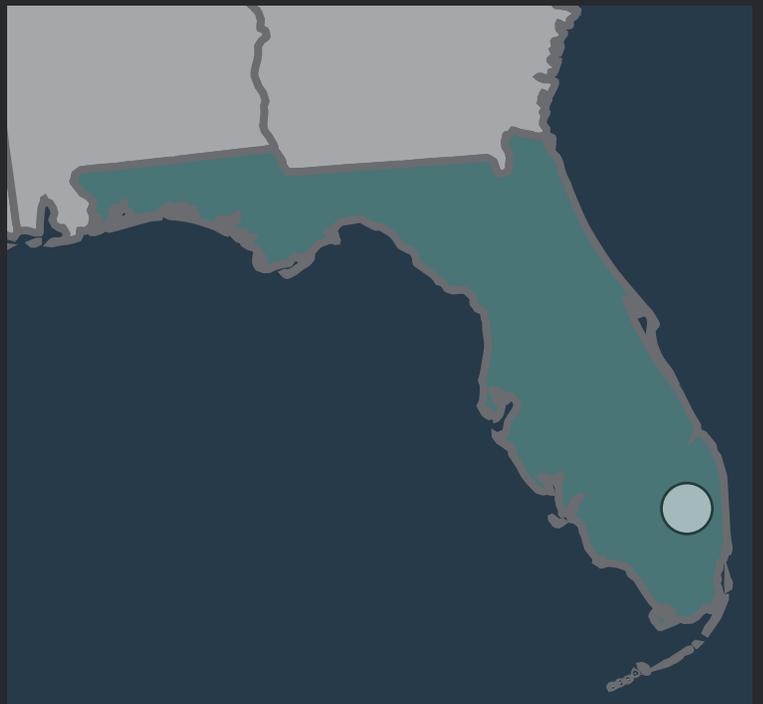




# Lessons in Regional Resilience

Case Studies on Regional Climate Collaboratives



## Lessons in Regional Resilience:

### Case Studies on Regional Climate Collaboratives

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**Case Studies in Regional Collaboration:** This report is part of a series of six case studies (<http://www.georgetownclimate.org/reports/lessons-in-regional-resilience.html>) that explore lessons that are being learned by climate collaboratives from around the United States that are bringing together local governments and other stakeholders at the regional level to both reduce carbon pollution (mitigation) and prepare for the impacts of climate change (adaptation). These case studies explore the following collaboratives:

- The Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability in California
- The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative in California
- The Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative in California
- The Sierra Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership in California
- The Southeast Florida Climate Change Compact in Florida
- The King County-Cities Climate Collaboration in Washington State

Each case study explores the history and development, structure and decisionmaking methods, funding sources, roles and initiatives of each of these climate collaboratives. A synthesis report also explores lessons that can be learned by comparing the efforts of each collaborative on climate policy in their regions.

These case studies were supported by a grant from the Kresge Foundation. In developing these case studies, the Georgetown Climate Center collaborated with the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation (ARCCA). The authors are grateful to the local officials and other stakeholders in each collaborative who graciously spent time being interviewed and providing invaluable feedback on this work.

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## INTRODUCTION

*Local governments across the United States are developing innovative ways to work together to address the impacts of climate change, which cross jurisdictional lines.* In recent years, cities around the country are increasingly grappling with record-setting extreme weather events—from more intense heat waves, to prolonged droughts and wildfires, to extreme coastal and inland flooding—and the damage inflicted by these events can be catastrophic. Hurricane Sandy in 2012 represented the second costliest natural disaster in recorded history (after Hurricane Katrina), inflicting an estimated \$65 billion in damage and causing 159 deaths across the New York and New Jersey region.<sup>1</sup> Severe drought and heat conditions across western, Midwestern, and Plains states in 2012 caused over \$30 billion in losses, with widespread impacts in the agricultural sector.<sup>2</sup> The related summer heatwave that same year caused over 100 known deaths.<sup>3</sup> The human and economic costs of these events are also increasing; in 2016, the United States experienced fifteen billion-dollar weather events.<sup>4</sup> Communities across the country are experiencing the effects and are recognizing the need to prepare for climate change. Decisionmakers at all levels of government are planning and taking actions to avoid or reduce costly impacts to infrastructure, human health, natural resources, and the economy.

Local governments are on the front lines of these impacts and therefore are critical actors for preparing for climate change. They have the primary powers (delegated from their state legislatures) that will be needed to respond to these threats, including the powers to plan, regulate land use, tax, and contract for services, among others. Planning and preparing for climate change is challenging, however—particularly for smaller cities that face funding and staffing constraints and that lack technical capacity. Furthermore, the physical impacts of climate change and extreme events will cross jurisdictional boundaries. This creates challenges for local jurisdictions because decisions about land use and infrastructure, and the adaptive responses that one community implements, can affect neighboring areas both positively and negatively.<sup>5</sup> As a result, no single actor can adequately prepare a community or region, and decisionmakers are beginning to recognize that proactive and effective adaptation should be coordinated with neighboring jurisdictions on a larger regional level.

Regional adaptation, however, can pose governance challenges. Any given region may have dozens of entities with a role to play. In addition to local governments themselves, there are often numerous other public agencies and special authorities with different responsibilities related to climate adaptation. For example, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and councils of government (COGs); water management and air districts; public health authorities; transit agencies; regulatory and permitting agencies; electrical, water, and wastewater utilities; and many other entities all need to be part of planning and implementing adaptation actions within their own plans and programs. Private entities—including businesses, non-profit organizations, universities, among others—also have an important role to play and need a voice in local and regional adaptation efforts.

To address the challenges of regional governance, some local governments have started to work with their neighbors and other organizations through “regional climate collaboratives.” These regional collaboratives take a variety of forms, but typically resemble loose membership networks that may include any mix of local governments; other public agencies, regional authorities, and planning bodies; utilities; universities; nonprofit organizations; and private sector representatives. Most collaboratives have been established on an ad hoc basis; with no legal authority of their own, they aim to build the capacity of the stakeholders in their regions and make recommendations about how local decisionmakers can increase resilience through their own planning, policy, and investment powers.

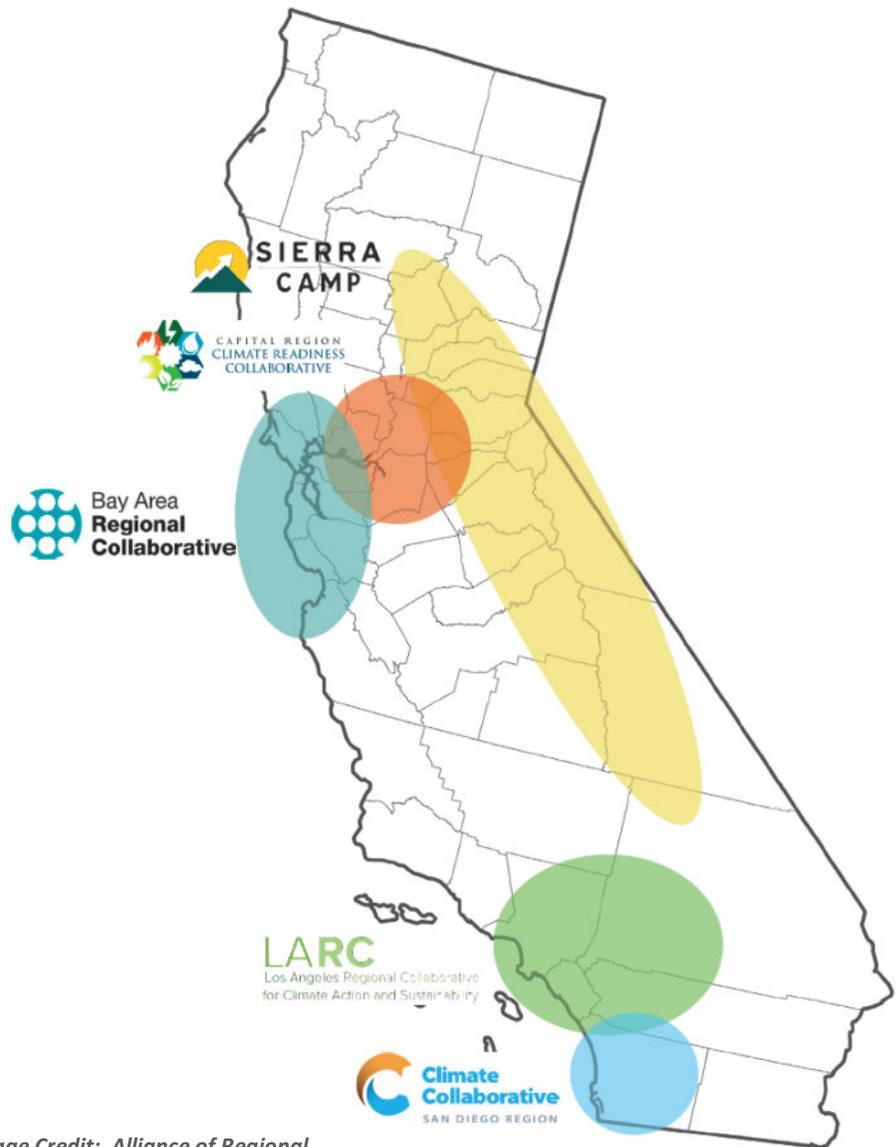
These collaboratives are realizing important benefits from coordinating at a regional scale. Collaboration has allowed these entities to leverage scarce financial resources and staff time, collectively assess climate change risks, and develop regional strategies for responding to the threats posed by climate change, while still respecting the proper roles and decisionmaking authority of each individual jurisdiction or agency involved. Piecemeal adaptation approaches that vary from one community to the next can prove counterproductive. In contrast, well-coordinated adaptation can more effectively foster resilience across an entire region.

Despite these merits, regional collaboration as an approach to addressing climate change is a new concept. While some regions across the United States have made significant advancements in short periods of time, many are unsure as to the sustainability of the collaborative model over the long term. Many collaboratives are still struggling to decide how to structure and staff the collaborative’s work, and how to obtain reliable funding to support regional initiatives and the long-term administration of the collaborative. For this reason, existing and newly emerging collaboratives are looking to each other to provide lessons on how to start and sustain adaptation work at the regional scale.

Several metropolitan and rural areas in California are experimenting with regional collaboration as a means to enhance climate action. These collaboratives support coordinated adaptation across five regions with distinct geographies, sizes, populations, and climate hazards: the rural Sierra Nevada region, and the major urban regions surrounding San Diego, Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Sacramento. These California collaboratives have also joined together to form a statewide “collaborative of collaboratives” known as the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation (ARCCA). Through ARCCA, member regional collaboratives come together to share lessons and solidify their individual efforts, as well as to give a stronger voice to regional and local needs at the state and federal levels.

The Georgetown Climate Center worked with ARCCA members in California to develop case studies of six collaboratives across the country that are working on climate policy (both adaptation and reducing emissions) at the regional scale. This synthesis report captures the lessons that can be learned from comparing the formation, governance, and work of these various collaboratives.

**Figure 1:** Members of the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Adaptation (ARCCA)



*Image Credit: Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation*

## OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to explore existing regional collaboratives and to analyze questions about: (i) what makes a collaborative effort successful, and (ii) how to structure and fund a collaborative so that it is sustainable over the long term. To help address these questions, the Georgetown Climate Center first developed detailed case studies on the following collaboratives<sup>6</sup> from both within and outside the ARCCA group.



*The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative (SDRCC)* helps coordinate climate initiatives within San Diego County, focusing on local capacity building for the County and its eighteen municipalities. The collaborative currently has ten member cities plus the County, as well as other public agencies in the region, academia, utilities, and nonprofits and philanthropic organizations. The collaborative has worked to facilitate climate action planning across the region<sup>7</sup> and recently has been directing a regional “Resilient Coastlines Project” with federal funding to connect and coordinate local sea-level-rise initiatives in the region.<sup>8</sup> The SDRCC received a Climate Leadership Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2015 for its innovative partnership model.

# LARC

Los Angeles Regional Collaborative  
for Climate Action and Sustainability

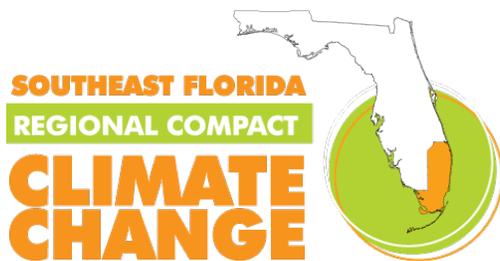
*The Los Angeles Regional Collaborative (LARC)* supports climate resilience efforts across different sectors and actors in the Los Angeles County region and its 88 municipalities. Its membership includes Los Angeles County and three cities, other public agencies, utilities, nonprofits, and academia. Based at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), LARC has helped to bring about more localized, actionable climate science for communities in the region through strong partnerships with academia. LARC has developed a regional framework to support coordinated decisionmaking by identifying regional goals for adaptation and mitigation, and best practices and policies for achieving them.



*The Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative (CRC)* covers the six-county region surrounding California’s capital, Sacramento (including El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties). Its membership includes cities and regional public agencies including air districts, utilities, nonprofits, universities, and business organizations. The collaborative brings attention to issues affecting the capital region at local, regional, state and federal levels. The group works to bring stakeholders together to find regional solutions to the impacts of climate change.



*The Sierra Nevada Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership (Sierra CAMP)* is the first rural-focused collaborative within ARCCA, spanning the 22-county Sierra Nevada-Southern Cascade region in California. The collaborative is coordinated by Sierra Business Council and brings together local and county governments and regional agencies in the Sierras, federal government agencies, state conservancies, businesses, nonprofits, and several individuals. Sierra CAMP works to strengthen urban-rural partnerships to build support for investment in forest and watershed health. The



collaborative’s members (excluding state and federal agencies) work to engage with state agencies on climate policy affecting Sierra communities and natural resources, by providing analysis and comment letters on proposed plans, policies, and legislation.

*The Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (Compact)*<sup>9</sup> covers the geographic area spanning four counties in Southeast Florida (Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach) and their 108 municipalities. The Compact’s membership formally consists of the four counties themselves, and the Compact counties work to create close partnerships with municipalities and other partners in the region. Municipalities have signed on to the “Mayors’ Climate Action Pledge” stating support for the Compact and its regional action plan. The Compact has also successfully engaged a diversity of stakeholders in the region through partnerships with nonprofits, the regional water management district, and a coalition of Florida universities working on climate change.



*The King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C)*<sup>10</sup> is a collaborative between King County, WA and cities within the County; it currently has fourteen local government members that have joined by signing an Interlocal Agreement.<sup>11</sup> The K4C’s efforts have focused on climate change mitigation (reducing emissions), and have resulted in the adoption of shared countywide greenhouse gas reduction targets. The collaborative also developed a series of policy commitments for local governments to help meet these reduction goals, and has formed working groups to help develop program recommendations in specific areas, like electric vehicle usage and commercial energy benchmarking.

Each case study explores the roles that these collaboratives are playing to support climate action in their regions, how the collaboratives are helping to align resources and policies among participating jurisdictions, and how they are structured and funded. The first part of this report summarizes lessons from each of the regional collaboratives organized in four key categories: (1) formation and early stages of a collaborative, (2) key roles played by collaboratives, (3) organizational structure, and (4) overall benefits of the collaborative model for generating and sustaining climate action. The second part of this report explores broader questions about how regions can formalize their collaboration and tap new funding sources to support collaborative efforts.

Ultimately, this report is intended to inform ARCCA and other emerging collaboratives about ways to structure a collaborative to successfully catalyze regional climate action and coordinate adaptation policy at the regional scale.

## **PART I: CHARACTERISTICS OF REGIONAL COLLABORATIVES**

Regional collaboration is emerging as an effective way to develop coordinated policies across multiple jurisdictions. Collaboratives also allow jurisdictions and agencies to improve efficiency by pooling limited staff capacity and financial resources, while also drawing on the expertise of other partners like universities and nonprofits. However, regional collaboration comes with many challenges including questions about how best to structure and fund collaborative efforts over the long term, how to find the right balance of member entities and partners, how to effectively engage stakeholders throughout a region, and how to provide the greatest value to the region while respecting existing local authorities. The first part of this report addresses these questions by providing lessons and

comparing the approaches taken by the six collaboratives that the Georgetown Climate Center studied for this project, using specific examples from the case studies.

## FORMATION & EARLY STAGES

This section focuses on themes relating to the early stages of a regional collaborative. It explores the initial motivations for forming the collaboratives, the founding people and entities involved, and the goals and objectives for forming the collaborative.

*Policy or other actions at the state level can provide an impetus for regional coordination on climate policy.*

- *California:* California is among the few states in the U.S. with both legislation and executive orders requiring or encouraging climate action and planning at the state, local, and regional level.<sup>12</sup> Some of the ARCCA collaboratives grew, at least indirectly, out of these state-level directives and from a desire to have a greater voice in the development of state-level climate policy. ARCCA was developed with support of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to improve communication between the State and its major regions working to adapt to climate change. In Sierra CAMP’s case, activity at the state level brought attention to unmet needs within the Sierra Nevada region on issues like investments in forest and watershed health and low-income rural communities. Sierra CAMP formed to help generate support around these issues by developing better urban-rural connections and educating urban areas about the importance of forest and watershed health for urban water supply.
- *Southeast Florida:* The Southeast Florida region is one of the regions within the U.S. facing the highest risk from climate change impacts, with valuable infrastructure and natural resources that are likely to be affected. Although the state developed an “Energy and Climate Action Plan” in 2008 pursuant to a 2007 Executive Order (07-128, issued by then-Governor Crist), subsequent leadership did not prioritize climate action. The counties in Southeast Florida, however, recognized the need for action—particularly to prepare for sea-level rise—and sought to spur action at all levels of government.<sup>13</sup> The counties formed the Compact to facilitate greater alignment on climate policy (including development of unified sea-level rise projections) and to help the counties speak with a more uniform voice when advocating for support for local climate adaptation initiatives.

*Collaboratives can emerge as a natural way to build on existing environmental or sustainability programs and initiatives in a region.*

- *King County, WA:* The K4C in King County, Washington grew out of the convening and research efforts of an individual graduate student, in combination with an existing forum that the County regularly convened to discuss solutions for encouraging use of green-building standards<sup>14</sup> (through the “King County Sustainability Roundtable” series, part of the County’s GreenTools Program). The graduate student began organizing staff from some of the cities to discuss climate initiatives, which were robust in some cities but not coordinated across jurisdictions. The group saw value in coordinating and tapping into ongoing regional initiatives, and institutionalized this informal collaboration through creation of the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (the K4C). The Roundtable series facilitated the growth of the emerging K4C collaborative by expanding its meetings to include additional topics focusing on energy, transportation, reducing emissions, and local climate change impacts.
- *San Diego County:* Similarly, San Diego’s regional collaborative was formed in response to a recognition that cities and other stakeholders in the region were undertaking many projects related to climate change mitigation and adaptation—some inter-jurisdictional— and there were many opportunities for the cities to learn from each other and share best practices. In San Diego’s case, these existing efforts included local government energy efficiency partnerships<sup>15</sup> through the region’s electric utility, San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E), and a regional sea-level rise adaptation strategy supported by The San Diego Foundation (TSDF). Seeing the value in working together and building a community of knowledge, several of these cities and regional agencies embarked on the creation of the collaborative, and secured start-up funding to help bring other entities to the table and to get the collaborative off the ground.

*A formal agreement, charter, or other organizational document developed in the early stages of a collaborative can be useful for establishing high-level goals that will guide the collaborative's activities.* These documents can take many forms and levels of specificity, but are generally helpful for clearly establishing the mission and scope of the collaborative, and spelling out collaborative membership, funding, and roles.

- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact counties used the collaborative's Compact Agreement to clearly establish the goals for the collaborative and to secure each county's commitment to work together to achieve these goals (e.g., developing legislative policy and position statements on state and federal legislation; developing a regional climate action plan). Over the years since its formation, the Compact members report that the clarity of purpose established at the outset through the Compact Agreement has helped the group make progress in achieving their goals.

## KEY ROLES

Regional collaboratives can play a wide range of roles to support climate action. Each collaborative is deciding on the most useful roles for the group to play based upon the local needs and gaps that need to be filled in the region. However, the roles collaboratives are playing can be organized into several broad categories: convening, policy and planning, outreach and policy engagement, funding and development, and science and assessment.

### Convening and Stakeholder Engagement

*One of the most widespread and important functions that regional climate collaboratives play is providing a forum for convening key decisionmakers and other stakeholders in a region.* Collaboratives provide space for members to share lessons and best practices, discuss challenges and strategies for addressing them, and build partnerships to tackle mutual issues. Through regular membership meetings, special events, and workshops, collaboratives can provide a valuable way for building local capacity. These meetings also provide opportunities to bring in expertise from federal, state, or local government agencies, and local nonprofits and businesses. In some cases, collaboratives have hosted high-profile events like summits to engage elected officials. In-person stakeholder engagement can prove challenging, particularly for larger regions, but collaboratives can help bolster these efforts by active outreach through webinars, email updates, and newsletters.

- *Capital Region, CA:* The CRC holds quarterly stakeholder meetings, which are often used to report on the progress of the collaborative's initiatives or member projects and to discuss strategies for maximizing the collaborative's effectiveness in the region. These meetings have also been used to focus on risks and solutions for specific impacts or topics of importance for the region, such as flood risk, drought, and water resource management. The CRC publishes a biweekly newsletter with information relating to funding opportunities, ongoing projects, and developments in federal, state, or local climate change policy; the newsletter has proven to be a valuable resource for stakeholders and an effective outreach tool for the collaborative.
- *Sierra Nevada Region:* Sierra CAMP covers the largest geographic region of the collaboratives the Georgetown Climate Center studied, and the region's size and rural nature has made outreach and stakeholder engagement challenging. To address these difficulties, Sierra CAMP conducts webinars, listening sessions, and email outreach, relying on the extensive network and experience of the host organization (Sierra Business Council). Early on, the collaborative also developed materials to provide non-technical summaries of the climate risks affecting different sectors and solutions for increasing resilience in those areas (e.g. forests, transportation and housing, and agriculture); Sierra CAMP has found these materials to be useful tools for recruiting new members and partners.
- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact has found annual summits to be effective engagement strategies. The Compact counties take turns hosting these "Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summits" (now in their eighth year as of fall 2016), which bring together leaders from the counties, their municipalities, businesses, academia, nonprofits, and other levels of government.<sup>16</sup> As local elected officials often attend, these summits help ensure that climate change stays on local agendas across the elected bodies of the four

counties. The summits also provide an ideal forum for announcing new initiatives, setting the Compact's work plan for the following year, and getting input from local leaders.

## Policy and Planning

*Collaboratives can develop policy recommendations or plans that will result in a more coordinated regional response to climate change.* In general, collaboratives have sought to provide value for decisionmakers without encroaching on local government power. Collaboratives have developed recommendations for coordinating climate change policies and planning in their regions, but implementation of these recommendations is voluntary and requires action by local government or others with decisionmaking authority. By providing implementation support in the form of guidance documents or direct technical assistance, collaboratives can also help to build the capacity of local governments to implement the recommendations from regional plans. In this way collaboratives can facilitate policy alignment across jurisdictions while respecting existing delegations of authority.

- *King County, WA:* One of the K4C's main goals is to "adopt consistent standards, benchmarks, strategies, and overall goals related to responding to climate change."<sup>17</sup> The K4C played a major role in supporting the formal adoption of countywide targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (25 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2030, and 80 percent by 2050 compared to a 2007 baseline). Representatives from the collaborative briefed city councils across the County on how the targets could be achieved, helping to increase support for adoption of the targets. These targets were adopted unanimously by the County's Growth Management Planning Council in July 2014.<sup>18</sup> Since then, the K4C, with assistance from Climate Solutions (a Pacific Northwest-based NGO), has identified different pathways for the local governments in the region to achieve those regional targets through policies on energy supply, land use, and green building. For example, the K4C recommends partnering on Transfer of Development Rights initiatives to focus development in urban areas, a policy commitment that could help the region reduce transportation-related GHG emissions and also help protect forestland.<sup>19</sup> Nearly all of the K4C's member jurisdictions signed a "Joint Letter of Commitment"<sup>20</sup> indicating their support and commitment to pursue these policies as appropriate given each jurisdiction's size, location, and development patterns.
- *Los Angeles County:* LARC aims to inform policy and planning efforts at the local level across its highly diverse county by providing the tools and resources that local governments need to develop effective and well-coordinated climate change and land-use policies. LARC has finalized a comprehensive resource for local governments known as "A Greater Los Angeles: the Framework for Regional Climate Action and Sustainability."<sup>21</sup> The Framework provides access to relevant climate science; information on federal, state, and local policy mandates; a county-wide emissions inventory; and regionally specific priorities, recommendations, and best practices. By distilling critical information so that it is easily understood and accessible from a single source, the Framework is designed to help build the capacity of resource-constrained local governments to help them make smart climate policy and investment choices.
- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact encouraged a coordinated policy agenda across the four-county region by developing a Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) and tracking local implementation. Compact working groups developed recommendations of specific actions that local governments in the region can take to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. For example, the RCAP recommends revising building codes and land-development regulations to discourage development in vulnerable areas and modifying design standards for transportation infrastructure located in vulnerable areas (e.g., materials, elevation, stormwater management). As most of the RCAP recommendations require local government action, the Compact further sought to facilitate implementation by developing guidance documents. Guidance targeted at specific sectors helps local governments identify potential partners and funding sources, develop needed policy or legislative changes, and set timelines for implementation. The Compact also operates a database<sup>22</sup> to track implementation of each RCAP recommendation and the database includes case studies of ways municipalities have acted on specific recommendations.

## State and Federal Policy Engagement

*Many collaboratives also participate in outreach efforts, helping local governments communicate more effectively between vertical levels of government (local, state, federal) and providing a stronger, more unified voice for the region.* Some regions have used their collaborative to generate comments and recommendations on proposed state and federal programs or legislation, in some cases with successful policy outcomes.

- *Southeast Florida:* In the Compact Agreement, the member counties agreed to collaborate on policy positions for advocacy at the state and federal level. The Compact’s Policy Work Group prepares an annual legislative program stating the Compact’s stance on federal and state legislative initiatives, which each individual county commission then considers for integration into their own county’s legislative program. The Compact engaged on 2011 state legislation and successfully got language added to allow local governments to designate “Adaptation Action Areas” (AAAs) in local comprehensive plans. AAAs allow local governments to direct investments and change land-use policies in areas that are highly vulnerable to coastal flooding from climate change and sea-level rise. The Compact helped draft language for the AAA designation and voiced support to the state legislature to include this in the 2011 Community Planning Act.
- *Sierra Nevada Region:* Sierra CAMP was created to promote state policy that would recognize the importance of Sierra forest and watershed health for statewide water supply, greenhouse gas sequestration, and other ecosystem services. State policy engagement, therefore, has been a key role of the collaborative. Most of the collaborative’s members (excepting federal and state agencies) participate in the group’s legislative and other advocacy efforts. Sierra CAMP expressed support for legislation establishing state policies relating to watershed health<sup>23</sup> and investment in low-income communities.<sup>24</sup> The group has also provided recommendations for improving the statewide adaptation plan, “Safeguarding California,” highlighting the important biophysical and economic relationships between the Sierra Nevada region and California’s downstream communities (such as Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area that rely on water supply from the region). Throughout this process, Sierra CAMP held monthly advisory meetings with the California Natural Resources Agency to ensure that the group’s input would be useful to the agency as it updates the plan, expected in early 2017.
- *California (ARCCA):* ARCCA plays this role at a larger level for all of the member collaboratives in California by facilitating regular conversations between the member collaboratives and state agencies, including the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR, the comprehensive state planning agency) and the California Natural Resources Agency. OPR’s involvement offers the regions a more direct line of communication with the state on issues and policies relating to local and regional planning. To keep member collaboratives informed of developments at the state level that might interest them, ARCCA also tracks climate adaptation bills under consideration by the state legislature. Furthermore, ARCCA has developed comment letters with recommendations on how state-level policies, tools, and guidance can better meet the needs and interests of municipalities and regions across California.

## Shared Funding

*Some regions have used the collaborative as a way to pool funding and seek new shared funding opportunities for broader regional initiatives like planning and risk assessments.* Members of regional collaboratives—particularly municipalities—have limited budgets to address concerns like climate change, so collaborating with neighbors allows them to pool resources for efforts that will benefit the whole region. By demonstrating a broader regional benefit, collaboratives have also been able to advance more competitive grant applications than they would have had they applied individually.

- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact has received both philanthropic and federal grant funding to support its work and broader regional initiatives. For example, the Institute for Sustainable Communities applied for and received a grant from the Kresge Foundation on behalf of the Compact. This funding supported much of the Compact’s work on developing and implementing the Regional Climate Action Plan, including hosting workshops and developing guidance. Additionally, the Compact has received federal grants through

individual members for other efforts. Broward County's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) led the region's successful application for a Federal Highway Administration Climate Resilience Pilot Project, which provided funds to assess vulnerabilities to regionally significant roads and rail infrastructure.<sup>25</sup> The South Florida Regional Planning Council also received a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to fund the development of the "Seven50 Plan," a 50-year blueprint plan for a larger 7-county area in South Florida to grow a more prosperous and resilient region.<sup>26</sup>

- *Sierra Nevada Region:* Sierra CAMP's host organization, Sierra Business Council, and several county and local partners helped to develop the State of California's application for funding through HUD's National Disaster Resilience Competition.<sup>27</sup> The presidentially-declared disaster that qualified the state to participate in the competition was the 2013 Rim Fire in Tuolumne County, a Sierra Nevada region county. The state received over \$70 million from HUD, which will be used to fund forest and watershed health efforts led by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (a state agency and member of Sierra CAMP), new Community Resilience Centers to help rural communities respond to emergencies, and a new facility to support production of wood products and energy from biomass.<sup>28</sup>
- *San Diego County:* The SDRCC was awarded a nearly \$700,000 Coastal Resilience Grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to lead the development of coordinated sea-level-rise vulnerability assessments and coastal resilience strategies that are integrated across cities in the county.<sup>29</sup> The project will also involve developing a consistent regional communication strategy to engage and educate the public about coastal resilience.
- *Los Angeles County:* LARC partnered with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("Metro") to secure a grant from the California Strategic Growth Council's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program. On behalf of itself and LARC, Metro received the \$1 million grant to support development of the Framework, discussed above (p. 7), and a Model Ordinance. The Model Ordinance is designed to supplement the Framework, incorporating best practices identified in the Framework and providing draft language for land-use plans, zoning ordinances, and other laws and policies that municipalities in the region can adopt to help them adapt to the impacts of climate change.

## Facilitating Climate Research and Analysis

*Collaboratives can play a role in producing or commissioning downscaled climate and sea level rise projections.* Collaboratives are often well-positioned to help analyze and translate climate science so that local decisionmakers can more easily use the findings in policymaking and decisions about local projects. They can also help inform the academic community about the research needs at the local level, to encourage the development of climate science that will be useful and actionable.

- *Sea-level rise, Southeast Florida:* The Southeast Florida Compact developed (and has since updated) a unified sea level rise projection for the region to help ensure that local adaptation actions would be informed by the same projections. The Compact leveraged the expertise of county staff as well as outside expertise from NGOs, federal agencies, and universities. The Compact also formalized a collaboration with the Florida Climate Institute (FCI), a network of southeast Florida universities that conduct climate change research. Now when universities in the FCI network apply for grants related to climate research, the Compact can voice support for grant applications and ensure that university-based research is scoped to be relevant to local decisionmakers.
- *Temperature, Los Angeles County:* LARC spearheaded an effort to commission downscaled climate studies for the region, leveraging funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and the City of Los Angeles for the new supercomputer used in the studies.<sup>30</sup> A team of atmospheric scientists at UCLA completed the first study in 2012, which produced projections for average temperature changes and changes in extreme heat events at a neighborhood-scale resolution (2-km). The team has since produced downscaled projections for changes in precipitation and snowpack as well.<sup>31</sup>

- *Carbon wedge analysis, King County, WA:* The K4C commissioned the nonprofit Climate Solutions to conduct a carbon wedge analysis that outlined pathways for achieving the County’s near-term emissions reduction target (50 percent by 2030).<sup>32</sup> This analysis helped generate awareness and support among elected officials for developing a series of joint commitments for achieving the target, and nearly all K4C member cities and the County have signed on to these commitments.

## ORGANIZATIONAL AND DECISIONMAKING STRUCTURES

Along with the roles they choose to play, regional collaboratives must make decisions about the structure of the collaborative, including membership, governance, and other administrative aspects like funding and staffing. Often these structural details are laid out in governing policies or other organizational documents, like charters.<sup>33</sup> This section identifies common themes and lessons from the existing models of regional collaboration. Some of these structural choices can affect the collaborative’s success at coordinating a regional response to climate change and may also have implications for the collaborative’s ability to sustain itself in the long-term, particularly in terms of funding. Other structural and funding considerations that might affect a collaborative’s longevity are discussed in Part II of this report.

### Membership Decisions

*Collaboratives have many options for the types of members they involve.* Typically, collaboratives offer membership to organizational entities, which may be represented by one or more people at collaborative meetings and on decisionmaking bodies. Often collaborative members include local governments (usually represented by staff from an environmental or natural resource agency), other regional public authorities and planning bodies (e.g., water management districts, air districts, MPOs, councils of government, etc.), utilities, nonprofits, universities, philanthropic organizations, and businesses. However, some collaboratives only have one or two types of member entities (e.g., local government or public entities only) whereas others offer membership to a wider range of entities and organizations. These decisions are influenced by the needs, politics, and stakeholders within the region.

*A collaborative’s goals can drive its decisions on what kinds of members to include, particularly if the collaborative hopes to play a distinct role in regional adaptation efforts.* For example, a collaborative created to more directly coordinate policy and planning may choose to limit its membership exclusively to local decisionmakers. In these cases, the collaborative may wish to establish an interlocal agreement as authorized under state law, which may limit “membership” (if the agreement involves sharing of powers) to include only combinations of local governments or other public entities.<sup>34</sup> Collaboratives intending to serve primarily a convening function may involve a much broader range of stakeholders that can help the collaborative accomplish its goals. For example, collaboratives formed with a goal of developing actionable climate science often include university members who can help provide these services and bring in funding for this work.

- *Local government members only (e.g., Southeast Florida; King County, WA):* Both the K4C and the Southeast Florida Compact involve only local government members (counties and cities), and both collaboratives were established through an agreement among the local jurisdictions that each member jurisdiction approved and ratified (e.g., by formal approval from the county council, or signing by a municipal or county executive or elected official).<sup>35</sup> From the outset, both agreements included a commitment to collaborate on some form of consistent policy or planning. With the K4C, the group sought to collaborate on consistent standards, benchmarks, strategies and goals for responding to climate change. With the Compact, the counties agreed to collaborate in the development of a Regional Climate Action Plan.
- *Wide-ranging membership (e.g. ARCCA collaboratives):* In contrast, the California collaboratives all have much more varied membership that is not limited to government entities. This more open membership style can offer a collaborative more diverse sources of funding and expertise to support convening and capacity-building efforts, but may not align as well with a more direct focus on coordinated policy and planning. The mix of members of each ARCCA collaborative depends on the active stakeholders in the region and the audiences the collaboratives are trying to engage. For example, the CRC works to involve the private

sector and support small business resilience, as small businesses comprise an important part of the Sacramento region's economy.

*By strategically involving member organizations with their own extensive networks, collaboratives can efficiently reach a wider range of local governments and other stakeholders in a region.* This can help a collaborative keep to a manageable size while also ensuring that a larger network is represented, at least indirectly.

- *San Diego County:* The SDRCC currently includes ten of the County's eighteen municipalities as members, but the collaborative's membership also includes important regional agencies like the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG, the region's MPO) and the Port of San Diego. Both agencies inherently represent several local governments: SANDAG includes representatives from each city within San Diego County and from the County government itself<sup>6</sup>, while the Port includes representatives from each of the five coastal jurisdictions along the San Diego Bay. Through these agencies, which already have a well-established regional presence on particular issues (e.g. transportation and land use for SANDAG and coastal issues for the Port), the collaborative can better reach public entities that are not members and can also help ensure that the interests of non-member cities are considered in the collaborative's planning and strategies.

### **Administration and Decisionmaking**

*There are many alternatives to formalizing a collaborative as a separate legal entity; most collaboratives choose an administrative "host" that helps staff the collaborative on a day-to-day basis and acts as a fiscal sponsor.* These host organizations can come in a variety of forms, from nonprofits to universities to one of the local government members. Some collaboratives have dedicated staff (e.g., a manager for the collaborative) while others rely on donation of staff time from individual members.

- *Nonprofit host:* Several of the collaboratives use a nonprofit administrative host. This allows the collaborative to be staffed by an organization that may be viewed as more independent than if they were to choose one of the member governments to host. Additionally, collaboratives can choose a nonprofit host with expertise in a particular area of concern to the region, in order to help facilitate the regional response. For example, Sierra CAMP is organized as a program of Sierra Business Council (SBC), a nonprofit organization with years of experience working on forest and watershed health issues and serving businesses in the region. The CRC in California's Capital Region is a program of the Local Government Commission, which connects leaders from across the nation to advance transformative policies and implement innovative solutions for sustainable communities. The Southeast Florida Compact receives administrative support through the Institute for Sustainable Communities. These nonprofits serve as neutral facilitators that provide staff to help organize meetings and keep collaborative projects moving forward.
- *University host:* In Los Angeles, LARC's initial founding partners opted to host the collaborative at a university in part due to a need for a neutral host and to avoid any perception of control over the collaborative by the region's larger jurisdictions. LARC's host office at UCLA's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability also gives the collaborative a close relationship with leading climate scientists at UCLA. However, one of the challenges of selecting a university host is the overhead costs associated with university administration of grants, which can make it more costly to take in funding to sustain the collaborative's work.
- *Local government host:* Collaboratives also have the option of designating a host for fiscal purposes (e.g., managing grants and contracts) from among the local government members. For example, King County administers funding on behalf of the K4C and has applied for grants on behalf of the collaborative. Another administrative difference of the K4C is that, unlike collaboratives with a nonprofit or university host, the K4C does not have any dedicated staff. Instead, the K4C relies on the time donated from staff of its individual member jurisdictions to participate in meetings and subcommittees and to advance collaborative projects. The K4C's funds, generated by member dues, go towards hosting events and hiring partners (e.g., Climate Solutions) to help with technical analysis. There is no strict requirement for the staff time that each

jurisdiction must dedicate, which allows flexibility based upon the city's available resources and political support for climate action. City and County staff involved with the K4C have observed that this model seems to encourage greater participation across a variety of cities (even though participation may be at times uneven) because it does not alienate those with more limited resources.

*Regardless of administration and management, many collaboratives make decisions about the direction, initiatives, and funding of the collaborative through smaller decisionmaking bodies such as a steering committee.* Typically, these bodies operate either by a simple majority vote or make every effort to operate by consensus. They often include representatives from a subset of the collaborative's member organizations, although there may be a minimum number of seats designated for a particular type of member entity (e.g., local governments). Collaboratives that only offer formal membership to local government entities may nevertheless have non-voting seats for nonprofits or entities to expand the diversity of voices on the decisionmaking body. Non-voting seats can also allow the collaborative to involve a "neutral" facilitator in the discussion, such as a non-member fiscal and administrative host, which can help bridge jurisdictional differences.

- *California collaboratives:* The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative allows any public agency member or "supporting" member (which include nonprofits, academic institutions, philanthropic organizations, and utilities) to sit on its steering committee. However, a majority of seats on the committee are designated for public agencies, which helps ensure that public agencies have more decisionmaking power within the collaborative.<sup>37</sup> The Capital Region Collaborative, in contrast, requires at least one representative from each of eight different categories: municipalities; councils of government; regulatory agencies and service providers; utilities; educational institutions; nonprofits; business, labor and agriculture organizations; and professional organizations.<sup>38</sup> For Sierra CAMP, Sierra Business Council emphasized the importance of finding the right mix of organizations and representatives to fill the initial Steering Committee seats, particularly given the size of the region and the rural nature of its communities. Sierra CAMP's Governance Policy allows up to 20 representatives on its Steering Committee, with composition limits specified and the most seats allowed for industry (5), nonprofits (4), and local governments (3).<sup>39</sup>
- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact is one example of a collaborative that, although limited to county and municipal membership, reserves non-voting seats on its steering committee for representatives from other key partners in the region. Each of the county-parties to the Compact receives two votes, and four total municipalities in the region (one from each county) each receive one vote on the Compact steering committee. The steering committee also has non-voting representatives from the South Florida Water Management District, the South Florida Regional Planning Council, and the South Florida chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The Institute for Sustainable Communities has served as a neutral facilitator and organizer for steering committee meetings. ISC does not vote on Compact decisions but facilitates meetings and has been instrumental in helping the counties set priorities for the region as a whole.

*Working groups and subcommittees are a useful way that collaboratives can streamline decisionmaking and bring in outside expertise from other stakeholders.* Collaboratives have used working groups as an effective means for addressing particular topics, impacts, or projects. Typically, decisions are made at this level and then advanced to the steering committee (or other general decisionmaking body). For collaboratives that have only governmental members (like Southeast Florida and the K4C), these groups can also allow the collaborative to bring in outside voices and expertise from NGOs, federal or state agencies, businesses, and other non-local government entities.

- *Southeast Florida:* The Compact uses work groups to undertake technical analyses and to bring in additional expertise. For example, many federal agencies, universities, and nonprofit organizations provided technical assistance and participated in working groups to help the Compact develop a regional sea level rise projection and vulnerability assessment (including NOAA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the South Florida Water Management District, the South Florida Regional Planning Council, The Nature Conservancy, and several Florida universities).<sup>40</sup> By combining expertise from these stakeholders and staff within the individual

counties, the Compact has produced detailed studies that have been used to inform the adaptation initiatives of the region and individual member jurisdictions.

- *King County, WA:* The K4C utilizes subcommittees to develop policy recommendations on three priority areas: clean energy (the Clean Energy Transition Plan Subcommittee), building energy (Commercial Energy Benchmarking Subcommittee), and transportation (Electric Vehicle Charging Subcommittee). For example, the Commercial Energy Benchmarking group is analyzing ordinances that have been adopted in other cities to require buildings to report on energy use and is considering how similar policies could be implemented in King County. These subcommittee groups also often involve other stakeholders like Climate Solutions, a nonprofit, which has helped the K4C identify pathways to achieve its regional GHG emissions reduction targets.

## Funding and Other Support

*Collaboratives have funded their efforts from a variety of sources, although many seek to develop a sustainable and reliable funding method like membership dues or cost sharing.* Many collaboratives combine multiple sources of funding (member dues, and philanthropic, state or federal grants) to support their efforts. Funding is one of the key challenges to maintaining a robust collaborative. Membership dues are often used to support administrative overhead and staffing costs, whereas government grants are used to fund specific projects. Collaboratives with membership dues often tier their dues depending on the organizational size and type of member entity. However, some collaboratives have been hesitant to impose membership dues and fees for fear of alienating potential members, particularly jurisdictions with more limited resources. Collaboratives solely reliant on grant funding, however, may lack a reliable funding source to support long-term administration. In some cases, collaboratives have used seed funding from other organizations to get up and running and grow their membership before later creating a dues structure.

- *Membership dues and cost-sharing:* This is the most common form of funding used or considered among the collaboratives that were examined for this project, but dues structures take a variety of forms. Many collaboratives lay out a dues structure (often in the governing policy document) that varies based upon the type of member entity (e.g., local government or other public agency, nonprofit, academia, business, etc.) or the size of the organization, with smaller organizations and jurisdictions paying less.<sup>41</sup> Collaboratives that exclusively involve local government members often organize their dues structure by the population size of the member jurisdictions (e.g., King County)<sup>42</sup> or by equal cost sharing (e.g., Southeast Florida Compact).<sup>43</sup> Still, securing contributions from public agency members can be challenging due to resource constraints, so some collaboratives have opted for alternatives that prioritize greater participation over membership dues (e.g., San Diego's collaborative, only requires dues from its Steering Committee members,<sup>44</sup> or Sierra Nevada's collaborative, which has a voluntary dues structure<sup>45</sup>).
- *Philanthropic grants:* Several collaboratives have secured philanthropic grants to fund administration of the collaborative, events and workshops, or specific projects. These include grants from national foundations (e.g., the Kresge Foundation, which provided funding to the Institute for Sustainable Communities to support administration of the Southeast Florida Compact and several specific initiatives over a three-year period) and local foundations (e.g., The San Diego Foundation, which has provided continued support for the San Diego region's collaborative).
- *State and federal grants:* Some collaboratives have successfully applied for state and federal grants, but typically these funds are directed to specific projects or initiatives, not overall administration of the collaborative. For example, the Southeast Florida region secured federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration to analyze vulnerability of regional transportation networks. The Los Angeles region's collaborative received state funding (through the county transportation authority as the formal grantee) for development of the regional framework for climate action. And San Diego's collaborative received funding from NOAA for coordination and development of coastal resilience strategies across coastal jurisdictions in San Diego County.

- *Utility or other local programs:* A few of the California collaboratives have received local program funding offered by regional utilities or other regional agencies. For example, in San Diego, some of SDRCC’s initial and ongoing funding has been provided through San Diego Gas & Electric’s (SDG&E) Local Government Energy Efficiency Partnership Programs (a program providing support to local jurisdictions and nonprofits to promote energy efficiency and conservation). In California’s Capital Region, the CRC’s initial funding came from one of the collaborative’s founding members, the regional Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD). In most of these cases, these entities still contribute annual funding through membership dues but the initial seed funding they provided was critical for helping get regional efforts off the ground.

*In-kind services can also provide a valuable source of support, in lieu of or in addition to financial support, to help sustain a collaborative.* Many of the collaboratives with membership dues allow members (particularly local government, nonprofit, and academic members) to contribute in-kind support in lieu of dues, at least partly. In-kind services have been a critical source of support for collaboratives with only local government members (e.g., the K4C and the Southeast Florida Compact).

- *San Diego County:* The SDRCC governance policy requires member organizations (even public agencies) that are on the steering committee to contribute \$5,000 annually, but this can be in the form of direct financial or in-kind programmatic support, or a combination of the two.
- *Capital Region, CA:* The CRC allows in-kind services to substitute for membership dues under some circumstances, an approach also applied by LARC and Sierra CAMP. The CRC also allows participation of non-member entities that are unable to pay dues; these organizations can “join” the collaborative as “Channel Partners” if they contribute a minimum amount of in-kind service hours annually, but are not considered formal members and cannot serve on the collaborative’s steering committee.

The chart below summarizes the organizational aspects of the six regional collaboratives discussed in this report, including the types of member entities involved; the type of administrative and/or fiscal host for the collaborative; and sources of funding that the collaborative utilizes.

**Figure 2: Comparison of Organizations Characteristics of Collaboratives Studied**

Collaborative	Membership <sup>†</sup>				Administrative or Fiscal Host	Funding Source(s) <sup>‡</sup>				
	Local government	Public agencies & utilities*	Nonprofit, Academia	Business/Private		Member dues/ Cost-share	Philanthropic grants	State or federal grants	Other	In-kind services
<i>King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C)</i>	✓	✗	✗	✗	County	✓				✓
<i>Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative (CRC)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Nonprofit – Local Government Commission	✓			✓	✓
<i>Sierra Climate Adaptation &amp; Mitigation Partnership (Sierra CAMP)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Nonprofit – Sierra Business Council	~	✓		✓	✓
<i>Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability (LARC)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	University – UCLA	✓		✓		✓
<i>San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative (SDRCC)</i>	✓	✓	✓		University – USD	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (Compact)</i>	✓	✗	✗	✗	Nonprofit – Institute for Sustainable Communities; County – Broward (fiscal)	✓	✓	✓		✓

†Note on Membership: “✗” indicates entities/organization types that are not eligible at all for membership in the collaborative, while blank spaces indicate member types that are eligible but so far the collaborative does not have any from that category.  
‡Note on Funding Sources: blank spaces indicate funding sources not used to date, while tildes (~) indicate mixed or optional dues structures (i.e., SDRCC, which does not charge dues to public agency members, and Sierra CAMP, which has a voluntary/suggested contribution structure).  
\*Other public agencies include regional authorities like water and air districts, councils of government, port authorities, etc. Utilities (e.g., electric) are included in this category regardless of ownership.

## BENEFITS OF THE COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR CATALYZING AND SUSTAINING ACTION

There are many benefits to using a regional collaborative model to catalyze climate action at a regional level and helping to sustain that activity over time. This is documented by the experiences and many successes of the collaboratives that the Georgetown Climate Center studied as a part of this project. We are also seeing more and more collaboratives emerge across the country to facilitate climate action at the regional scale.

Collaboratives across the country have been successful at encouraging or even developing more coordinated approaches to climate change across jurisdictions, including regional plans and policies. A well-planned regional response will help to ensure that resources are utilized effectively, that the solutions that are implemented enhance the overall resilience of the region, and that piecemeal solutions are not implemented in ways that reduce the resilience of the region or individual jurisdictions. Although it can be a difficult process to unite diverse jurisdictions, there are practical reasons that these climate collaboratives have recognized the benefits and effectiveness of collaborating to address climate change. Below are successes identified by those interviewed for this project.

- *Collaboratives are flexible and can be designed to suit the needs and goals of the region and its local governments.* This is important because every region is unique, with differences in the mix of stakeholders, climate vulnerabilities, goals, and political and geographical landscapes. Some collaboratives have limited the scope of their roles to focus on facilitation and convening—holding meetings and workshops to increase communication and share lessons between jurisdictions. These collaboratives tend to have a more informal “network-type” structure to expand the types of members that can be involved. Other collaboratives have taken on a more direct role in regional planning and policymaking and these collaboratives tend to be led by public entities. To avoid actions that can be perceived as superseding existing local authority, these

collaboratives develop recommendations that must be voluntarily implemented by their local government members. This gives members flexibility to act on recommendations that align with their own local priorities and politics and fit within available budgets and staffing.

- *Collaboratives allow local governments and other entities that often have limited funding and staff capacity to pool resources in a way that is beneficial for individual communities and the region as a whole.* Often local governments lack sufficient resources and expertise to assess and plan for the climate-related risks facing their communities. By collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions and other partners like nonprofit organizations, state and federal agencies, businesses, and others, they can generate more funding for these efforts and leverage expertise from a variety of sources. Collaboratives have helped their member jurisdictions efficiently develop a collective understanding of climate change risks, including transboundary impacts, and regional solutions, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort.
- *Collaboratives can bring about tangible benefits for a region such as increased attention and funding for climate initiatives.* For example, collaboratives have been acknowledged with Climate Leadership Awards from the EPA in recognition of their innovation in forming partnerships to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.<sup>46</sup> The Southeast Florida Compact and the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative have also received major federal grants to support regional projects, which members report were made more competitive by the regional nature of their applications and the fact that the jurisdictions had an existing structure in place to coordinate regionally. The collaborative provides a way to indicate regional cohesion on the issue of climate change, as well as demonstrating that proposed projects or plans will have benefits beyond an individual jurisdictional level—which can be an important consideration for agencies and foundations deciding how to administer limited funds.
- *A collaborative represents a unified regional voice that can more effectively communicate policy positions with state or federal levels of government.* Compared to numerous municipalities working alone and developing individual (and possibly disjointed) policy positions, the voice of a unified region can be much stronger and more likely to produce positive outcomes in state or federal policy. Furthermore, state and federal agencies can more effectively work with local governments through a collaborative, as opposed to working with municipalities individually. For example, ARCCA’s outreach and communication efforts with state decisionmakers has resulted in greater state-level recognition of local needs and the benefits of regionalism. Several recent state-level policy statements, including the Safeguarding California: Implementation Action Plans (sector-based plans to implement the state’s adaptation strategy) released in December 2011,<sup>47</sup> have noted the valuable role of ARCCA and the importance of supporting local and regional interests. In 2015, the California Legislature recognized the importance of collaboratives, setting an objective for state agencies to encourage regional planning efforts to address climate impacts and develop regional adaptation strategies.<sup>48</sup>
- *Collaboratives are an effective way to build trust and relationships among staff and elected officials from different jurisdictions.* This trust can be critical for generating the will to act together on policies, projects, and funding opportunities. For example, county and municipal representatives from the Southeast Florida Compact indicated that the trust built over time has been one of the major reasons for their success and has empowered them to coordinate regional projects and collaborate, rather than compete, on funding opportunities. Whereas previously each county may have submitted a separate application for a particular federal grant, the relationships built through the collaborative have allowed them to recognize the benefit of advancing a single, more regionally cohesive application. In addition to building relationships between county and municipal staff, collaboratives can help staff ensure that climate change stays on the radar of their elected officials through summits and other high-profile events. In both Southeast Florida and King County, these types of events have been very successful in generating support from elected officials to continue the collaborative’s momentum and set the stage for next steps and new initiatives.

- *Despite changing administrations at the local level, collaboratives can help maintain continuity of climate initiatives and can offer both political buy-in and political shelter for elected officials.* While local champions—particularly at the elected level—are very important for catalyzing and maintaining an agenda on climate change, collaboratives present a unique way to temper the swings that can sometimes occur when a local champion moves on and a new administration comes in with a different agenda. Local government representatives who are most involved with the collaborative are typically career staff members of environmental agencies or sustainability offices; staff who are less likely to turnover and who can maintain involvement with the collaborative even if support wanes under new elected leadership. Staff members who see the benefits of such collaboration and who have formed relationships with their peers in other jurisdictions are often able to explain the benefits to a new administration and ensure continuity of support. Collaboratives can also help to build political buy-in by demonstrating successes across the region and instilling a sense of friendly competition among jurisdiction. Positive attention for collaborative members in the news, or from state or federal agencies (perhaps in the form of funding), can motivate other jurisdictions to join or other members to enhance their level of ambition.

## **PART II: GOING FORWARD & LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY**

### **FORMALIZING COLLABORATIVES**

*As regional collaboration grows in popularity as a method to address climate change, collaboratives are beginning to consider whether more formal governance structures would provide a more effective and sustainable model.* How a collaborative structures itself could affect its sustainability over the long term, but the ideal solution will not necessarily be the same for every region.

The collaboratives explored in these case studies are distinct from other types of existing regional entities (like RPCs, MPOs, and COGs) in that most of the collaboratives have not formally incorporated as a legal entity and therefore they have no legal authority or status to take in funds, contract, or undertake other activities that municipal corporations are empowered to take under state laws. Instead, these collaboratives are operating by virtue of voluntary agreements and are often taking in funds to support their work through nonprofit or academic fiscal agents, or through the individual entities involved in the collaborative. For example, the Southeast Florida Compact receives private foundation support through the Institute for Sustainable Communities, and the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative through the University of San Diego. On the Institute for Sustainable Communities' chart below, regional entities like MPOs and COGs would be considered more formal, but less flexible “regulatory bodies” or “legal entities,” whereas the regional collaboratives studied as part of this project would fall into the less formal, more flexible categories of a “chartered” or “informal network.”

**Figure 3:** Summary of Structural Characteristics of Collaboratives



Credit: Institute for Sustainable Communities.

As regional collaboratives grow and pursue long-term sustainable funding to support their work, they are considering whether to formalize their collaboratives into legally recognized entities and evaluating pathways for doing so. Essentially regional collaboratives have three different options for incorporating as a formal entity under the state laws reviewed:<sup>49</sup>

1. They can form a regional entity through state statutes authorizing the creation of a regional government entity or joint powers agency.<sup>50</sup>
2. Some states allow regional entities to form a nonprofit corporation through state statutes authorizing local governments to coordinate regionally through a nonprofit corporation eligible for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.<sup>51</sup>
3. They can continue to operate through fiscal agents (such as an existing regional or local entity, a nonprofit, or university).

In selecting how to formalize, collaboratives should consider the benefits and drawbacks that each option presents. How a collaborative formally establishes itself can affect its ability to directly take in funding,<sup>52</sup> the members that can participate, and the roles that it can play. Thus, these groups must weigh many considerations as they choose a structure that can help the collaborative maximize its effectiveness and deliver on collaborative goals:

- **Eligibility to take in funding:** Many collaboratives are exploring options for formalizing their structure due to concerns about longevity and in hopes that a more formal structure will help the collaborative to attract additional funding, particularly from large federal programs. Some federal grants are only available to government entity applicants (e.g., local governments, regional government entities, and state agencies, etc.). Thus, collaboratives that operate through a nonprofit or university fiscal agents may be ineligible to directly receive grants from some sources. On the other hand, some private foundations have guidelines specifying that they can only make grants to nonprofit organizations and local or regional government

entities are not eligible grantees. Thus, a collaborative's choice on how to formalize its structure and its choice of fiscal agent can affect its ability to take in different sources of funding.

- **University constraints:** Many universities are providing important services to their regional collaborative partners, such as fiscal oversight, office space, web hosting, convening space, among other things. However, collaboratives hosted by an academic institution must often navigate the unique bureaucratic constraints of universities. For example, universities have policies requiring administrative overhead on grants, and such overhead can be quite substantial for federal grants (from 26 to 54 percent of the grant).<sup>53</sup> Some universities, however, like UCLA, can offer lower overhead (6 percent), if membership fees are treated as gifts. Academic institutions also have unique staffing and hiring constraints, which can limit their ability to hire staff to support the collaborative.
- **Goals and roles:** Regional goals and the kinds of roles the collaborative wants to play might affect whether the collaborative should adopt a more flexible (but less formal) structure versus a more formal and rigid structure that might give the collaborative planning or decisionmaking authority in the region. Funding sources and the structure of a collaborative can also limit the collaborative's ability to play certain roles. For example, 501(c)(3) organizations cannot lobby and entities receiving funding from philanthropic sources are often prohibited from using those funds for lobbying.
- **Membership:** The collaborative's goals and structure can also affect membership decisions. The way a collaborative forms can limit the types of members that can formally participate in the collaborative. For example, many states have laws that allow for the creation of regional entities and the sharing of local powers through interlocal agreements, which may provide a vehicle for formalizing a collaborative's structure. However, these statutes may also limit the types of members that can formally participate in the collaborative. For example, under California's Joint Powers Act only *public agencies* can participate in a joint powers agency.<sup>54</sup> As such, a California collaborative formed as a joint powers agency will not be able to formally include nonprofit, business, or academic members.
- **Politics:** Collaboratives also have to take into account the political realities in their regions, and whether a more formal (and possibly authoritative) structure is politically feasible. Many existing collaboratives have so far expressed an interest in maintaining a more flexible network-type structure to avoid any perception of encroaching on the powers and responsibilities of local governments in their regions.

## CREATING LONG-TERM MODELS FOR FUNDING COLLABORATIVES

Through this project, the Georgetown Climate Center also examined how a collaborative's structure could affect its ability to take in funding—with a focus on eligibility for federal grants. Federal grant programs often specify the entities that are eligible to receive funding under the program (i.e., the “eligible grantees” of the program). In developing this report, the Center analyzed a variety of federal programs (those commonly used by state and local governments to fund adaptation planning and implementation of adaptation projects) to determine whether the structure of the collaborative (either public agency, nonprofit, or university) would affect its eligibility to receive funding. While many grant programs allow for nonprofit and university grantees, many of the programs that local governments rely on for adaptation planning and implementation can only make grants to public entities. Several of these grant programs, however, specifically recognize *regional government entities* as eligible grantees. More detail about specific programs can be found in Figure 4, on the following page.

Figure 4: Eligible Grantees for Select Federal Programs

	Regional entity	Public agency	Non-profit	Universities
<b>US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)</b>				
<b>Community Development Block Grants</b>	Yes, eligible grantees include “combination of political subdivisions” <sup>55</sup>	Yes	Yes, as subgrantee	Yes, as subgrantee
<b>Choice Neighborhoods</b>	Yes, if can demonstrate capacity to do economic development work	Yes, if capacity to do economic development work	Yes, if economic development work	Unclear
<b>Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</b>				
<b>Hazard Mitigation Grant Program</b>	Yes, eligible grantees include “regional government entities” <sup>56</sup>	Yes	Yes, as subgrantee	Unclear
<b>Pre-Disaster Mitigation and Flood Mitigation Assistance</b>	No	Yes, but must have land-use authority over floodplains	No	No
<b>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</b>				
<b>Coastal Zone Management Grants (Section 306/a and 309)</b>	Yes, states can subgrant to “areawide or regional agencies” <sup>57</sup>	Yes, as subgrantee	Yes, as subgrantee	Yes, as subgrantee
<b>US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</b>				
<b>Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants</b>	Potentially, if listed as an eligible grantee in state’s work program	Yes, if listed in state’s work program	Potentially, if listed in state’s work program	Potentially, if listed in state’s work program
<b>Water Pollution Control Grants</b>	No, only public bodies with authority over sewage and waste	No	No	No
<b>Economic Development Administration (EDA)</b>				
<b>Economic Adjustment Assistance</b>	Yes, “consortium of political subdivisions” or “district organizations” engaged in economic development activities. <sup>58</sup>	Yes, if engaged in economic development activities	Yes, if acting in cooperation with political subdivision	Yes, if acting in cooperation with political subdivision
<b>Department of Interior (DOI)</b>				
<b>Wildland Fire Research and Studies Program</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)</b>				
<b>Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)</b>	Yes, multi-jurisdictional groups (including MPOs) can apply through a single lead applicant <sup>59</sup>	Yes	No	No

Our research indicates that a formally established regional collaborative has greater potential to take in federal funds as a grantee or subgrantee under a variety of federal programs. Universities and nonprofits were not eligible grantees for many of the funding sources analyzed during this project, except for EDA grants and FEMA hazard mitigation grants that can be granted to nonprofits and councils of government with specific expertise in disaster recovery and economic development. Although nonprofit or university fiscal agents may be eligible *subgrantees*, they are not eligible to be *direct* recipients of some sources of funding that would be available to them were the collaborative to formally establish as a regional entity under applicable state laws.

However, establishing a collaborative formally as a separate regional entity can also have other administrative implications. To receive grants, all collaboratives (whether formally established regional entities or operating through a nonprofit or university fiscal agent) must demonstrate the administrative capacity to oversee the funding. Federal agencies often require that grant recipients have systems in place to ensure compliance with the grant terms and audit requirements. Collaboratives formally established under state law also may have to comply with other state laws requiring open meetings, disclosure of public records, financial reporting and audits, among other things.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, collaboratives considering a more formal structure to facilitate fundraising should balance this decision based upon considerations of the additional legal and administrative requirements involved with establishing and managing a separate agency or nonprofit to take in the funding.

In summary, regional collaboratives may be eligible grantees under a range of federal programs—particularly where the collaborative is a regional entity or where the collaborative takes in funds through one of its public entity members. Additionally, in several recent competitive calls for proposals federal agencies encouraged regional coordination. For example, in HUD’s Notice of Funding Availability for the National Disaster Resilience Competition, state and local applicants were awarded points for developing resilience approaches at a regional scale and demonstrating regional coordination.<sup>61</sup> In 2015, NOAA issued a competitive call for proposals to facilitate resilience strategies demonstrating regional coordination, the Regional Coastal Resilience Grants program (the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative was awarded one of these grants through its university host and fiscal agent).<sup>62</sup> Federal agencies under the leadership of President Obama used federal funds as a “carrot” to promote greater regionalism, and collaboratives were better able to compete for grants given this direction, though it is unclear whether similar approaches will be employed in the new administration. Federal and state agencies recognizing the need for greater cross-jurisdictional coordination may continue to use grants to encourage projects that provide regional benefits.

## CONCLUSION

*As communities become more aware of the risks they are facing from climate change and extreme weather events, they are coming together to develop innovative and collaborative solutions to address these risks.* As there is no one-size-fits-all approach, different regions are experimenting with a variety of different structural models for coordinating at the regional level. Most collaboratives have adopted more loose, voluntary network structures that give members flexibility about how involved to be and which collaborative initiatives to support. Others are working through more formal regional entities, such as regional planning councils. Despite the different approaches, many regions have experienced the benefits of working across local boundaries. The collaboratives researched as part of this project successfully brought more funding and expertise to the communities in their region, improved coordination on planning and policy, reduced duplication of efforts, and ensured the continuity of climate change initiatives despite changes in elected leadership. Furthermore, collaboratives have found that a flexible model, which allows local government members to choose which programs to support and policies to adopt, generates more participation from local governments as they can realize tangible benefits from participation while acting within local priorities and budget constraints.

Regional collaboratives aim to continue to fill gaps in their regions and pursue initiatives that will achieve measurable improvements in community resilience. However, many of these groups still struggle to build sustainable models for funding their efforts and measuring effectiveness. Both successful funding models and ways

to verify program success will be needed to boost momentum of collaborative efforts and broaden engagement by other leaders and partners.

As these groups look to grow and continue to add value to their regions and communities, they are considering what structural and funding options will give them the most stability over the long term. Some of them may ultimately decide to transition to a more formally established regional entity, depending on the needs and wishes of the local jurisdictions in their regions. There are many considerations that may factor into this decision, some outlined in this report and some that may emerge as requirements and incentives at the state and federal levels shift over time. Regional collaboratives can continue to share these lessons as their organizational structures, funding models, and roles evolve in the future.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA), National Centers for Environmental Information, Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters: Table of Events, <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events>.
- <sup>2</sup> Id.
- <sup>3</sup> Id.
- <sup>4</sup> Id.
- <sup>5</sup> Protective measures to address sea-level rise and coastal flooding are a prime example: while seawalls can protect one part of the coast from erosion and flooding, they can also exacerbate erosion downshore. See e.g., Gary Griggs, *The Effects of Armoring Shorelines—The California Experience*, [https://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2010/5254/pdf/sir20105254\\_chap8.pdf](https://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2010/5254/pdf/sir20105254_chap8.pdf)
- <sup>6</sup> A case study on Washington, DC’s Sustainable DC Initiative and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments’ climate adaptation efforts was also a part of this project, but is not discussed in this report because it is not a climate collaborative in the same sense of the other examples discussed here.
- <sup>7</sup> SAN DIEGO REGIONAL CLIMATE COLLABORATIVE, Climate Action Planning, <http://sdclimatecollaborative.org/solutions/action-plans/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Resilient Coastlines Project of Greater San Diego, <http://www.resilientcoastlines.org/about-1>.
- <sup>9</sup> Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, <http://www.southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/>.
- <sup>10</sup> The K4C’s efforts so far have focused exclusively on climate change mitigation, or reducing carbon emissions, although they may expand to adaptation efforts in the future. We have included lessons and examples from the K4C here, even though the main focus of this project was adaptation collaboratives, because many of the lessons drawn from the K4C’s organization, processes, and successes are transferrable to climate adaptation collaboratives and other types of collaborative efforts.
- <sup>11</sup> Interlocal agreements or joint powers agreements (collectively referred to as “interlocal agreements”) allow local governments to, through agreement, create a separate entity to coordinate powers and the delivery of services. The entity can possess the powers of the individual members but must specify the powers that will be jointly exercised in the interlocal agreement. See Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *A Handbook for Interlocal Agreements and Contracts* (Mar. 1967), <http://www.library.unt.edu/gpo/acir/Reports/information/m-29.pdf>.
- <sup>12</sup> On the climate change mitigation side, California first set emissions reduction targets in 2005 with then-Governor Schwarzenegger signing Executive Order S-03-05, followed by the Legislature’s passage of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 requires California to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and makes the state’s Air Resources Board the lead agency for developing a plan (the “Scoping Plan”) and regulations for a cap-and-trade system to achieve the target. In August 2016, with the passage of Senate Bill 32, the Legislature extended the target, establishing a requirement to reduce emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels by the end of 2030. By law, proceeds from the state’s cap-and-trade program are deposited into a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) and appropriated through the budget process for projects that support the goals of AB 32 (reducing emissions, providing net greenhouse gas sequestration, and supporting long-term, transformative efforts needed to improve public and environmental health and develop a clean energy economy). See CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD, California Climate Investments, <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/auctionproceeds.htm>. California is also active at the state level in adaptation planning. The state developed its first Climate Adaptation Strategy in 2009, pursuant to Executive Order S-13-08, and updated the plan in 2014 with the release of “Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk.” Pursuant to Executive Order B-30-15, state agencies also developed sector-specific Implementation Action Plans to identify actions to implement “Safeguarding.” Assembly Bill 1482, passed in October 2015, requires an update to the statewide adaptation plan every three years; the California Natural Resources Agency is expected to release a draft of this update in January 2017.
- <sup>13</sup> Leaders from counties in the region visited Washington, D.C in 2009 to discuss the risks posed by climate change and seek federal support, but each county had developed their own separate sea-level rise scenarios (at significant expense and effort), and congressional staff was not convinced. After these meetings, the counties decided to come together to develop unified sea-level rise projections for the region and work together to plan and prepare for climate change.

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- <sup>14</sup> Green-building standards encourage greener building and development, and several models codes or rating systems help communities revise building ordinances to green buildings. See U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Green Building Standards*, <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/green-building-standards>.
- <sup>15</sup> Through local government partnerships, SDG&E works with local governments and non-profit organizations “to promote energy efficiency, and demand response and conservation programs, services and resources; and provide energy education and outreach” to communities. SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC, Local Government Partnerships, <http://www.sdge.com/our-commitment/energy-efficiency-partnership-programs/local-government-partnerships>.
- <sup>16</sup> SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT, The Summit, <http://www.southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/the-summit/>.
- <sup>17</sup> King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Pledge.
- <sup>18</sup> KING COUNTY, News Release: Regional leaders unite in call to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in King County, July 23, 2014, [www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/News/release/2014/July/23\\_greenhouse-gas-targets.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/News/release/2014/July/23_greenhouse-gas-targets.aspx).
- <sup>19</sup> KING COUNTY-CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION, Joint County-City Climate Commitments, available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/dnrp-directors-office/climate/2016-K4C-LetterOfCommitments.pdf>. The Joint County-City Climate Commitments include general pathways and more specific “catalytic” policy commitments and/or projects or programs in nine subject areas: (1) Shared Goals, (2) Climate Policy, (3) Transportation and Land Use, (4) Energy Supply, (5) Green Building and Energy Efficiency, (6) Consumption and Materials Management, (7) Forests and Farming, (8) Government Operations, and (9) Collaboration.
- <sup>20</sup> KING COUNTY-CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION, Joint Letter of Commitment: Climate Change Actions in King County, available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/dnrp-directors-office/climate/2016-K4C-LetterOfCommitments.pdf>.
- <sup>21</sup> LOS ANGELES REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY, A Greater Los Angeles: The Framework for Regional Climate Action & Sustainability, <http://www.laregionalcollaborative.com/the-framework/>.
- <sup>22</sup> SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT, RCAP Database, <http://rcap.southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/>.
- <sup>23</sup> For example, California Senate Bill 1386 (2015-2016) establishes a state policy that “the protection and management of natural and working lands is an important strategy in meeting the state’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals,” and directs state agencies to consider the policy when revising or establishing policies, regulations, or investments relating to the protection of these lands. Assembly Bill 2480 (2015-2016) establishes a state policy that “source watersheds are recognized and defined as integral components of California’s water infrastructure” and makes maintenance expenses for these areas eligible for the same financing that other water collection and treatment infrastructure is eligible for.
- <sup>24</sup> Assembly Bill 1550 (2015-2016) adds new minimum allocations from the state’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (i.e. revenue generated from the state’s cap-and-trade program) for projects that benefit low-income households or low-income communities that do not otherwise qualify as “disadvantaged communities” under the state’s screening process, CalEnviroScreen. State law already required minimum allocations from the Fund to “disadvantaged communities,” which are determined through CalEnviroScreen using a combination of environmental and socioeconomic indicators. The rural Sierra Nevada region has a relatively high rates of unemployment and low-income households compared to the rest of the state. However, in determining “disadvantaged communities,” the emphasis on pollutants that are not measured or do not occur in rural areas like the Sierra Nevada region means that Sierra communities are generally precluded from consideration for these portions of GGRF funds that are allocated for the benefit of “disadvantaged communities.” See SIERRA CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION PARTNERSHIP, The State of Cap-and-Trade Spending in the Sierra Nevada Fact Sheet. Available at [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5556377fe4b0799dab4ec704/t/5757588207eaa0f05c3743f6/1465342083185/CAMP\\_Reduced+Size+Map+of+GGRF+Projects+in+the+Sierra\\_2016\\_05\\_31.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5556377fe4b0799dab4ec704/t/5757588207eaa0f05c3743f6/1465342083185/CAMP_Reduced+Size+Map+of+GGRF+Projects+in+the+Sierra_2016_05_31.pdf). AB 1550 will result in portions of GGRF funding being reserved for low-income areas, like some Sierra Nevada communities, that do not meet the criteria of a “disadvantaged community” using CalEnviroScreen (<http://www.adaptationclearinghouse.org/resources/california-communities-environmental-health-screening-tool-calenviroscreen-2-0.html>)
- <sup>25</sup> Broward County served as the applicant for the grant, on behalf of all four Compact counties. The vulnerability assessment looked at the vulnerability of “regionally significant” freeways, arterials, and rail to sea-level rise, storm surge and coastal flooding, and heavy precipitation and related flooding. See U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, FHWA Climate Resilience Pilot Program: South Florida, FHWA-HEP-16-048, [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/climate\\_change/adaptation/resilience\\_pilots/2013-2015\\_pilots/south\\_florida/index.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/climate_change/adaptation/resilience_pilots/2013-2015_pilots/south_florida/index.cfm).
- <sup>26</sup> For more information on the Seven50 plan and partnership, see <http://seven50.org/>.
- <sup>27</sup> The National Disaster Resilience Competition, funded through Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery appropriations, was administered in two phases by HUD in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation. The two-phase competition was modeled after the previous Rebuild by Design competition, and was designed to promote risk assessment and planning and projects to increase resilience to future natural disasters and climate change. States and local jurisdictions that had experienced presidentially-declared disasters between 2011 and 2013 were eligible to submit applications in Phase 1, framing a plan for increasing resilience to

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climate change and the type of disaster experienced by the state or community. HUD selected finalists to proceed with applications in Phase 2, during which the applicants proposed specific projects that would advance the plans they identified through Phase 1. HUD announced the winners (8 states and 5 local jurisdictions) in January 2016; in total, the funding awarded was nearly \$1 billion. *See* U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Awards \$1 Billion Through National Disaster Resilience Competition, January 29, 2016, <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-awards-1-billion-through-national-disaster-resilience-competition/>.

- <sup>28</sup> TUOLUMNE COUNTY, National Disaster Resilience Competition, <http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/index.aspx?NID=951>.
- <sup>29</sup> NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION – OFFICE FOR COASTAL MANAGEMENT, Regional Coastal Resilience Grant Awards, <https://www.coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant/projects/>.
- <sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, The City of Los Angeles Has Its Spotlight on Energy Efficiency, July 30, 2012, <http://energy.gov/articles/city-los-angeles-has-its-spotlight-energy-efficiency>.
- <sup>31</sup> KCET, Climate Change L.A. Climate Studies, <https://www.kcet.org/climate-change-la/climate-studies>.
- <sup>32</sup> CLIMATE SOLUTIONS, “50x30 Carbon Reduction: What Would It Take?,” <http://climatesolutions.org/article/50x30-carbon-reduction-ambitious-achievable>.
- <sup>33</sup> Typical organizational documents that regional collaboratives have utilized include charters, membership agreements, governing policies, and interlocal agreements authorized under state law (in the case of collaboratives with only municipal and/or county members).
- <sup>34</sup> For example, Washington’s Interlocal Cooperation Act, RCW Chapter 39.34, states a purpose to “permit local governmental units to make the most efficient use of their powers by enabling them to cooperate with other localities on a basis of mutual advantage...” RCW 39.34.010. The Act authorizes “any two or more public agencies [to] enter into agreements with one another for joint or cooperative action...” and identifies terms that must be specified in the agreement.
- <sup>35</sup> The K4C formally established under Washington’s Interlocal Cooperation Act, setting out goals and priorities for the collaborative and designating King County as the fiscal and contractual agent for the collaborative, rather than creating a new regional body as authorized under state law to administer funding and carry out decisionmaking (RCW 39.34.030 provides that if the interlocal agreement does not establish a separate legal entity, the agreement must provide for an administrator or joint board and manner of acquiring, holding, and disposing of property used in the joint undertaking). The Southeast Florida Compact first developed their voluntary Compact agreement that each county ratified in 2009 (or early 2010), and until 2016 operated under this voluntary agreement with administrative support from the Institute for Sustainable Communities. In 2016, the Compact counties formalized an interlocal agreement under Florida’s Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1969, Fla. Stat. §163.01, that commits the counties to contributing funding over FY 2016 and FY 2017 and establishing Broward County as the contracting agent on behalf of the four counties, to contract with ISC for continued staffing and other services for the collaborative.
- <sup>36</sup> SANDAG’s board of directors includes mayors, councilmembers, and county supervisors from each of the 19 local governments (city and county) in San Diego County. SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS, About SANDAG, <http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?fuseaction=about.home>.
- <sup>37</sup> The collaborative’s governing policy requires that at least seven (of a maximum of twelve) seats be held by public agency members, and also designates for the collaborative’s founding members, most of which are public agencies (two cities, the County, the region’s port authority, and the region’s MPO). SDRCC’s seven founding members include the cities of Chula Vista and San Diego, the County, the Port of San Diego, SANDAG, the University of San Diego, and the San Diego Foundation. SAN DIEGO REGIONAL CLIMATE COLLABORATIVE, San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative Governance Policy (December 2015), at 1.
- <sup>38</sup> CAPITAL REGION CLIMATE READINESS COLLABORATIVE, Organizational Structure: Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative (Last Revised July 30, 2015), Art. VI, §2.
- <sup>39</sup> SIERRA CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION PARTNERSHIP, Governance Policy, Version 1, May 20, 2015, Art. VI, §2.
- <sup>40</sup> SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT TECHNICAL AD HOC WORK GROUP, A Unified Sea Level Rise Projection for Southeast Florida (April 2011). A document prepared for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Steering Committee; SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT INUNDATION MAPPING AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT WORK GROUP, Analysis of the Vulnerability of Southeast Florida to Sea Level Rise (August 2012).
- <sup>41</sup> For example, the CRC has a range of dues requirements across its membership categories that depend on both member type (e.g. special districts generally pay more than nonprofits) and size (determined by number of employees, or population, as applicable). Private agencies and special district members contribute between \$750 and \$6,000 depending on the size (employee base); local and regional agency members contribute between \$750 and \$3,000 depending on the population covered; and nonprofit and university members contribute between \$250 and \$1,000 depending on the size (employees). “Foundational members” contribute \$10,000 annually, and any organization type may be a “foundational member” but typically, these have been larger regional agencies, utilities, etc. that have greater financial capacity to contribute to the collaborative. Foundational members can also opt to contribute less than the full \$10,000, or simply return to regular membership dues if the contributions are too onerous. *See* CAPITAL REGION CLIMATE READINESS COLLABORATIVE, Organizational Structure: Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative (Last Revised July 30, 2015), Art. V, §1.

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- <sup>42</sup> The K4C sets out its dues structure based on population, ranging from \$500 for cities with a population under 5,000, to \$5,000 for Seattle (with over 250,000 population) and \$10,000 for the County. KING COUNTY-CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION, Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration (2012), §4.3.
- <sup>43</sup> The Southeast Florida Compact recently agreed to an equal cost-sharing structure. All four counties approved an Interlocal Agreement in 2016 (passed by each of the four counties' Boards of Commissioners) that commits each county to contributing \$100,000 total over fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the staffing and services provided by the collaborative's administrative host, the Institute for Sustainable Communities. Interlocal Agreement Between Broward County, Miami Dade County, Monroe County, And Palm Beach County For Cost Share Support Of Services For The Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (2016).
- <sup>44</sup> SAN DIEGO REGIONAL CLIMATE COLLABORATIVE, San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative Governance Policy.
- <sup>45</sup> SIERRA CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION PARTNERSHIP, Sierra CAMP Governance Policy, Version 1, May 20, 2015, Art. V, §1.
- <sup>46</sup> The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative was given the Climate Leadership Awards' Innovative Partnerships Certificate in 2015, and the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration in 2016. U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, EPA Center for Corporate Leadership, Climate Leadership Awards: Past Winners, <https://www.epa.gov/climateleadership/climate-leadership-awards-past-winners>.
- <sup>47</sup> See ALLIANCE OF REGIONAL COLLABORATIVES FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION, State Policy Engagement, <http://www.arccacalifornia.org/initiatives/state-policy-engagement/>; CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY, Safeguarding California: Implementation Action Plans (e.g. at 119-122), available at <http://resources.ca.gov/docs/climate/safeguarding/Safeguarding%20California-Implementation%20Action%20Plans.pdf>.
- <sup>48</sup> Assembly Bill 1482 requires the California Natural Resources Agency to update the state's climate adaptation strategy every three years. It sets out a number of objectives that state agencies are directed to work to maximize (where applicable and feasible); among these objectives is "encouraging regional collaborative planning efforts to address regional climate change impacts and adaptation strategies." Ca. Public Resources Code § 71154.
- <sup>49</sup> The options available to local governments are limited to those authorized under state law, and state law will also govern the powers granted to the regional entity authorized by the statute. For example, in some states regional entities have power to tax or impose fees, in other states they do not.
- <sup>50</sup> E.g., Fla. Stat. § 163.01(7) allows local government to create a "separate legal or administrative entity" to administer or execute an interlocal agreement to provide services or cooperate with other localities. The entity can be a commission, board or council, and has the power to in its own name make and enter contracts; hire employees or contractors; acquire, construct, manage, maintain or operate building or public works; acquire, hold or dispose of property; appropriate funds; and receive grants or other assistance funds. The separate entity created under this provision of the state code does not, however, have taxing authority. The entity can develop its own decisionmaking protocols. California's Joint Exercise of Powers Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 6500 et seq.) similarly allows public agencies to, by agreement, jointly exercise powers held by the public agency parties to the contract. Through the agreement the agencies can create a separate entity responsible for administration of the agreement, a "joint power agency", including a separate board, commission, person, firm, corporation, or non-profit. The agency can possess the powers common to the parties to the agreement and as specified by the agreement, including the power to make and enter contracts; employ agents and employees; acquire, manage, construct, maintain and operate buildings, works or improvements; and acquire, hold and dispose of property. The Joint Powers Agency can also enter into agreements with other state agencies. Member agencies can even delegate land-use authorities to the Joint Powers Agency.
- <sup>51</sup> E.g., Fla. Stat. 163.02(1) authorizes the creation of a "council of local public officials" as a non-profit corporation governed by the elected chief executives of each participating local government.
- <sup>52</sup> The types of different sources of funding that collaboratives are using include: federal grants, state grants, contributions from individual local government members, and private foundation grants.
- <sup>53</sup> See e.g., Univ. of Cal. Los Angeles, *Facilities and Administrative Cost Rates* (Jul. 1, 2010), <http://www.research.ucla.edu/ocga/sr2/idcinfo.htm>.
- <sup>54</sup> Under California's Joint Powers Act, a nonprofit corporation may be designated to administer the joint powers agency. Cal. Gov't Code § 6506.
- <sup>55</sup> Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development can be granted to a "combination of political subdivisions," which includes cities, towns, counties, and community associations, or combinations thereof. States administered CDBG funding can also subgrant to nonprofit organizations and community development organizations. 42 U.S.C.A. § 5302 (West); HUD, *Managing CDBG: A Guidebook for CDBG Grantees on Subrecipient Oversight* at 1-6 (Mar. 2005), available at: [https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC\\_17086.pdf](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_17086.pdf).
- <sup>56</sup> HMGP funds can be granted to a "council of governments (whether incorporated as nonprofit or formed under state law), regional government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government". 42 U.S.C.A. § 5122 (West); 44 C.F.R. § 201.2; 44 C.F.R. § 206.2

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<sup>57</sup> 16 U.S.C.A. § 1455a; 42 USC § 3334.

<sup>58</sup> The Economic Development Administration defines “consortium of political subdivisions” or “district organizations” as an entity that is formed through an intergovernmental agreement providing for joint exercise of local government powers, a public organization established under state-enabling legislation allowing for the creation of multi-jurisdictional area-wide planning organizations, or a non-profit organization incorporated under applicable state statutes. 42 U.S.C. § 3149; 13 C.F.R. § 304.2.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.transportation.gov/tiger/faq>

<sup>60</sup> For a discussion of compliance issues for California Joint Powers Agencies see Joan L. Cassman and Jean B. Savaree, Hanson Bridgett LLP, *Joint Powers Authorities: Opportunities and Challenges* (undated), <http://www.cacities.org/getattachment/5768b027-71a7-4bc5-8d82-d2009f304297/LR-Cassman,-Savaree.aspx>.

<sup>61</sup> HUD, *Notice of Funding Availability, National Disaster Resilience Competition*, FR-5800-N-29 at pp. 35, 39, 49 (Sep. 17, 2014); <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=2014ndrc-nofa.pdf> (at page 7 of the NOFA, HUD acknowledges the importance of regional coordination: “[C]ommunities do not stand alone. A disaster affecting one community affects its neighbors. Frequently, vulnerabilities for flooding, storms, and fires have regional risks and solutions. Protecting a community from threats and hazards often requires cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions, not just during response, but also throughout the protection, prevention, mitigation, and recovery, as well as through revitalization, maintenance, and evaluation process.”).

<sup>62</sup> NOAA, Regional Coastal Resilience Grants, <https://coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant/>. The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative’s application for this program was successful, and the collaborative will be coordinating sea-level rise vulnerability assessments and integrated coastal resilience strategies for seven local jurisdictions in San Diego County.

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