

## **American Society of Adaptation Professionals' Policy Priority #3 Action Plan**

Priority #3: Require all physical and social infrastructure decisions to consider future climate conditions

As part of the 2022 goals for the Policy Practice Member-Led Interest Group (PPG) a series of meetings are planned to address each of the American Society of Adaptation Professionals' (ASAP) policy priorities and develop actionable plans to be more proactive in advocating for climate-related policies.

In August 2022, PPG heard from Meagan Williams, Stormwater Project Manager with the City of New Orleans on developing a gray-green stormwater management approach, funding mechanisms, improving resilience, and securing community buy-in.

With New Orleans as an example, PPG organized a follow-up peer learning meeting that focused on member-submitted case studies involving integrating climate and equity into infrastructure decisions.

This document summarizes the key takeaways from the case study discussions. The following list of actions is derived from the discussions within the small groups.

### **Policy Priority #3**

Require all physical and social infrastructure decisions to consider future climate conditions

As more public funds become available for physical and social infrastructure projects to build climate resilience, we need a much stronger policy framework to ensure project prioritization, planning, siting, design, construction, and maintenance address future climate conditions as well as equity and justice. Infrastructure unable to withstand current or future hazards inhibits the well-being of people, threatens our economy, and damages the health of our natural environment. Infrastructure in places highly exposed to climate risks may be better relocated elsewhere. Investments that appear to reduce vulnerability to climate change may actually do the opposite without careful consideration of the impacts to all populations and systems. To address these issues, governments should:

- Require public investments in infrastructure to be designed to withstand future climate conditions, benefit first and foremost communities most impacted by climate change\*, incorporate nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Create incentives to ensure private sector investments in infrastructure do the same.
- Integrate current and future climate information into building codes and standards.
- Reduce barriers to communities for using existing and new public and private funding and finance mechanisms to build new - and retrofit existing - climate resilience infrastructure.

## Action Plan

ASAP members found that similar actions could be taken at the local, state, and federal level. Many of the approaches discussed by members centered around improving the ways in which climate data are obtained and integrated, as well as enabling engagement across public, private, and academic sectors.

### Integrating Data

- Support inventories of plans that would benefit from the integration of future climate conditions (e.g., local comprehensive plan, emergency plan, hazard mitigation plan or capital plan, business continuity plan) and the development of such plans where they do not yet exist
- Consider sources of data to help ensure consistency and inclusion

### Enabling Engagement

- Advocate for federal guidance on prioritizing equity across agencies
  - Be aware that adding strict requirements is not always the answer, as that can create burdens for small jurisdictions
- Support the creation of stakeholder engagement processes with clear boundaries and mechanisms to handle growth
- Account for social vulnerability
- Enable communities to determine what is needed for themselves through the provision of tools or technical support
- Build partnerships with and support capacity-building of local nonprofits and businesses