

The 66th Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference
Conservation Science and Policy: Global Perspectives and Applications
Washington, DC, July 17-20, 2011

Activity: NCA Listening Session; July 19, 2011; 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Presenter: Emily Cloyd, NCA Public Participation and Engagement Coordinator

Recorder: Bryce Golden-Chen, NCA Staff

Attendance: ~25 participants

Major themes highlighted during the discussion included the following:

- Focusing on making the information more accessible, such as establishing a web-based product for the 2009 report, is one of the best ways to address a variety of questions and concerns about the science of climate change. The NCA can more readily reach a variety of audiences by including a narrative, along with numbers and figures, and by focusing on communication and engagement activities.
- The 2013 report will try to build an education and communication component, and assess what is working and not working in education and communication, including the amount of impact the assessment is having.
- Cross-cutting topics and economic reasoning will address energy development issues. The NCA assessment stakeholder/partner network will help determine how to address climate and energy and the human society sections of the 2013 report will address development issues. Education about climate and energy is key.
- The 2013 report use regional boundaries drawn along state lines to be more relevant to members of Congress and will include a focus on questions asked by policymakers.
- The NCA is developing the international context as a bigger part of the 2013 assessment, such as including cross-border biogeographical regions (e.g., the Great Lakes) that look holistically at the system across borders.
- The focus should be more on adaptation than impacts to grab the public's attention. The 2013 report will include ongoing adaptation, incorporating case studies in the chapters. There will be a specific chapter on adaptation, along with most chapters starting with impacts. The indicator system being developed could potentially address adaptation being both forward and backward looking.
- A key issue is how the NCA can evaluate adaptation and mitigation while remaining policy relevant but policy neutral. The connections between natural and social sciences needs to be carefully examined and can be addressed through improved communication.
- Other suggestions included using appropriate baselines (e.g., not going pre-1960s for some issues because of confounding factors) and including the business community's concerns in the 2013 report.