



# ICARP

INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCY PROGRAM

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## Technical Advisory Council Quarterly Meeting Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2023 | Zoom Video Conference | 9:30 AM – 12:20 PM

### [Agenda](#)

### Item 1 | Welcome and Roll Call

Chair Saharnaz Mirzazad introduced the meeting

#### Today's agenda:

- Item 1: Welcome & Roll Call
- Item 2: Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes
- Item 3: State Agency Report Out
- Item 4: ICARP Programmatic Updates
- Item 5: Vulnerable Communities Platform
- Item 6: Fifth Assessment Tribal Program
- Item 7: Fifth Assessment Synthesis Reports
- ~~PULLED Item 8: Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation Program Citizen Advisory Committee~~
- Item 9: General Public Comment
- Item 10: Closing & Adjourn

#### Technical Advisory Council (TAC) Members Present (18):

Jacob Alvarez, Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Nathan Bengtsson, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)

Kim Clark, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency

Jana Ganion, Blue Lake Rancheria

Alex Ghenis, Sustain Our Abilities

Jenn Phillips, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)

Virginia Jameson, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)

Denise Kadara, Allensworth Progressive Association

Saharnaz Mirzazad (Chair), Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR)

Darwin Moosavi, California State Transportation Agency

Lori Nezhura, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES)

Enrique Huerta (alternate for Jonathan Parfrey), Climate Resolve

Michelle Passero, The Nature Conservancy

Rohan Radhakrishna, California Department of Public Health (CDPH)/California Health & Human Services Agency (CalHHS)

Roberto Carlos Torres, Institute for Local Government

Gloria Walton, The Solutions Project

John Wentworth, Town of Mammoth Lakes

**Absent (5):**

Veronica Beaty, California Coalition for Rural Housing

Allison Brooks, Bay Area Regional Collaborative

David Loya, City of Arcata

Sona Mohnot, Greenlining Institute

Wilma Wooten, County of San Diego

## **Item 2 | Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes**

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Action**

Jacob Alvarez moved to approve the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting minutes, with a second from Nathan Bengtsson.

The TAC voted to approve TAC meeting minutes from June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, with 15 ayes, 0 noes, and 3 abstaining.

Aye: Jacob Alvarez, Nathan Bengtsson, Kim Clark, Grant Davis, Alex Ghenis, Jenn Phillips, Virginia Jameson, Denise Kadara, Saharnaz Mirzazad, Darwin Moosavi, Lori Nezhura, Rohan Radhakrishna, Roberto Carlos Torres, Gloria Walton, John Wentworth

Abstain: Jana Ganion, Enrique Huerta, Michelle Passero

*Minutes approved.*

### **Item 3 | State Agency Report Out**

Jenn Phillips of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) shared that the state's Sea Level Rise Guidance, which is updated every five years, is being finalized. Additionally, CNRA's Deputy Director Katherine Toy released an [Access for All Strategy](#). Ms. Phillips shared that they continue to work on AB 1757 implementation to support nature-based climate solutions. An expert advisory committee is supporting the development of nature-based climate solutions using natural and working lands under an ambitious timeline for early 2024. CNRA is also updating the Adaptation Strategy in 2024, with a draft release in January and a final version in July. A contractor will support the outreach and engagement and work to refine the Strategy's metrics between the draft and final version. An RFP for contract support will go out later this year.

Darwin Moosavi from the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) shared that Caltrans has been developing a [State Climate Resilience Improvement Plan for Transportation \(SCRIPT\)](#), an optional plan under the federal PROTECT program. The SCRIPT provides a useful overview of everything Caltrans is doing on climate resilience. Mr. Moosavi closed by noting that the public comment period for the SCRIPT closed at the end of October, and the final version will go to the federal government for review and approval in December.

Rohan Radhakrishna of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) shared that the Department had released two reports, one on [the excess mortality of the September 22 heat wave](#) and an [interim guide to creating a local heat plan that centers health equity](#). The excess mortality report found 5% more deaths than would have been expected, especially in Hispanic communities, the South Coast, and workers. The heat plan guide is available for feedback and will be re-released before the 2024 heat season. Mr. Radhakrishna noted that CDPH will be the lead coordinator of a public health topical report in the Fifth Climate Change Assessment. He also highlighted several bills the department is implementing, including AB 209 (safe maximum indoor air temperature recommendations), AB 1653 (extreme heat guidance for schools), and AB 2238 (extreme heat ranking system). Finally, CDPH launched communities of practice related to climate and health with local departments and within the department. He concluded by referencing climate and technical assistance to Tribes, including a virtual training session for California Tribal Epidemiology Center and supporting the Tribal Climate and Health Adaptation Summit.

Virginia Jameson of the California Department of Food and Agriculture highlighted block grant awards for the State Water Efficiency & Enhancement Program (\$40 million) and Healthy Soils Program (\$63 million). CDFA will begin a [process to define regenerative agriculture](#) for state policies and programs. This public process will begin December 6<sup>th</sup>. She concluded by announcing a climate resilience strategy for California agriculture that will take place next year through a public process in collaboration with agency partners.

Lori Nezhura of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) shared that the agency has a first draft of instructor materials for a climate adaptation course for emergency managers and hopes to begin offering training soon. She noted that the national level functional exercise or "hot wash" for FEMA Region 9 changed to reflect the significant, real-world disasters communities within the regions experienced and include a discussion on long-term recovery. Ms. Nezhura noted that climate was a focus of these discussions with FEMA. CalOES is still discussing whether they will coordinate a topical report and is working to update their actions and metrics of the Adaptation Strategy. CalOES also joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) conference to speak on environmental justice and climate change in disaster mitigation projects, as climate justice is a priority for the organization.

Saharnaz Mirzazad asked for clarification on the term "facilitated hot wash".

Ms. Nezhura responded that the term refers to a roundtable of emergency managers to discuss lessons learned in real-world disaster events and opportunities for improvement.

Saharnaz Mirzazad of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) shared that on January 12<sup>th</sup>, OPR, in partnership with Climate Resolve, will host the inaugural [Climate Resilience Nexus](#) in Riverside. She noted that the convening will bring together community leaders and policymakers to discuss opportunities for advancing California's resilience efforts, and includes action tracks focused on extreme heat, research, tools & resources, and financing resilience. Ms. Mirzazad also highlighted an event OPR hosted that brought together more than 80 city managers and county executives to discuss collaboration opportunities to deliver on the Governor's goal to rapidly build the infrastructure necessary to meeting our climate and housing commitments.

Jacob Alvarez shared a recent event that posed a challenge in his region, where Tropical Storm Hilary and associated runoff shut down the I-10 freeway with 2.3 million cubic yards of debris. He noted that once the sediments dried out, the region experienced historic air quality particulate levels, a cascading impact that doesn't seem to have been considered in climate research. He noted that the community feels that because there were no casualties from Tropical Storm Hilary, the State thought things would be fine. However, they are facing ongoing impacts that they anticipate may lead to deaths. He also noted that the debris removal cost \$67 million, but sand and soot remain in the area and continues to contribute to the problem. The community is still seeking a federal emergency declaration. He concluded by inquiring about the status of the emergency declaration.

Lori Nezhura responded that she will check on the status of the emergency declaration and gather more information.

John Wentworth voiced his support for Mr. Alvarez's community because his community's experience with last winter's storms was similar. He emphasized that we need to keep in mind what these unprecedented events and impacts mean for California's communities.

Erique Huerta sought information from CDFA regarding their [resiliency center program's awards](#), and why there didn't seem to be recipients south of Fresno.

Virginia Jameson indicated that she would reply to Mr. Huerta's question via email.

## Public Comment

None.

## Action

None.

## Item 4 | ICARP Programmatic Updates

Sloane Viola shared progress updates on ICARP's three investment programs. She noted that the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program has [draft Guidelines](#) available for public comment until December 7<sup>th</sup>. She highlighted ways the public could access the document and submit comments, including by attending a [workshop](#). The team expects to release the final guidelines and application in late January or early February 2024. Next, she shared that the Regional Resilience Grant Program will announce awards on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and that the team will update the Council on awarded projects at the first Council meeting of 2024. Listening sessions to inform guidelines for Round 2 of the program will begin in February of next year. The Adaptation Planning Grant Program is concluding contracting with [Round 1 grantees](#) with most projects underway. Round 2 program guidelines will be available at the end of the year for a short public comment period and will include set-asides for Tribes and disadvantaged communities. Ms. Viola highlighted the [ICARP Grants website](#) and the [ICARP mailing list](#) as means for the public to receive updates on the investment programs.

Ms. Viola also discussed the work ahead for ICARP's special initiatives, the California Climate Adaptation Strategy and the Extreme Heat Action Plan. She noted that these products are developed in coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency to articulate the state's strategic and coordinated efforts to advance resiliency and prepare for the growing threat of extreme heat. Currently, CNRA and OPR are preparing a Draft of the 2024 Adaptation Strategy for release in January 2024. This update process includes identifying a subset of near-term priority actions in the Extreme Heat Action Plan to include in the Strategy so it reflects the state's action in this sector, similar to how other sector-based plans are integrated in the Strategy. The next update to the Extreme Heat Action Plan will be released in 2026 and every three years after, following the direction of legislation enacted this year, SB 306. She concluded that Staff looks forward to engaging with the public on these plans to be sure they are responsive to on the ground needs, coordinated across sectors and scales, and effectively communicate the state's ambition and action on climate.

Enrique Huerta thanked Staff for their work and noted his affinity for the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program in particular. He asked why the draft guidelines don't allow advance payment, and noted that recent legislation, AB 590,

has authorized advance pay for nonprofit applicants, and whether that would affect this program.

Saharnaz Mirzazad replied that the organization is tracking this issue and will follow up on this question.

Nathan Bengtsson noted that PG&E is thinking deeply about how to partner with communities to access federal funds, and asked how the state is coordinating on state and federal grants.

Saharnaz Mirzazad noted that the state is also trying to be responsive and has several task forces focused on accessing these opportunities. She highlighted that OPR has a dedicated staff member who [tracks federal funding opportunities and provides regular updates through a mailing list](#). She concluded by inviting potential collaborators to bring opportunities to our attention so the state can provide coordination and support as needed.

Roberto Carlos Torres reinforced Mr. Huerta's comments regarding advance pay and its ability to lower barriers to community-based organizations' access to funding. He voiced his support for exploring this further and concluded by expressing his appreciation for the work ICARP has done this year.

John Wentworth voiced additional support for advance pay.

## Public Comment

No comment.

## Action

None.

## Item 5 | Vulnerable Communities Platform

Ankitha Doddanari, ICARP Staff lead for engagement and outreach for the [Vulnerable Communities Platform \(VCP\)](#) provided an update on the project. She noted that the motivation for this effort stems from the need to support communities experiencing disproportionate climate impacts so they can adapt. The ICARP Technical Advisory Council previously developed a definition of vulnerable communities, which laid a foundation for the VCP. The platform will function as a web hub that assists in visualizing the underlying factors that contribute to climate vulnerability. She noted that no tool currently exists that can holistically display all the information needed to understand vulnerability.

Ms. Doddanari then described the features of this [free and publicly accessible resource](#). The VCP will include climate hazard and sensitivity maps, social factors that exacerbate corresponding hazards, and guidance on the relevance of each factor. In addition to this data, ICARP Staff aims to address information gaps by hosting workshops and engaging with communities. Participants will share their experiences with climate change and physical, social, and natural assets that could provide resilience benefits, which will be

integrated into the tool. Staff will also partner with local community-based organizations to share information on additional resources available to these communities so they can implement key actions. The VCP will also feature a Climate Vulnerability Tool Comparison to provide guidance on use cases for various existing tools. Finally, the VCP will include a Resilience Resource Springboard, which will act as an entry level primer to available resources and connect users to these resources and the Adaptation Clearinghouse.

Ms. Doddanari concluded by sharing information the [project's timeline and next steps](#). Development of each feature is staggered based on the engagement feedback, with the mapping platform and tool comparison features built first. However, Staff will make iterative and ongoing updates to the features as outreach and feedback continues. Staff are currently seeking expert user feedback on a prototype of the mapping tool. Beginning next year, Staff will gather feedback from communities on their lived experience.

Lori Nezhura expressed her agency's enthusiasm for this tool to become available. She offered to coordinate with any of her agency's grant recipients about hosting workshops or joining outreach events. Ms. Nezhura also noted that FEMA just approved the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, and upcoming outreach associated with the plan can also provide an opportunity for ICARP to discuss the VCP. She concluded by noting that her agency would be interested in sharing the tool with cities and counties as part of the local hazard mitigation plan review process.

Alex Ghenis pointed out that disability is missing from the vulnerable communities definition, despite being a clear fit and high exposure to climate hazards due to physiological, ability, and social oppression. He recommended expanding the definition and platform to include disability. Mr. Ghenis recommended engaging the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers and other well-organized disability organizations to gather input from the disability community on how data on disability could be integrated.

Ankitha Doddanari noted that disability is included as an indicator in the platform. She expressed enthusiasm for following up on Mr. Ghenis' recommendations for disability organizations, whose feedback would be valuable.

Alex Ghenis continued that this could be an opportunity to go a little further into the different categories of disability and the unique vulnerabilities each may experience.

Ankitha Doddanari asked for recommendations on other data sources for disability beyond the census data, which is what is currently being used.

Allison Brooks expressed her appreciation and anticipation for the resource. She continued by offering the suggestion that the tool could integrate recommended strategies to address vulnerabilities. Ms. Brooks concluded by noting that in the Bay Area, BayCAN is engaging community-based organizations through a working group that could support outreach and engagement in this effort.

Ankitha Doddanari noted that Staff is trying to make the connection to resources very clear, so the use of the platform leads to action.

Roberto Carlos Torres shared his excitement over the progress of the tool and noted its potential. He advocated for the resource springboard to be available earlier so that communities that see the data on their vulnerability can identify resources to act on the information. Mr. Torres continued by noting that he didn't see much detail about how the engagement with vulnerable communities would be meaningful. Hosting a workshop and working with community-based organizations only goes so far, especially for rural and disconnected communities. He encouraged the team to think through best practices to engage hard-to-reach communities. Mr. Torres continued by highlighting the importance of ground-truthing these large datasets, whose gaps might not reflect the on-the-ground conditions. He suggested that the tool include a disclaimer to this effect, so agencies don't use the tool in place of community outreach. Mr. Torres concluded by asking if Staff could share who they have engaged with thus far so the Council can identify gaps and recommend additional organizations to engage with.

Ankitha Doddanari replied by sharing that she has been collecting this information and can share it.

Jacob Alvarez asked how the tool will be used, aside from the likely application to grant applications. He noted that a more proactive use of the tool should be communicated if there is one.

John Wentworth noted that it would be interesting to have CalTrans join one of these meetings to hear about the on-the-ground conditions and challenges with rural roads and natural disasters.

Ankitha Doddanari noted that CalTrans Staff participate in the interagency technical working group that supports the project.

Denise Kadara expressed her appreciation for the comments thus far and opportunity for the Vulnerable Communities Platform. She noted that her region has immediate needs related to flood risks. She highlighted the importance of engaging with vulnerable communities on a human level, and recommended working with the nonprofits that work in these communities. Ms. Kadara advocated for more urgency in directing funding to communities that have significant needs, especially those like hers that haven't recovered from previous impacts and are vulnerable to future floods.

Ankitha Doddanari responded that the VCP could be helpful in tracking the impact of where grants are going and how they are helping these communities.

Michelle Passero asked if there is discussion on how and when to use the different tools the state provides, like CalEnviroScreen and the Vulnerable Communities Platform. This could help users understand when to use certain tools and whether



there are any shortcomings or gaps that could determine when to use and apply the tools.

Ankitha Doddanari replied that Staff will provide guidance on how to use the VCP. She emphasized that the tool isn't intended to replace CalEnviroScreen or any other tools and will be complementary.

Michelle Passero followed up to ask that the tool include an explanation or examples for how the information from the different tools may be used.

Gloria Walton noted that the Council has been waiting on the VCP. She expressed her appreciation for the qualitative and quantitative pieces of the tool, and the intentionality about engaging communities. She also reinforced Jacob Alvarez's comments about the importance of narrative, and Alex Ghenis' recommendation to include disability in the vulnerable communities definition. Ms. Walton continued by suggesting that Staff consider that the mapping functions of the VCP include mapping organizations that are working on climate in communities and offered support from organizations in getting their permission to share this information. She further suggested that the qualitative data collection also include information on innovative solutions communities have already implemented to facilitate networking and replication of best practices. Ms. Walton concluded by offering support for connecting with community-based organizations in this effort.

Ankitha Doddanari thanked Ms. Walton for her comments and noted that there are several networks and organizations that Staff are tracking and considering ways to elevate for the VCP.

Enrique Huerta noted that the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program included 30 points for identifying communities served and references the Vulnerable Communities Platform. He asked if applicants would be as competitive if they used other tools?

Ankitha Doddanari responded that use of the VCP is an encouraged to provide feedback to the team but will not be required of applicants in this round of awards.

Rohan Radhakrishna noted the importance of specificity in the definitions, including on English proficiency, used by the platform to be sure they are as inclusive as possible. He expressed appreciation for the geographic details included, such as Tribal or unincorporated land, and recommended that this also include areas that lack broadband access. Mr. Radhakrishna reinforced previous comments about identifying assets and community solutions and recommended that this information and other resources be accessible from the map directly rather than separately through the resources springboard. He continued that this aspect, adaptive capacity, is important to include and has a more positive influence. Mr. Radhakrishna concluded by recommending short video tutorials to help users use the tool.

Kim Clark shared their compliments for the tool and its user-friendly features. They continued by reinforcing previous comments about the benefit of having the tool linked to other tools and encouraged OPR to collaborate with other agencies to develop a tool hub. Councilmember Clark additionally recommended that the VCP include drought as a climate hazard as well as built environment factors. They explained that local elected officials are growing concerned that meeting increased need for high-density housing could exacerbate extreme heat, so including built environment considerations and density in the tool could inform officials' decision making.

Jana Ganion expressed her appreciation that Tribal lands are included in the map as an overlay and recommended that this information be part of the foundational map, so all users see this information. She noted that making this information more available will help users identify opportunities to partner with tribal governments.

Ankitha Doddanari responded that Staff are working with some Tribes to pilot the use of the VCP for Tribes with the goal of developing a Tribal-specific version of the tool that's more specific to their needs.

Michelle Passero noted that CalEnviroScreen is often used to determine where investments are made, and recommended thinking about how the VCP relates to that tool. She expressed anticipation that the Legislature would want to incorporate this tool.

Wilma Wooten shared that San Diego County has an annual Live Well San Diego Summit that would be a good opportunity to share information on the VCP with community members. Participants include government, schools, community members, businesses, and faith- and community-based organizations.

## **Public Comment**

No comment.

## **Action**

None

## **Item 6 | Fifth Assessment Tribal Program**

Patricia Kennedy, Program Manager for the Fifth Assessment Tribal Program, shared that the program builds on the recommendations of the [Fourth Assessment Tribal Report](#). The enabling legislation for the program charges ICARP with addressing issues of statewide significance, including the unique risks posed to, and research and monitoring approaches used by, tribal communities. We recognize and understand the best way to do this is through strengthening our partnerships with tribes and lifting up and supporting the good work tribes are already doing.

Ms. Kennedy continued by sharing the Tribal Program's five goals:

- Strengthening partnerships with tribes through early, often, and meaningful engagement and consultation.
- Establishing a travel advisory group to ensure collaboration on indigenous knowledges and expertise throughout the assessment.
- Supporting tribally led research through a grant program to address California specific tribal research needs and questions related to climate change.
- Developing this report that will be authored by tribal representatives, including research and summarizing climate change impacts in California.
- Supporting the development of guidance on collaboration and protection of indigenous knowledge and tribal expertise through these research processes.

She continued that the program is committed to strengthening partnerships with Tribes, including recognition that Tribal communities are under-resourced and over-burdened. Staff are committed to engagement and consultation and are using that feedback to inform the program. For example, the program has held four tribal roundtables this summer and fall.

Ms. Kennedy continued by describing the Tribal Advisory Group, whose eight diverse members are providing expertise to shape and strengthen the program. The advisory group has had eight meetings and continues to meet monthly. She noted that the guidance from the advisory group is not replacing Tribal engagement and consultation.

The tribally led research of the program is a \$3.625 million program administered by the California Energy Commission. The purpose of this program is to support research led by California Native American tribes, address tribal specific needs and questions related to climate change, support participation in the Fifth Assessment, and inform the Assessment. Tribes can seek funding for projects that involve topic-specific research, climate assessments, project implementation, information sharing, or other Tribal priorities. Ms. Kennedy noted that the application period for the first round of funding closes today and that Staff hopes to quickly open applications for the second round to fit within the timeline of the Assessment.

She continued by describing the Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report, which will build off the Fourth Assessment's report. Scoping and engagement began this year and will continue next year until report drafting begins in early 2024 through 2025. This report requires additional time for review by Tribes before it's released publicly in the Spring of 2026. The Tribal Advisory Group informed the structure for the report's author team, which includes a coordinating lead author, three regional lead authors, contributing authors, and review panels.

Next, Ms. Kennedy discussed collaboration with Tribes on indigenous knowledge and traditional ecological knowledge. She noted that more agencies are seeking indigenous knowledge, and the motivation to create tools or resources that support rather than replicate these efforts. From engagement with Tribes, there's a general mistrust of information sharing. Ms. Kennedy noted that the goal is to not be extractive when addressing the State's knowledge gap here. To address this, Staff are preparing guidance and procedures to help support State and Tribal collaboration on indigenous knowledge

and climate change research. This will include tools and guidance for Tribes on how they can protect their knowledge and feel confident in these processes.

Ms. Kennedy concluded by introducing her discussion question, which asked Councilmembers to share their perspective on the most challenging factor for meaningful collaboration with Tribes, or, for those representing Tribes or vulnerable communities, barriers to meaningful collaboration with the state or researchers.

Jenn Phillips began by complimenting Staff on their work on this and highlighting that the Fourth Assessment was the first time that Tribal nations partnered with the State on an Assessment report. She expresses her appreciation for identification of resources and understanding that we need to move forward together by creating opportunities for Tribal scientists to meaningfully participate.

Patricia Kennedy responded that the Tribal Advisory Group has also emphasized grounding the work in the recommendations of the Fourth Assessment and considering what might not be possible this round and included in the Sixth Assessment.

Jacob Alvarez noted that there are 110 federally recognized Tribes in California, and several dozen more non federally recognized Tribes. He suggested that the Tribal Advisory Group consider capacity constraints for engaging in strategic initiatives and how there is continuity of input and representation. Mr. Alvarez continued by noting the diversity of Tribes in his region and their variable capacities for planning, with some having more sophisticated capabilities. He then asked about the geographic representation of the Tribal Advisory Group, and wondered if there was missed perspective from different climate zones, particularly the Coachella Valley. Mr. Alvarez concluded by sharing a lesson on the value of elders' history he learned from working on a history book for the City of Coachella. He noted that during the project, he gathered a lot of good information from elders, including his grandfather, a former Mayor for the City. Many communities have aging populations, and Mr. Alvarez noted the need and appreciation for gathering that knowledge before it's lost.

Patricia Kennedy thanked Mr. Alvarez for his insight and reinforced that the issue of loss of knowledge from elders is something Staff has heard a lot in Tribal engagement. She noted that COVID exacerbated this issue, and some Tribes are still struggling. She concluded by noting that expanding the membership of the Tribal Advisory Group is something Staff can look into.

Enrique Huerta expressed his appreciation for the overview and asked whether engagement with Tribal partners includes discussions of how climate change is impacting forests' and ecosystems' ability to withstand changing climate conditions. He noted that we commonly regard natural systems as resilient to change, but emissions continue to rise and might exceed nature's capacity to adapt.

Patricia Kenned responded that the program’s engagement with Tribes has involved very general prompts so the Tribes could really lead the discussion. The discussions have acknowledged that we’re all in this together, but from their perspective, climate change is rooted in colonization. Tribes have always adapted, for example, by moving across the landscape in a certain way that’s no longer possible because of structures in place. Part of the work is allowing space for Tribes reidentify this in a way that makes sense for them. Ms. Kennedy concluded by sharing her excitement for what will be included in the report on this topic.

Rohan Radhakrishna referenced Ms. Kennedy’s comment about the impact of COVID on Tribal communities and elders and built upon it by noting a behavioral health crisis of suicide and fentanyl overdoses, which are also impacting engagement. He noted that several Tribes have issued a public health emergency around the opioid crisis. Engagement is impacted by colonization, intergenerational trauma, the climate crisis, and the behavioral health crisis. Mr. Radhakrishna referenced the Department of Public Health’s support for the Administration’s Truth and Healing Council with behavioral health support for a trauma responsive framework. He noted that his department has found it useful to include trained behavioral health professionals in engagement sessions in anticipation of topics of genocide and trauma coming up. Healing in the context of the climate crisis requires including the root causes of climate change and solutions.

Patricia Kennedy thanked Mr. Radhakrishna for his comments. She noted that she was at the Tribal Climate Change and Health Summit, which had discussions about providing comprehensive care and space for healing. She noted that these conversations are fragile because a lot of healing needs to happen. Additionally, the cascading and compounding impacts of climate change add to the climate grief and build on the generational trauma and health-related challenges facing Tribes. She noted that the Fourth Assessment’s report didn’t include much information on the impacts of climate change on traditional practices that have taken place over generations, and that she would engage the Tribal Advisory Group on how to include this in the upcoming report.

Saharnaz Mirzazad thanked Ms. Kennedy and commended her for the great work of the program in shifting the paradigm from previous years on this topic.

## **Public Comment**

None.

## **Action**

None.

## Item 7 | Fifth Assessment Synthesis Reports

Saharnaz Mirzazad introduced Neil Matouka, Fifth Assessment Program Manager, and noted the importance of the Assessment's Synthesis Reports because they apply a lens to the Assessment's data and research findings and distill a comprehensive report on how climate change will impact California's unique geographic contexts.

Neil Matouka began by providing background information on California's Climate Change Assessments, noting that the Fifth Assessment is different from previous Assessments because it was guided by SB 1320 (2020). That bill established the Assessments as a multiyear research effort led by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, in partnership with the Strategic Growth Council, California Natural Resources Agency, and the California Energy Commission on a five-year cycle. Staff works with government, academic, tribal and community partners to generate new data and original research to build understanding of climate related vulnerability at the regional and local scale to inform state policies, plans, programs, and guidance.

Mr. Matouka continued by describing the Fifth Climate Change Assessment's diverse suite of research and tools that will be available to the public by mid-2026. This will include new climate change projections, data, and modeling scenarios available through [caladapt.org](https://caladapt.org); original climate change research related to California's specific resilience needs; and a suite of regional and topical synthesis reports, as well as a statewide summary report, that summarize key findings and information from throughout the Assessment. He noted that this is the first time the Climate Assessment will be able to provide financial support to author teams for their contributions to the synthesis reports.

The goal of the regional synthesis reports is to support a community-led process that produces actionable science and resources. He reinforced that community participation in the scoping and development of the synthesis reports will allow them to meet the needs of diverse audiences. While the process will allow each region to have a customized report unique to their region, Staff are creating a consistent framework applicable to all regions and will ensure the reports are readily accessible. The framework, which Staff shared at a series of in-person workshops throughout the state, encompasses the information presented, potential audiences, and proposed author team structure.

Mr. Matouka described how the coordinating lead author of a synthesis report must be a principal investigator affiliated with the University of California or California State University for contracting and administrative purposes. Additionally, a lead author will oversee key responsibilities, subject matter experts will contribute their specific expertise, and community advisors will provide additional scoping and lived experience perspective. The regional and topical synthesis reports are currently in their scoping phase, and Staff are finalizing the scopes of work for the reports. Next, Staff will review survey submissions to identify coordinating lead authors and begin the contracting process in early 2024 for the regional synthesis reports. Staff will then identify the coordinating lead authors and establish contracts for the topical synthesis reports. Once the coordinating lead authors are in place, they will begin recruiting the rest of the teams, who will deliver draft reports in

mid-to-late 2025. After a peer review process, the reports will be finalized in early 2026 for release before the end of June 2026.

He continued by noting that the regional reports have updated regional boundaries for the identification of author teams. The boundaries are primarily based off ecoregions and climate impacts so areas within one region are more likely to experience similar climate impacts to the rest of the region. Some changes in the boundaries from the Fourth Assessment include an expansion of the Inland Desert region to incorporate some parts that were previously in the Los Angeles Region and the Owens Valley, and potentially changing which region includes Ventura County.

The topical synthesis reports by law must include an Environmental Justice Report and a Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report, but the Assessment will fund additional topical reports. Additional report topics include an economic evaluation of climate impacts, climate finance, public health, and biodiversity. State agency partners, including the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, Department of Insurance, California Department of Public Health, and Department of Fish and Wildlife, will lead the development of these reports, and additional agencies have expressed interest in supporting additional topical reports.

Mr. Matouka concluded by posing discussion questions seeking Council feedback on how to improve the utility or value of these resources, and how frequently the Technical Advisory Council would like to receive progress updates on the reports.

John Wentworth thanked Mr. Matouka for the update and asked how the reports and analysis was going to interface with the suggestions from those regions that are also engaged with the CERF (Community Economic Resilience Fund) process, which he noted is being renamed. He noted that people involved in that process have done a lot of work that could be incorporated into the regional reports. He concluded by offering to share contact information to facilitate information sharing.

Neil Matouka thanked Mr. Wentworth for his generous offer to share contact information. He replied that Staff are working with the Labor Agency as well as the CERF team at OPR to ensure that the differences in regional boundaries aren't a barrier, and that the economic status reports produced through CERF can be directed into the regional reports. He continued that participants in the CERF regional processes could contribute as subject matter experts in the Assessment process, and acknowledged the capacity strain of participating in these efforts. He noted that connecting with people engaged in existing efforts was a good idea to avoid duplicating work and wasting public funds.

## **Public Comment**

Mira Chokshi noted that she had applied as an author or lead author through the open process. She asked for clarification on author eligibility and whether there was a timeline in the selection process.

Neil Matouka replied that people can submit applications until the end of the day, and that Staff will evaluate potential authors and select coordinating lead authors in the upcoming weeks. Eligibility for coordinating lead authors relates to their affiliation with a University of California or California State University system and experience managing a contracting process.

### **Action**

None.

## **Item 8 (PULLED) | Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation Program Citizen Advisory Committee**

This item was removed from the agenda and not discussed.

## **Item 9 | General Public Comment**

No general public comments submitted.

## **Item 10 | Meeting Adjourned**

Before closing the meeting, Saharnaz Mirzazad encouraged participants to attend the 2024 Climate Resilience Nexus event on January 12<sup>th</sup>. She also noted that the ICARP website will include the schedule for next year's Council meetings, which will include an in-person location in addition to remote participation options. Councilmembers will receive a memo describing the public meetings rules applicable in 2024 and what to expect for future meetings.

Finally, the end of the year also marks the end of the appointment term for some of our Council members. Staff will be reaching out to gauge interest in continuing with the Council. Ms. Mirzazad thanked those Councilmembers that might not return next year for their service to ICARP.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20pm.