



## CLIMATE PROGRAM OFFICE

# Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments

**How might climate variability and change affect environmental conditions in my community?**

**Can I get local- or regional-scale information about potential climate impacts?**

NOAA's Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program supports research teams that conduct innovative, interdisciplinary, user-inspired, and regionally relevant research that informs resource management, planning, and public policy. RISA teams help build the nation's capacity to prepare for and adapt to climate variability and change by providing cutting-edge scientific information to public and private user communities.

RISA teams interact with a diverse range of decision makers and users of climate information including, but not limited to: federal, state, and local resource managers; elected officials; community planners; utilities; tribal governments; the private sector (e.g., farmers, property owners, consulting firms, businesses); non-profit organizations; media; researchers; educators; and members of the public.

### RISA Objectives

- Communicate and collaborate with a diversity of decision makers to understand and evaluate how they use or could use climate information
- Conduct interdisciplinary science and assessment on how climate impacts the resources of a region
- Innovate knowledge, products, or services to enhance the capacity of decision makers to adapt to climate variability and change
- Transition knowledge, products and services to entities such as government agencies, extension networks, and the private sector



Rabiu Olatinwo

*RISA teams conduct research and outreach, and work in partnership with stakeholders to ensure their information products are relevant and reliable.*

### Approaches

RISA teams currently investigate how climate impacts fisheries, water, wildlife, agriculture, public health, transportation and coastal zones. Because climate cuts across sectors, RISA teams are expected to analyze connections between sectors and provide assessments of integrated issues to create and enhance adaptation support tools. Resource managers work with RISA teams to analyze options for how to deal with climate variability and change on seasonal to decadal time scales. RISA teams also evaluate the impact of their efforts on regional and local stakeholders, policy and planning processes, and resource management.

The RISA program strengthens NOAA climate services by bridging science and service communities. Ongoing dialogue between scientists and the stakeholder network provides the perfect setting for social scientists and outreach experts to evaluate the overarching issue of the role of science in supporting policy and decision-making, particularly climate science.

RISA teams prepare and conduct workshops and training sessions in their regions. These opportunities include:

- Seasonal Forest Fire Assessment workshops in the western and eastern United States,

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**Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments Program** [http://climate.noaa.gov/cpo\\_pa/risa](http://climate.noaa.gov/cpo_pa/risa)

**Email:** [oar.cpo.risa@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.cpo.risa@noaa.gov)

**Approaches (continued)**

- Regional Climate Change impacts assessment conferences,
- Alaska Climate Impacts monthly conference calls,
- Pacific Islands climate impacts training, and
- Climate impacts trainings for U.S. Forest Service and Department of Interior personnel.

Several RISA projects publish periodic seasonal outlooks and climate summaries to forecast or describe regional climate:

- The "Intermountain West Climate Summary" provides information for water managers.
- The California Nevada Applications Program works collaboratively with the California Energy Commission to produce climate summary reports.

RISA teams develop tools that enable stakeholders to consider potential impacts of climate in their decisions:

- The Dynamic Drought Index Tool provides users with the ability to examine drought indices.
- Paleoclimate Web tools enable water resource managers to examine reconstructed stream flows for drought impact analyses in western river basins.
- Agroclimate.org provides crop models and seasonal climate outlooks, enabling users, such as farmers, to



The La Niña Drought Tracker, a monthly experimental product from the CLIMAS RISA, provides water and other resource managers in the region up-to-date information about current and forecast drought conditions.

analyze information about climate and crop variations in the southeastern U.S.

- A forecast evaluation tool enables users to interpret and examine past performance of climate forecast.

NOAA's Climate Program Office has expanded the RISA network by nearly 20 percent since 2009. Currently, there are eleven RISA teams spanning the continental U.S. and its territories.

