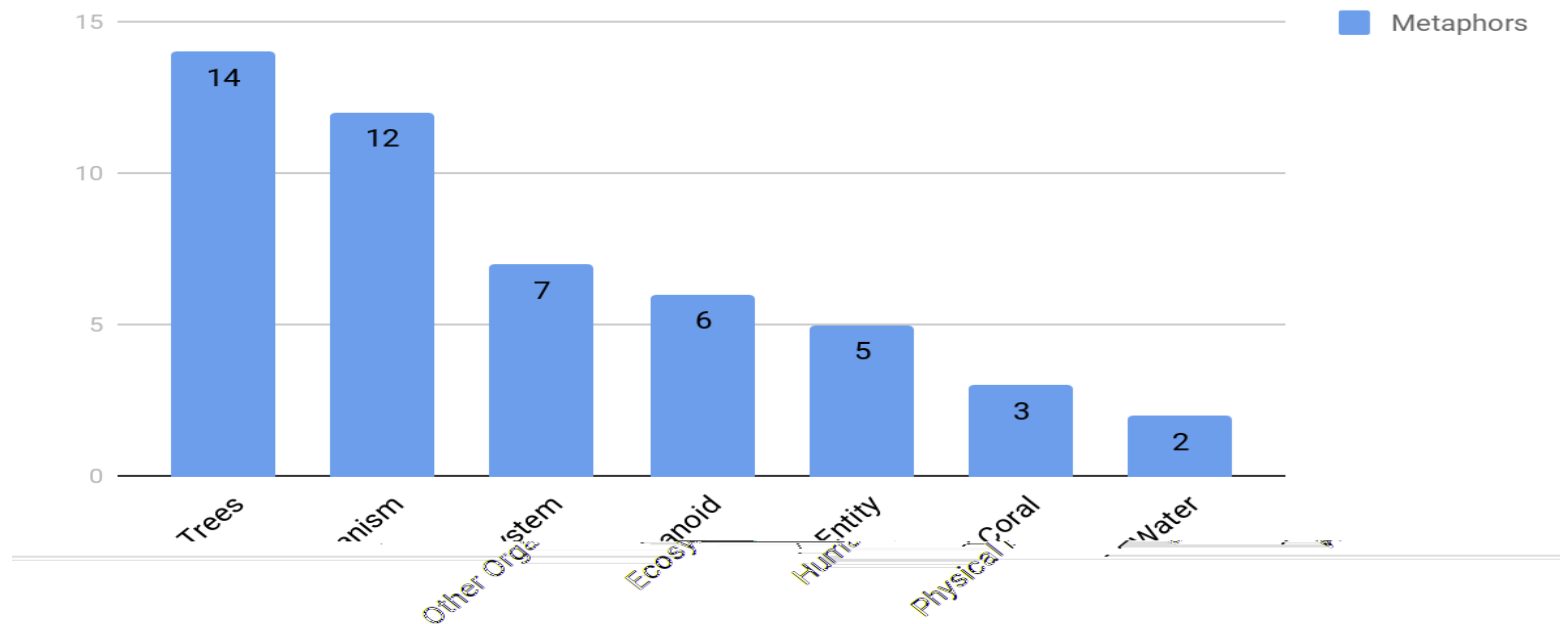


# What does a mature RISA Network look like?

What natural system might the RISA Network use to think about its future self?

- Connected strength of root systems
- Deep legacy of seeds, rivers, and immortal landscapes
- Slow, solid investment of coral, soils, and higher education
- Balance of thriving ecosystems
- Group adaptability of wolves and coyotes

RISA Metaphors



# What is Success?

Success is:

- ...meeting demand
- ...meeting the *need* (even when it's not requested)
- ...a mainstreamed RISA, training professionals and integrated into data production.
- ...a nimble, “research-plus” network that responds to events and opportunities, shares lessons, and tests methodologies across regions.
- ...expanding policy support to stakeholders.
- ...planned obsolescence.
- ...recognition from governors, policy leaders, etc. that RISA is a resource.
- ...RISA as an expert convener creating communities of practice and breaking down silos.
- ...when RISA stakeholders are self-sufficient and go on to teach others.
- ...when RISA stakeholders show greater sophistication in their questions.

# Strengthening collaborations across the RISA Network to address key topic areas





# A Place to Start: Collaboration Ideas

RISA Meeting Index Cards: Cross-RISA Ideas		
Number on Card	Description	Total Score
1	Extreme rainfall - spatial distribution (physical) and social & economic impacts - case studies (depth) - construct a database of events and impacts (breadth)	25
2	Capacity building for stakeholder groups... to expand the pool of RISA-associated EXPERTS! & use tried a tested capacity-building methodology	23
3	Transform the Penn State currently-funded NSF week-long summer school to a RISA wide summer school for students, post-docs, and other researchers and analysts and new to the RISA network. The summer school would build cohesion, continuity, and camaraderie among the RISA teams	22
4	Research on and communication of transferable lessons from working at the policy-science nexus (e.g., what works/doesn't work)	21
5	Economic analysis - of adaptation - of RSA's work	20
6	Integrating correlated extremes into Climate risk assessment	19
7	Changing Prep Extremes and Frequent Urban Flooding	19
8	Assessing success and failure of adaptation/resilience initiative within or regions	19

# Common Themes: Collaboration Ideas

- Look at and across mid-sized communities (e.g., testing intervention and tools for adaptation; how cities are choosing to build resilience);
- The economics of adaptation, RISA work and climate change
- Sharing and testing of tools across the network;
- Examining extreme rainfall and societal impacts (e.g., implications for urban flooding and stormwater management; equity issues arising from the impacts of extremes)
- Adaptation planning across regions (i.e., similarities and differences, sharing tools, successes and failures, indicators, costs)
- Extreme events (e.g., cascading events, cumulative events, concurrent events across regions, protocols for risk analysis and outreach, socioeconomic and physical impacts)
- Capacity building

# Adaptation Progress - Trends

## **Who is providing information to decision makers?**

- Increasing number of players such as hubs, state resilience offices, ACCO etc...
- Organizations hiring own expertise
- Great interest in RISAs who can serve as NOAA's "eyes on the ground"

## **How are stakeholder groups shifting or changing?**

- Number of requests and their sophistication has increased, many from private sector
- Demand shifting from larger cities to smaller municipalities, community groups, tribal entities
- More state and local organization involvement
- More boundary organizations that can serve as efficient entry points for RISA to reach others
- More engagement with media and politicians

## **How are RISAs interacting with new players?**

- More use of social media
- Trainings with continuing education credits
- Impacts to quality standards: As requests increase, information distributed increases, sometimes beyond control of RISA source
- Increasing demand being met by increase in private consultants, can provide information more quickly. Large variability/ diversity in this growing sector.
- Visibility and reputation of RISA has increased, within and outside of NOAA
- Focus on innovation and dynamic element that responds to changing societal needs
- Notion of need for a critical voice (not limited to just innovative voice)
- Need for metrics/ evaluation of adaptive success

# Advancing Knowledge of Extreme Events

## Potential Future Collaborations / RISA Role

- Sum is greater than parts. Room for collaborations and sharing expertise across regions.
- Understanding individual RISA capabilities valuable and collaborations great tool for this (within and across RISAs).
- If budgets limited, should RISAs figure out top priorities and work with state agencies to implement?
- RISA has role in discussing / explaining weather events to public
- Towards holistic, multidisciplinary approach to systems modelling and give insight into what impacts interdependent systems can create in multiple scenarios
- Prepare for dealing with correlated events
- Look at compound flooding, where of interest
- Catalogue most vulnerable places?

## Challenges: Communication and Working with Stakeholders

- Need to represent interdependent systems, discuss connections in context
- Communicating - e.g. uncertainty, new extreme events, timescales, unprecedented events, higher thresholds
- Unreceptive stakeholders: busy responding to disasters, perceive information as negative to livelihoods, regulators need certainty, mismatch of disciplines BUT relationships can help

# Preparing for Social Transitions: Climate Migration

**Current Status Migration:** inequitable, inconsistent, post disaster, expensive

**Goal for Migration:** Mutual Agreement = gov't helps, communities come together

Will affect all of U.S., short and long term impacts. Great place to engage as a network of regions

## Potential Collaborations

- Change the perspective on “retreat,” it is not a failure
- Understand cost/benefits
- Build systems to withstand more extremes
- Share information including case studies, adaptation strategies, and experiences
- How can our work help achieve the types of novel funding needed to stay in place, adapt, or relocate?

## What would it take besides money/resources?

- Climate literacy
- Community driven

## Challenges/Needs Discussed

- Need more data
- Inadequate government response

# RISA Network

## Best Methods encouraging cross RISA collaboration

- **Sustained assessment specialists** to cross-collaborate with different RISAs.
- **Developing databases, report and activities** to synthesize the information across RISA.
- Building both community and next generation by expanding knowledge beyond the organization in form of **RISA summer schools**.
- A way to **gather questions** that everyone has and **identify interested researchers** to collaborate and move the research across RISAs.
- **Identifying key themes** for a year, focus on just 3 things. Could conduct a poll.

# The Value of the RISA model and Investing in Resilience

Two main themes:

- (1) Valuing a network of boundary work.
- (2) Informing decisions regarding on resilience/adaptation investments that require an understanding of costs, benefits, and risk.

Role for RISA may include:

- 1) How to evaluate credibly and guidance on how to do CBA well. One piece of the value of the RISA network could build on individual RISA-level evaluations:
  - a) Does evidence from different contexts in which different RISAs operate help to design more effective approaches? How, for whom, under what conditions?
- 2) RISA PIs interested in doing more on benefit and cost assessment of adaptation policies. Valuations of resilience and adaptation could be an important area for the RISA network to do collective methodological development.
- 3) Important to talk about how to value trade-offs with non-valued market goods (culture, etc.). This combines economics with anthropological and other social science methods. There is room for guidance and work in this area.