



Photo courtesy of James Willamor, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/81464596@N00/5713679378>

# Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact: Building Capacity for Implementation

## Key Issues

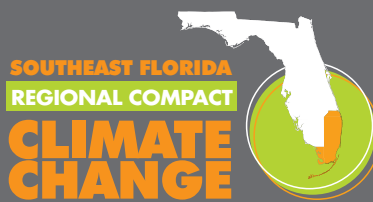
Southeast Florida, home to the eighth-largest metropolitan population in the U.S., is especially vulnerable to climate change. High-density coastal development, which dominates the state's modern landscape, sits atop a very flat, low-elevation limestone foundation. This low-lying topography makes Florida's built environment, people and economy particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels through larger and more powerful storm surges, decreased capacity of gravity-fed stormwater drainage and saltwater infiltration of the region's drinking-water aquifers. In fact, **nearly 40% of U.S. sea level rise risk is in Florida**. These issues represent an urgent need to implement a comprehensive climate strategy to **manage and reduce climate risks in the state**.

### The Challenges:

- Sea level rise 6-10 inches by 2030, 14-26 inches by 2060
- Saltwater infiltration of drinking water supplies
- Vulnerable coastal areas & ecosystems
- Population growth & expanding development
- Multiple jurisdictions & lack of cohesion (108 cities & towns in 4 counties)



### The Solution



"Five years ago, local leaders down here, Republicans and Democrats, formed the bipartisan Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact – an agreement to work together to fight climate change. And it's become a model not just for the country, but for the world."

– President Obama, *The Everglades, Florida*.  
April 22, 2015



## Project Overview



## Areas of Impact

- Intergovernmental coordination
- Regional climate plans
- Climate adaptation & mitigation
- Resilience

## Compact Objectives

- Speak with a regional voice on state and federal policy
- Develop and implement a Regional Climate Action Plan
- Meet annually in Regional Climate Leadership Summits



INSTITUTE FOR  
**Sustainable  
Communities**

## Compact Partners

- \* Counties: Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe & Palm Beach Counties
- \* Cities of: West Palm Beach, Hollywood, Key West & Miami Beach
- South Florida Water Management District
- The Nature Conservancy – Florida Chapter
- South Florida Regional Planning Council
- \* *Compact Steering Committee*

## ISC Funding Partners

- The Kresge Foundation
- Compact Counties



## About ISC

The Institute for Sustainable Communities' mission is to help communities around the world address environmental, economic, and social challenges to build a better future shaped and shared by all. Since our founding in 1991 by former Vermont Governor Madeleine M. Kunin and George Hamilton, ISC has led transformative community-driven projects in 30 countries including the United States, China, India and Bangladesh.

[www.sustain.org](http://www.sustain.org)

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## Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact

### Project Overview

- In 2009, government leaders from Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties came together to form the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The Compact represents a groundbreaking regional effort to foster sustainability and climate resilience at the regional scale.
- The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) has helped advance the Compact from the planning stage to actual policy implementation – integrating climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, highlighting the importance of addressing natural and built systems holistically and supporting the work across adjacent jurisdictions, using adaptive management principles to guide the process.
- ISC provides the Compact with direct technical assistance and capacity-building workshops and supports implementation of its projects by identifying and forging new partnerships, leveraging additional resources and building the social capital needed to institutionalize the Compact for the long term.

Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties together represent over 6 million people – nearly one third of Florida's population and more than a third of the total economy and carbon emissions in the state.

### Expected Impact

- With ISC's support and facilitation, the Compact continues to develop and implement the **Regional Climate Action Plan** that integrates climate adaptation and mitigation measures for the region. The plan identifies vulnerabilities, prioritized actions and integrated policy initiatives to create a clear – though challenging – path forward for their region.
- The Compact serves as a model that addresses a key U.S. climate adaptation challenge: managing intergovernmental coordination (both vertical and horizontal) around the unique problems of a region. The project has enabled the development of a regional voice and vision for future prosperity in Southeast Florida.

