ASAP Professional
Guidance Resources Glossary

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
ADAPTATION PROFESSIONALS

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Term	Definition and Example Sentence	Source
Adaptive Capacity	The ability of an individual, asset, or system to adjust to a hazard, take advantage of new opportunities, or cope with change. *This program helped increase the **adaptive capacity** of the people in the neighborhood.*	Adapted from U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/glossary
Best available information	Use of the full range of scientific and cultural tools for gathering and analyzing information, including quantitative and qualitative methods, community knowledge, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, collaboration among disciplines and experts, and the informed co-production of knowledge. *The forest managers engaged tribal leaders to incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge into the new management plan, helping to ensure that **best available information** was used in the plan's development.*	Adapted from ASAP Living Guide to the Principles of Climate Change Adaptation https://adaptationprofessionals.org/resources/living-guide-to-the-principles-of-climate-change/
Change Management	The control and coordination of processes with the intention to orchestrate a transition to a preferred outcome for an individual, organization, or system. Transitioning to the preferred outcome may require or result in new system structure or function, new working arrangements, or new ways of operating. *The consultant used a **change management** process to help the company integrate consideration of climate impacts into standard operating procedures.*	Adapted from http://sociology.iresearchnet.com/sociology-of-organizations/change-management/
Climate Change	Changes in average weather conditions that persist over multiple decades or longer. Climate change encompasses both increases and decreases in temperature, as well as shifts in precipitation, changing risk of certain types of severe weather events, and changes to other features of the climate system. ***Climate change** is contributing to increased precipitation in the county.*	USGCRP https://www.globalchange.gov/climate-change/glossary
Climate Change Adaptation	In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate.	IPCC SREX https://archive.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/srex/SREX-Annex_Glossary.pdf

Climate Change Adaptation and Climate Resilience Professionals	People who integrate consideration of future climate conditions into their day-to-day work *The company reached out to the American Society of Adaptation Professionals to identify **climate change adaptation and climate resilience professionals** who could provide the services they needed.*	ASAP
Climate Impacts	Effects on natural and human systems that result from hazards. *The **climate impacts** on marine environments are becoming increasingly severe.*	Adapted from U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/glossary
Climate Change Mitigation	Processes that can reduce the amount and speed of future climate change by reducing emissions of heat-trapping gases or removing them from the atmosphere. *The state's **climate change mitigation efforts** include incentives to switch to forms of energy that emit fewer greenhouse gases.*	U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/glossary
Climate-Related Hazards	A condition or event produced or exacerbated by climate variability or change that may cause harm.	ASAP
Climate Resilience	The capacity of an individual, group, or system to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a climate-related disruption.	Adapted from U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/glossary
Climate Variability	Natural changes in climate that fall within the observed range of extremes for a particular region, as measured by temperature, precipitation, and frequency of events. Drivers of climate variability include the El Niño Southern Oscillation and other phenomena. *Great Lakes water levels fluctuate on both short-term and longer-term timescales, demonstrating **climate variability.***	USGCRP https://www.globalchange.gov/climate-change/glossary
Context Assessment	An exercise in information gathering and analysis intended to improve understanding of a geographic target area and/or field of inquiry within a specific timeframe. *The team used **context assessment** to learn more about the history and values of the community, enabling them to formulate recommendations the community was more likely to adopt.*	USAID https://www.spring-nutrition.org/sites/default/files/publications/tools/spring_guide_to_context_assessment_tools.pdf

Core Competency	The knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitude needed to perform an essential job function.	ASAP Professional Education Member Advisory Group
Critical threshold	The level of magnitude of a system process at which sudden, rapid, or irreversible change occurs. *The **critical threshold** which triggered the community's managed retreat was when, in a single season, the school, water treatment plant, and several homes were damaged beyond repair due to erosion and storms.*	Adapted from http://www. physicalgeography.net/ glossary.html
Cultural competence	The awareness, knowledge, attitude and skills to understand, communicate with and positively interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own. *His **cultural competence** was bolstered by living in a foreign country for several years.*	Adapted from American Psychological Association https://www.apa.org/ monitor/2015/03/cultural-competence
Decision Making	The process of purposely choosing one course of action from a set of alternatives to advance personal or organizational goals. *The land managers were able to engage in better **decision making** after they started using higher quality data from the new sensors.*	
Equity	Giving front-line and marginalized communities an explicit voice in [or input to) processes, and re-apportioning or redistributing resources so individuals can access opportunities. *They increased **equity** by creating a new tier of conference rates available to people with lower incomes.*	Adapted from the Avarna Group https:// theavarnagroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ Vocab-Sheet-v6.pdf
Exposure	The presence of people, assets, or ecosystems in places where they could be adversely affected by hazards. *Homes and businesses along low-lying coasts are **exposed** to coastal flooding from storms.*	Adapted from U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/ content/glossary
Foundational Knowledge	The knowledge required as part of gaining a competency (see "core competency") *Her **foundational knowledge** of climate variability and change helps her excel at accessing and applying climate data for community projects.*	ASAP

Framing	Placing, organizing, or structuring information within a field of meaning in order to influence the choices people make about how to process and use that information. *They used a positive **framing** which focused on the benefits to wildlife to communicate why this new policy is needed.*	Adapted from Davie https://masscommtheory.com/theory-overviews/framing-theory/
Greenhouse gas accounting	The process of inventorying and auditing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. *The company began conducting annual **greenhouse gas accounting** to report their emissions to shareholders.*	ASAP
Individuals and communities on the frontlines of climate change	People and communities on the frontlines of climate change are those that experience the consequences of climate change first and worst. They include people who are both highly exposed to climate risks because of the places they live and have fewer resources, capacity, safety nets, or political power to respond to those risks because of widespread discrimination, promoted by histories of colonialism, white supremacy, domination of nature, and economic exploitation. They include Black people, Indigeonous Peoples, people of color, people with low incomes and from low income backgrounds as well as other individuals and communities such as immigrants, those at-risk of displacement, old and young people, people experiencing homelessness, outdoor workers, incarcerated people, renters, people with disabilities, and chronically ill or hospitalized people.	Derived from conversations with ASAP members, Georgetown Climate Center Equitable Adaptation Legal and Policy Toolkit and the NAACP Our Communities, Our Power: Advancing Resistance and Resilience in Climate Change Adaptation - Action Toolkit.
Justice	Equal access to rights, resources, opportunities, and power. Achieving justice involves dismantling systems of oppression and privilege that create systemic disadvantages and barriers for certain individuals and groups. *Their work to pursue **justice** begins by recognizing the historical events and conditions that have caused the community to be oppressed.*	Adapted from the Avarna Group https://theavarnagroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Vocab-Sheet-v6.pdf
Knowledge co-creation	People from different departments, backgrounds, or disciplines joining efforts to learn something new.	Van Amstel http://fredvanamstel.com/blog/the-co-creation-of-knowledge

Mainstreaming	Integrating climate change into existing planning and decision-making processes. *One way they* **mainstreamed** *climate change into their business continuity plan was by creating a policy to consider climate projections for key locations in their supply chain rather than rely solely on historical data.*	ASAP
Maladaptation	Action taken ostensibly to avoid or reduce vulnerability to climate change that impacts adversely on, or increases the vulnerability of other systems, sectors or social groups	Barnett & O'Neill https://onlinelibrary. wiley.com/ doi/10.1002/9781118529577. ch7
Problem orientation	A strategy for addressing complex, interdisciplinary issues which calls for framing research questions and research processes with the aim of solving specific problems	Adapted from Kueffer et al https://www. ecologyandsociety.org/vol17/ iss4/art8/
Psychological resilience	The ability to cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly. Psychological resilience exists when the person uses mental processes and behaviors in promoting personal assets and protecting self from the potential negative effects of stressors. *They built* **psychological resilience** *by learning they could ask for help from community members when they were struggling.*	DeTerte and Stephens 2014 Robertson et al 2015
Risk	The potential for consequences where something of value is at stake and where the outcome is uncertain. Risk is often evaluated as the probability of a hazard occurring multiplied by the consequence that would result if it did occur. *Sea level rise and increased development are increasing the* **risk** *of coastal property damage.*	Adapted from IPCC https:// www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/ uploads/2019/01/SYRAR5-Glossary_en.pdf
Scenario development	Creation of storylines that explore plausible future states of the world or alternate states of a system. *The team* **developed scenarios** *describing how bus service could be modified to serve residents' needs in a variety of potential winter weather conditions.*	UN Environment Program https://www.unep-wcmc. org/system/comfy/cms/ files/files/000/000/803/ original/Scenario_ Development_2016_WEB. pdf
Sensitivity	The degree to which a system, population, or resource is or might be affected by hazards. *The yield of crops with a high* **sensitivity** *may be reduced in response to a change in daily minimum temperature during the pollination season.*	Adapted from U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit Glossary https://toolkit.climate.gov/ content/glossary

Skill	An ability or capacity, stemming from knowledge, practice or aptitude, to do something well. *Their **skill** in GIS mapping helped the team visualize the most effective places to preserve and expand the urban tree canopy.*	
Systems Thinking	A holistic approach to analysis requiring the capacity to solve problems at a complex, systems-level scale, where many interrelated and interdependent parts interact within the whole system. Systems thinking requires the ability to understand system structure, recognize interconnections, identify feedback loops, understand non-linear relationships and adjust to dynamic conditions and behavior. *By using **systems thinking**, the city was able to anticipate that raising public transportation fees to cover the infrastructure upgrades needed to adapt to increased flooding would disproportionately impact people with low incomes.*	Adapted from Arnold and Wade https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877050915002860
Traditional Ecological Knowledge	TEK is a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs, handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment. Further, TEK is an attribute of societies with historical continuity in resource use practices; by and large, these are non-industrial or less technologically advanced societies, many of them indigenous or tribal.	Berkes, F. 1993. Traditional Ecological Knowledge in perspective. https://library.um.edu.mo/ebooks/b10756577a.pdf
Transformational change	Irreversible, persistent adjustment in societal values, outlooks and behaviours of sufficient width and depth to alter any preceding situation. A structural change that alters the interplay of institutional, cultural, technological, economic and ecological dimensions of a given system. *To achieve **transformational change** in society, we need connection and collaboration between people and organizations from all sectors and scales.*	UN Environment Program https://www.climateactiontransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ICAT-TC-Ch-3-What-is-transformational-change.pdf

| Vulnerability | The propensity or predisposition of individuals, assets, or systems to be adversely affected by hazards. Vulnerability encompasses exposure, sensitivity, potential impacts, and adaptive capacity.

*Overfishing makes fish populations more **vulnerable** to warming ocean temperatures, and warming hinders recovery of overfished populations.* | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit https://toolkit.climate.gov/content/glossary |
| Windows of opportunity | The use of climate-related shocks to trigger latent adaptive capacities which lead to systemic improvement.

*This major flood event provided a **window of opportunity** during which the officials were more inclined to approve funding for the upgraded culvert.* | Adapted from McSweeney and Coomes https://www.pnas.org/content/108/13/5203 |

Statement on the Use of the Term and Concept of Resilience

ASAP believes that climate change increases risk and uncertainty, and that the concept of resilience fills a need for an idea to help society deal with the growing complexity, uncertainty, and challenges stemming from those conditions. The term and concept of resilience has many interpretations, definitions, and related practices that differ by discipline and perspective. The K&C Framework embraces the word resilience and attempts to be inclusive of its multiplicity of definitions, interpretations, and related practices, even when they are in tension with one another, so that the framework can be used productively, in its entirety, across professional roles and disciplines. ASAP acknowledges the following:

- Resilience can be a system trait, process, or outcome.
- Resilience may be intentionally cultivated or an underlying property that results from intrinsic conditions. Therefore, efforts to build resilience may be proactive (preemptive strategy) or reactive (coping mechanism).
- Some see resilience as positive (based in objective facts); others see it as normative (based in subjective values). Normative perspectives are more recent, and lead to a need to clarify and acknowledge trade-offs related to questions of resilience of what to what and for/by whom. The K&C Framework, which is informed by the ASAP Living Guide, comes from a normative perspective and may be biased towards normative definitions, interpretations, applications, or related practices of the concept/term resilience.
- Some resilience efforts are focused on maintaining the status quo and incremental change (e.g. fostering individuals' or communities' capacities to adapt to climate impacts) and some are focused on radical transformation (e.g. transforming the fossil fuel–driven economic system that is causing the problem of climate change.) ASAP believes that both are necessary, as reflected in the Living Guide and the rest of the K&C Framework.

ASAP acknowledges "The turbulent world of resilience: interpretations and themes for transdisciplinary dialogue" (Moser et al) for articulating the themes and distinctions which gave shape to this statement.

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