Advisory Council for Climate Adaptation Science (ACCAS)

February 27-28, 2024, Meeting 1 Summary

Stewart Lee Udall Department of the Interior Building (Main Interior Building)

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Advisory Council for Climate Adaptation Science (ACCAS or Council) met for the first time on February 27-28, 2024 in Washington D.C.

Tuesday, February 27, 2024

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Meeting Purpose

Holly Chandler, SGS Designated Federal Officer, Management and Program Analyst, National Climate Adaptation Science Center, opened the meeting.

Council Chair Dave Reidmiller (Gulf of Maine Research Institute) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Annalise Blum, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, set the stage for the importance of the Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASCs) in providing climate adaptation science and maintaining partnerships with diverse actors for the delivery of the science. Ms. Blum highlighted the recently revised DOI Climate Action Plan focused on addressing climate change threats. Anne Kinsinger, USGS, Associate Director, Ecosystems Mission Area provided an additional welcome and highlighted the role of the Council in advising USGS on the operations of the CASCs.

Introductions

Council members introduced themselves. See Appendix 1 for the participants list.

ACCAS Foundations – Scope and Goals

Holly Chandler provided an overview of the Council's scope and duties as outlined in the Charter and noted that the ACCAS charter will expire after two years, unless renewed, and ACCAS members are currently appointed for staggered two or three year[1] terms. Holly also discussed subcommittee structure and added that the Council will follow a consensus decision-making process. Susan Hayman, Ross Strategic Facilitator, reviewed the Council's operational guidelines and flagged one change from the version shared with members as part of the meeting packet: alternates can participate in the ACCAS meetings only if they are nominated by members and formally appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

ACCAS members agreed to being recorded and photographed during full ACCAS meetings but noted that recordings or pictures should not be posted on personal social media accounts.

Level-Setting Presentations on USGS CASCs (CASCs 101)

Doug Beard (Chief, USGS National CASC), Shawn Carter (Chief Scientist, USGS National CASC), Steve Gray (Federal Director / Regional Administrator, USGS Alaska CASC), and Meade Krosby (University Director of the Northwest

[1] At the outset, half of the current members will serve two-year terms and half will serve three-year terms to provide for an orderly future rotation of half the members at any time.

CASC) provided level setting presentations on the national and regional CASCs and the role of the university host with regional CASCs. The presentations are available on the USGS website.

Council members emphasized the need to enhance coordination and learning across USGS CASCs and across USGS and stakeholders to work on climate adaptation science priorities, including on issues such as technical support, capacity building, and skills development for the next generation of climate adaptation workforce.

Members also reflected on ACCAS's charge of advising on the "*contents of a national strategy identifying key climate adaptation science priorities to advance the management of natural and cultural resources in the face of climate change*"[2]. They noted that adaptation is inherently place-based and suggested that a national strategy that reinforces the notion of centrality of places would empower people on the ground.

2024 ACCAS Priorities

David Applegate (USGS Director) provided welcoming remarks and emphasized the role that the CASC network plays in advancing the goals of the DOI Climate Action Plan (2021).

Robin O'Malley (USGS, retired) gave an overview of the recommendations provided by the prior Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science (ACCCNRS), including the need to deliver actionable science, strengthen coordination and collaboration, incorporate tribal and indigenous knowledge, and conduct program evaluation.

Nicole DeCrappeo (Federal Director / Regional Administrator, USGS Northwest CASC) presented the national and regional CASC priorities for the ACCAS as they relate to climate adaptation science, partnerships and community-building, and science delivery and communications (see Appendix 2).

In response to questions from members, USGS noted that the national and regional CASC priorities for the Council can be used as a starting point and ACCAS could identify additional needs based on their experiences.

To indicate those priorities where Council members' individual organizations are currently working/have an affinity, members added their organizations' names next to the USGS priorities. Most priority areas were identified as areas of high affinity. Two priorities, "Develop a framework to better support multi-CASC research efforts" and "Identify best ways for CASCs to support implementation of DOI Climate Action Plan and target CASC science products to DOI bureaus", are priorities where fewer member organizations are currently working. As they proceeded with work planning, members were invited to consider whether to continue focusing efforts on high affinity areas, or to invest efforts in areas where additional attention might be warranted.

2024 ACCAS Work Planning (Part 1)

ACCAS members held three breakout discussions based on the eight priorities presented by the USGS, grouped within the three following areas[3]: Climate adaptation science priorities; Partnerships & community-building; Science delivery/communications. The USGS priorities were used as a starter list of ideas. The discussions gathered members' input related to additional ideas that could be considered, the issues to be addressed around each priority area and the key questions and information needed to be explored. Members provided report outs on the second

[2] ACCAS Charter.
[3] The priority areas presented by USGS that members discussed are included in Appendix 2 for reference.

meeting day. As seen later in this report, the outcome from these three breakout groups was a list of sixteen initial topics that could be examined/addressed further in subcommittees (Appendix 3).

Day 1 Reflections

Members shared reflections from the first meeting day. They noted that ACCAS could consider three main types of recommendations:

- high-level recommendations about the status of climate adaptation science at national level;
- advice to DOI to improve the integration of CASCs throughout the broader network of climate adaptation organizations;
- recommendations to improve the CASC network functionality both operationally and more cohesively in service of the science users.

The Council also discussed that it should be realistic about the recommendations that ACCAS can develop within two years per its charge.

Members noted potentially two major needs that could be addressed as part of the Council's recommendations to the Secretary, i.e., 1) an internal component related to refining current operations to more effectively deliver the science to users and decision-makers, and 2) an external component identifying opportunities for the CASCs to develop, scale up work, and form effective partnerships. To that end, some members mentioned the potential effectiveness of identifying lessons learned from similar programs such as: the NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnerships (CAP) / Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program; or the National Center for Biotechnology Information. One member noted that the World Bank Fragility Forum addresses similar issues related to co-production and indigenous community engagement.

Clarifying how indigenous knowledge is addressed, USGS noted that they follow the Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies, and the principle of free, prior, and informed consent.

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Agenda Review and Meeting Procedure

Holly Chandler, USGS Designated Federal Officer, opened the meeting. Dave Reidmiller, ACCAS Chair, reviewed the agenda for the second meeting day.

Day 1 Check-in

Council members shared epiphanies/insights based on the first meeting day discussions. Among these insights, a key observation was the importance of developing actionable and implementable recommendations.

Members also suggested taking an iterative approach with the Council recommendation report development: develop an initial set of recommendations in the next months leading up to the ACCAS Fall meeting through the work of the subcommittees; and work towards additional recommendations after the Fall meeting.

Members identified the following information needs that will be shared by USGS after the meeting:

- The webinar led by Robin O'Malley that provides an update on the implementation of the report developed by ACCCNRS.
- The status of an updated inventory of the major providers of climate science and decision-support services by federal, state, tribal governments, and other entities.
- Explore with the Federal Adaptation and Resilience Group if a landscape analysis has been done to understand the federal actors working on climate adaptation efforts.

2024 ACCAS Work Planning (Part 2)

Members reported on their breakout discussions from the first meeting day. Members then reviewed the full list of sixteen ideas generated by the three breakout groups (Appendix 3) and shared observations on the degree of urgency and importance for each idea. While further conversations will take place in subcommittee meetings on the full list of ideas generated by the breakout groups, Council member discussion identified the following initial ideas as both urgent and important:

- Science Delivery and Communications:
    - Develop a framework/model for climate adaptation technical support that enhances science accessibility and translation, and aids in identifying science gaps. Such a framework/model could support Tribes and other indigenous communities, managers, other DOI bureaus, other government agencies, and climate-related private sector entities.
- Partnerships & Community-Building:
    - Identify ways to improve and better implement co-production efforts.
    - Ways to transfer power to the communities/users; Ways to more effectively implement and raise awareness around the existing science.
- Climate Adaptation Science Priorities:
    - Identify national high-level topical priorities and/or describe a process to identify national high-level topical priorities.
    - How should we define adaptation science for the future – to what extent should we think about science priorities in the context of response actions and implementation?

Subcommittee Organizing Conversations

Based on the work planning session, the Council decided to form three subcommittees structured around the three major USGS priority groupings:

- Science Delivery and Communications
- Partnerships and Community-Building
- Climate Adaptation Science Priorities

Subcommittees are planning to meet approximately once per month, starting in approximately late March 2024. Subcommittees are generally planning to use their first meetings to examine the list of ideas developed in the earlier breakout groups (Appendix 3) to formalize subcommittee workplans and actions. All findings and recommendations from the subcommittees will be brought to the full Council during future public Council meetings for consideration.

Remarks from Deb Haaland, U.S. Secretary of the Interior

Deb Haaland, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, provided welcoming remarks and noted the importance of the ACCAS's work in tackling the climate crisis. Secretary Haaland said the CASCs play a key role in achieving the Biden Administration's priorities to use science to protect natural ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations and deliver clean energy-related jobs. She noted that the regional CASCs make a difference on the ground in working with communities that are most impacted by the climate crisis. Secretary Haaland expressed her appreciation for ACCAS in lending their diverse expertise with the shared goal of building a livable future for the betterment of local communities and for empowering marginalized communities.

Public Comment

There were no public comments during the meeting. A written public comment was submitted to the Council for review before the meeting. The Council will not respond to public comments; individual members can respond personally but not on behalf of the Council.

Path Forward

The next in-person meeting will take place in the Fall 2024 with more details to be shared in the coming weeks. A potential interim virtual Council meeting is being considered for mid-Summer 2024.

Day 2 Closing

USGS leadership thanked ACCAS for the productive conversations and the progress made during the meeting. They emphasized that the USGS will act as a resource for ACCAS and can share more information about the USGS operations as work continues.

Council members, along with the Council leadership, Dave Reidmiller and Collin O'Mara, showed appreciation for being part of this effort and expressed enthusiasm for working together over the next two years for addressing the climate crisis and advancing implementation of the climate adaptation science. Members thanked Dave Reidmiller for his leadership, facilitation, and expertise over the two-day meeting.

Holly Chandler, USGS Designated Federal Officer, adjourned the meeting.

Appendix 1: ACCAS Participant List

*(*Denotes remote participation)*

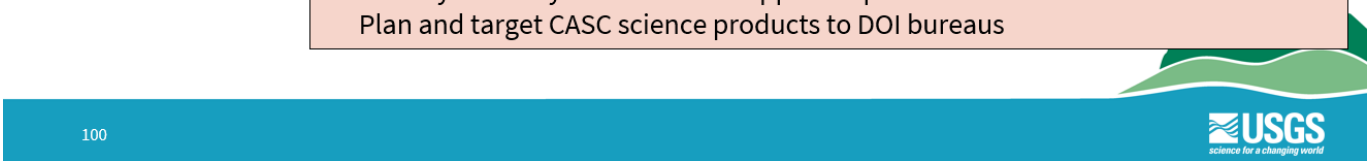
Name	Affiliation	Attendance
David Reidmiller (Chair)	Gulf of Maine Research Institute	X
Collin O'Mara (Vice-Chair)	National Wildlife Federation	X
Elizabeth Crosson	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California	X
Michael Durglo, Jr.	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes	X
Tim Fredricks	Bayer Crop Science	X
Elizabeth Gibbons	Farallon Strategies	X*
Ellen Herbert	Ducks Unlimited	
Chris Hoving	Michigan Department of Natural Resources	X
Meade Krosby	University of Washington	X
Harriet Morgan	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	X
Susan Natali	Woodwell Climate Research Center	X
Deyanira Nevárez Martínez	Michigan State University	X
Benjamin Preston	Rand Corporation	
Erin Sikorsky	Center for Climate and Security	X
Mervyn Tano	International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management	X
Galen Treuer	Miami-Dade County	X
Tiffany Turner	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	X
Robert VanZile Jr.	Sokaogon Chippewa Community	
David Wegner	Woolpert Engineering	X

DOI Leadership, USGS Leadership, and Additional Speakers

Name	Affiliation
Deb Haaland	U.S. Secretary of the Interior
Annalise Blum	DOI Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water & Science
Holly Chandler	USGS Designated Federal Officer, Management and Program Analyst, USGS National CASC
David Applegate	USGS Director
Anne Kinsinger	USGS, Associate Director, Ecosystems Mission Area
Doug Beard	Chief, USGS National CASC
Emily Fort	Acting Deputy Chief, USGS National CASC
Shawn Carter	Chief Scientist, USGS National CASC
Ryan Boyles	Acting Senior Scientist for CASC Climate Adaptation Technical Support, USGS National CASC
Steve Gray	Federal Director / Regional Administrator, USGS Alaska CASC
Nicole DeCrappeo	Federal Director / Regional Administrator, USGS Northwest CASC
Robin O'Malley	USGS National CASC, Policy & Partnership Coordinator and Designated Federal Officer (retired)

Appendix 2: USGS Priorities, Grouped by Topic

Climate adaptation science priorities	• Identify high-level science needs (broad bin topics) • Develop a framework to better support multi-CASC research efforts
Partnerships & community-building	• Identify best practices for connecting the climate adaptation science community • Identify best practices for partnering with organizations to jointly fund research or help develop research projects • Identify ways to improve and better implement co-production efforts
Science delivery & communications	• Develop creative messaging to help frame and describe CASC work & capabilities for partners and science users • Develop a framework for climate adaptation technical support • Identify best ways for CASCs to support implementation of DOI Climate Action Plan and target CASC science products to DOI bureaus



Appendix 3: Ideas identified during breakout groups within each of the USGS priority grouping areas

Ideas for Council work on Climate Adaptation Science Priorities included:

1. Identify national high-level topical priorities and/or describe a process to identify national high-level topical opportunities.
2. Develop a framework to better support multi-CASC research efforts
3. How should we define adaptation science for the future – to what extent are adaptation science and tools inclusive of response options and implementation and should we think about science priorities in the context of response actions and implementation?
4. What are science priorities that help agencies integrate and operationalize climate adaptation science in their work across the board?
5. Do we expand thinking about adaptation to include climate driven land-use change and, for example, decisions related to energy siting?
6. Are there new opportunities to serve additional end users that should be considered?
7. Evaluation framework for CASCs.
8. Where to take RAD next?
9. How to really integrate environmental justice into science needs?
10. What science do managers need in order to direct ecological transformation in a way that respects the autonomy, resilience, and diversity of those species and ecosystems and social ecological systems.

Ideas for Council work on Partnerships and Community-Building included:

1. Identify best practices for connecting the climate adaptation science community.
2. Identify best practices for partnering with organizations to jointly fund research or help develop research projects.
3. Identify ways to improve and better implement co-production efforts.
4. Transfer power to the communities/users: More effectively implement and raise awareness around the existing science.

Ideas for Council work on Science Delivery and Communications included:

1. Develop a framework/model for climate adaptation technical support that enhances science accessibility and translation, and aids in identifying science gaps. Such a framework/model could support Tribes, managers, other DOI bureaus, other government agencies, and climate-related private sector entities.
2. Assess and evaluate the effectiveness of science communications and use this as a basis to identify best practices for communicating climate adaptation science products to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes.