

Public Universities and Transformative Climate Action for a Just Recovery



Historical Community Engagement



Universities have long been partners with their communities:

- Land Grant Universities
- Sea Grant Universities
- Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program
- Climate mitigation and adaptation assessments
 - National Climate Assessment
 - IPCC Reports
 - Global Adaptation Commission

Models of universities – community engagement

- Amplifier
- Neutral facilitator
- Technical expert
- Leader
- Community as “client”
- Campus as living lab
- Investments through endowments

Four key areas:

Research & Convenings

Dual Degrees/Certificate Programs

Institutional Levers

Opportunities



Research & Convenings

Ripe Research Opportunities (derived from UC3 Poll)

How can universities help our communities prepare for the future?

Topical Areas

- **Energy Innovation / deployment**
- **Community Resilience**
- **Green Infrastructure**
- **Green Jobs**
- Climate Investment
- Land Use Management
- Health and climate change
- Climate Adaptation in all sectors
- And more....

Process Areas

- Appropriate stakeholder engagement
- Increasing diversity and inclusion
- Behavioral change
- Indicators of success
- Enhancing resilience and adaptive capacity
- K-Gray education
- And more....

Convenings

Land-use management in the State of Maryland

- Convening to introduce UMD/NASA Remote sensing technology to advance climate-smart land use planning for the state, Chesapeake Bay, and campus

Community Resilience Planning & Financing

- Multi-stakeholder engagement with the City of Annapolis to develop a comprehensive resilience plan with financing mechanisms built in to ensure rapid implementation
- GLISA helps Great Lakes' cities develop climate adaptation plans for their context

Energy Innovation, Development, and Deployment in Michigan

- Stakeholder convenings on where wind/solar can be deployed and with community support
- Life Cycle Analysis of materials use for various corporations and the investment community

Client-Based projects:

- UNFCCC commissioned work on adaptation opportunities in The Seychelles, Namibia
- Review of Global Commission on Adaptation case studies and action tracks
- Climate Risk Screening Tools for projects financed by the Global Environment Facility



Innovative Degrees /Certificate Programs

Ways to increase 'Systems Thinkers' and Civic Scientists'

Popular Dual Degrees at Michigan:

- MBA/Environment
- Urban Planning/Environment
- Engineering/Environment
- SPH/Environment
- SPP/ Environment

Certificate Programs

(available to all graduate students across the University)

New Michigan "Climate Solutions"

Maryland developing several in the Sustainability space, including on climate



Institutional Levers

Institutional Incentives & Levers

- How can Universities appropriately incentivize, recognize, and reward public service and multi-stakeholder research and engagement?
- *All faculty should be engaged in teaching, research, and service.*

Institutional incentives your Universities can consider:

- Require faculty to report annually on outreach/community engagement and the impact
- Publicly recognize outreach leaders – “Public Service Awards”
- Create interdisciplinary communities of practice – seed money helps!
- Innovation Centers or Collaboratories focused on key aspects of climate change
- Client-based student and faculty projects
- Paid student internships with cities/communities/NGOs/Gov’t

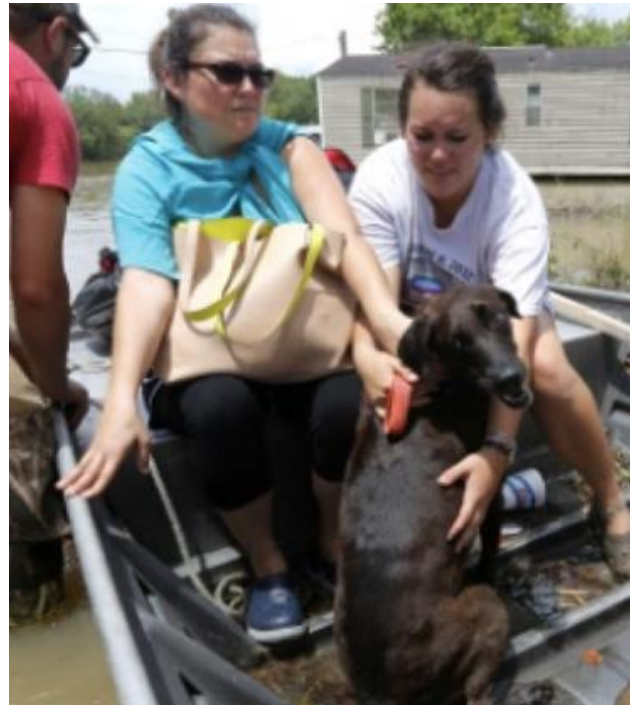


Opportunities

Transformation requires 'Audacious Action'* together!

Quickly develop 'communities of practice' for the kinds of problems most intractable:

- How can we limit climate change to <2°C and adapt to the consequences already manifest?
- How to protect the most vulnerable from climate change impacts and lift people out of poverty?
- How to preserve ecosystem services as the climate maps shifts ideal ranges for species?
- How to cope with extreme heat that exceeds physiological limits in some countries?
- What data on future extreme events are most useful for regional planning?
- How to communicate *usable* information across the researcher-practitioner world = language!
- **WE MUST NETWORK OUR NETWORKS – PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES HAVE A UNIQUE ROLE TO PLAY!**



Thank you !