



Executive Summary

To: Bob Vitas, City Manager

From: Don Craig, Alison Higgins

Date: November 5, 2012

Re: Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact partnership

ACTION ITEM

To endorse the Mayors Climate Action Pledge, Affirm support for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, Agree to consider implementing the Regional Climate Action Plan, and urging all mayors within Monroe County limits to support the Mayors' Climate Action Pledge.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact was first executed by Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach Counties in January 2010 to coordinate mitigation and adaptation activities across county lines. The Compact represents a new form of regional climate governance designed to allow local governments to set the agenda for adaptation while providing an efficient means for state and federal agencies to engage with technical assistance and support.

The Compact called for the Counties to work cooperatively to:

- Develop annual Legislative Programs and jointly advocate for state and federal policies and funding;
- Dedicate staff time and resources to create a Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan to include mitigation and adaptation strategies; and
- Meet annually in Regional Climate Summits to mark progress and identify emerging issues.
- The Compact was formalized following the 2009 Southeast Florida Climate Leadership Summit, when elected officials came together to discuss challenges and strategies for responding to the impacts of climate change. The Compact outlines an on-going collaborative effort among the Compact Counties to foster sustainability and climate resilience at a regional scale.

In 2010 the Compact partners convened climate experts to complete the 2011 white paper "[Unified Sea Level Rise Projection for Southeast Florida](#)", which laid out a planning horizon of 3-7 inches by 2030 and 9-24" by 2060.

In 2011, GIS specialists from across the four counties convened to normalize their data and produce the 2012 analysis of the [Vulnerability of Southeast Florida to Sea Level Rise](#).

In 2011, Compact Partners completed a [Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory](#) for the four county region to document a baseline for years 2005-2009.

In 2012, the compact counties, municipal partners and community stakeholders worked together and completed a [Regional Climate Action Plan](#) and [Implementation Guide](#), highlighting actions that would be most successful for all if we worked on it together. The 110 action items detailed in the plan's seven goal areas are to be accomplished over the next five years with annual reports to mark progress.

PURPOSE & JUSTIFICATION

All of the above documents have been used to make the case at the State and Federal level that our region is in need of technical and monetary assistance to meet the challenges that are at our doorstep. The strength of their work is eclipsed only by our population, representing 5.6 million residents, exceeding the population of 30 states and representing 30 percent of Florida's population and Gross Domestic Product.

Already this partnership has led in policy creation, including the recognition of [Adaptation Action Areas](#). In May, the Florida Legislature adopted the Community Planning Act, HB 720, which provides for a definition of Adaptation Action Areas. Also in May, the concept of Adaptation Action planning moved to the federal level, as members of Congress signed onto a letter supporting the definition of Adaptation Action Area in federal law and requesting funds to study, define and designate several Adaptation Action Areas. Further concerted actions can be found in the 2011 [Policy and Advocacy Implementation Report](#).

The partnership has also led to increased in-kind technical support from groups such as the US Army Corps, South Florida Water Management District, and NOAA, as well as funding from Kreske Foundation and HUD.

Alison Higgins, the City's Sustainability Coordinator has been involved with the group from its inception due to her role with Green Living & Energy Education. Because of her history with the group, the City of Key West was asked to be the official City Partner for Monroe County (each County gets to bring only one City partner to the board).

An official partnership gives the City many opportunities that it would otherwise not be afforded. The actual language of the Compact and Regional Climate Action Plan does not lock the City into anything it cannot afford or does not want to participate in.

OPTIONS

1. The City Commission can accept all four of the proposed actions:
 - A. Endorse the Mayors Climate Action Pledge,
 - B. Affirm support for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact,
 - C. Agree to consider implementing the Regional Climate Action Plan, and
 - D. Urging all mayors within Monroe County limits to support the Mayors' Climate Action Pledge.
2. The City Commission may elect to adopt parts of the above four actions
3. The City Commission may elect not to not adopt any of the actions

ADVANTAGES

- The City of Key West will gain an official voice at the table of this strong coalition without having to do much of the heavy lifting.
- The City of Key West will lead the way for the other four municipalities to also join.

DISADVANTAGES

- Staff sees no disadvantage to adopting all four actions.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

There are no financial implications for adopting any of the four actions. In fact, the City will gain a lot of leverage and in-kind assistance for adding their voice to this larger group.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Commission adopts all four actions.