

# Working with Social Factors and Values to Support Adaptation Planning and Public Finance

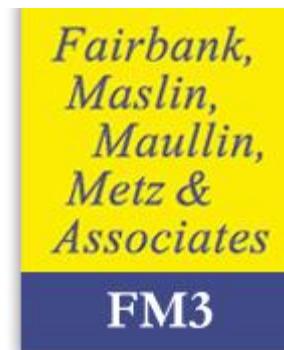
Hannah Torres, PhD. University of Central Florida

David Metz, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3)

CJ Reynolds, University of South Florida



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA  
COLLEGE OF MARINE SCIENCE



APA Florida Conference  
September 7, 2017

# Today's Program

## Agenda Topics

- Introduction and overview: Why social values/perceptions matter
- Polling research: messages and lessons from successful referenda
- Social research: factors influencing adaptation and finance
- Facilitated discussion about YOUR projects and challenges
- **Speakers and Schedule**
  - 8:30 to 8:40 Dr. Hannah Torres, University of Central Florida
  - 8:40 to 9:00 David Metz, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3)
  - 9:00 to 9:15 CJ Reynolds, University of South Florida
  - 9:15 to 9:45 Interactive Discussion, Q & A

# Objectives of this session:

- Clarify project objectives
- Identify audience(s)/desired outcomes
- Identify challenges and opportunities
- Formulate messages to effectively communicate
- Learn about useful resources to help you meet your objectives



There is growing awareness of the need to understand **social** aspects of environmental issues



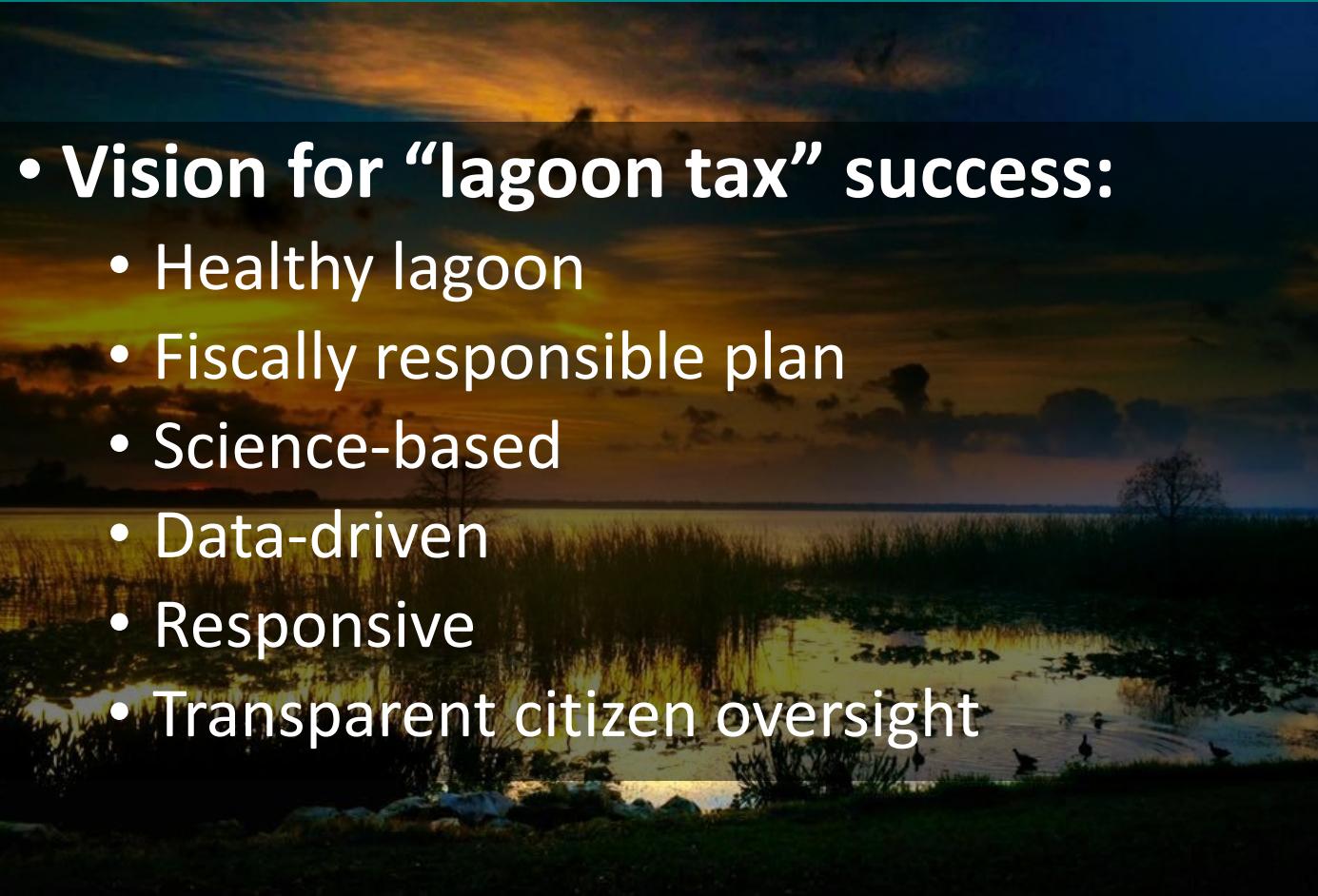
# Example: Indian River Lagoon

- Stretches across 40% of FL east coast (5 counties, 156 mi.)
- 1990 – “Estuary of National Significance”
- IRL ecosystem services estimated to represent 1/7 of region’s economy
- Socially constructed rhetoric depicts a “Lagoon in crisis”
- 2015 – IRL Council forms to carry out IRL Nat’l Estuary Program
- Nov. 2016 – Brevard voters overwhelmingly approved new 10-year, ½ penny sales tax





# Example: Indian River Lagoon



- Vision for “lagoon tax” success:
  - Healthy lagoon
  - Fiscally responsible plan
  - Science-based
  - Data-driven
  - Responsive
  - Transparent citizen oversight





E·S·R·C  
ECONOMIC  
& SOCIAL  
RESEARCH  
COUNCIL



# METROPOLE: Analyzing Decision-Making in Coastal Cities in Brazil, UK and US

METROPOLE worked with municipal partners in Brazil, the UK, and the US to investigate how social, cultural and governance factors impact decision making and local capacities to adapt to sea level rise.

<http://metropole.marine.usf.edu>

Principal Investigator Frank Muller Karger

USA partners



American Planning Association  
Florida Chapter

UK partners



Cemaden  
Centro Nacional de Monitoramento  
e Alertas de Desastres Naturais



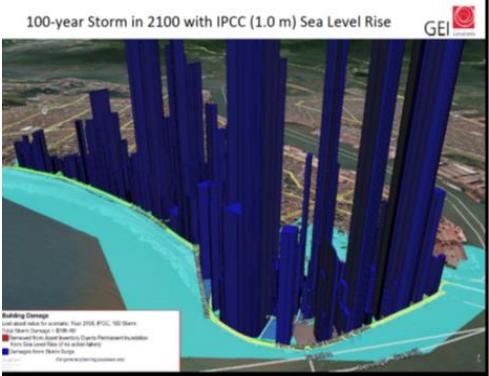
Brazil partners



UNICAMP



# Example: METROPOLE project



COAST Vulnerability Assessments & Scenarios

Understand values, perceptions, and conditions that influence adaptation planning and institutional capacity



Interviews with Decision-Makers



Two Interactive Workshops per Community

Pre/Post Workshop Surveys



# Outcomes

Workshops increased awareness of local risks and future needs

- Attitudes shifted accordingly for options
- Projects catalyzed local and regional **action!**
  - Santos – Commission formed to develop Adaptation Plan (2015-2016)
  - Selsey – Held regional flood defence conference for small towns (2016)
  - Broward County & Cities – Added new information to plans
  - **Social science research contributes to public finance and adaptive capacity knowledge**

Hannah R. Torres  
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University of Central Florida  
Department of Sociology





# Crafting the Language of Adaptation

*Using Research To Guide Communications to  
Build Support for Financing Adaptation*

**Dave Metz**

*Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates – FM3*

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH & STRATEGY

A close-up photograph of two large fish heads, likely salmon or trout, resting on a dark wooden surface. The fish are positioned side-by-side, facing towards the left. The fish in the foreground has its mouth open, showing sharp, white, conical teeth. Its skin is a mottled greenish-brown color. The fish in the background is slightly larger and has a more prominent, bulging eye. The background is out of focus, showing some equipment and cables, suggesting a processing or cleaning station.

# Language Matters

**“In your own words, what does the term ‘watershed’ mean to you?”**

**Don’t know: 47%**

**A geographic area through which water flows to a common destination: 27%**

**A building or shed used to store water: 26%**

**1999 survey of 850 Santa Clara County, CA residents**

# A Key First Step in Opinion Research: Define Your Objectives

- Do you want your research to...
  - 1) *Help you understand what the public thinks*
  - 2) *Document what the public thinks for key stakeholders*
  - 3) *Identify messages, messaging, and target demographics for a communications campaign*
- Research can accomplish one or more of these objectives, but its design will hinge on which is most important

# **Case Study: Measure AA And San Francisco Bay**

# **Measure AA Ballot Language**

## **Measure AA: San Francisco Bay Clean Water, Pollution Prevention and Habitat Restoration Program.**

To protect San Francisco Bay for future generations by reducing trash, pollution and harmful toxins, improving water quality, restoring habitat for fish, birds and wildlife, protecting communities from floods, and increasing shoreline public access, shall the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority authorize a parcel tax of \$12 per year, raising approximately \$25 million annually for 20 years with independent citizen oversight, audits, and all funds staying local?

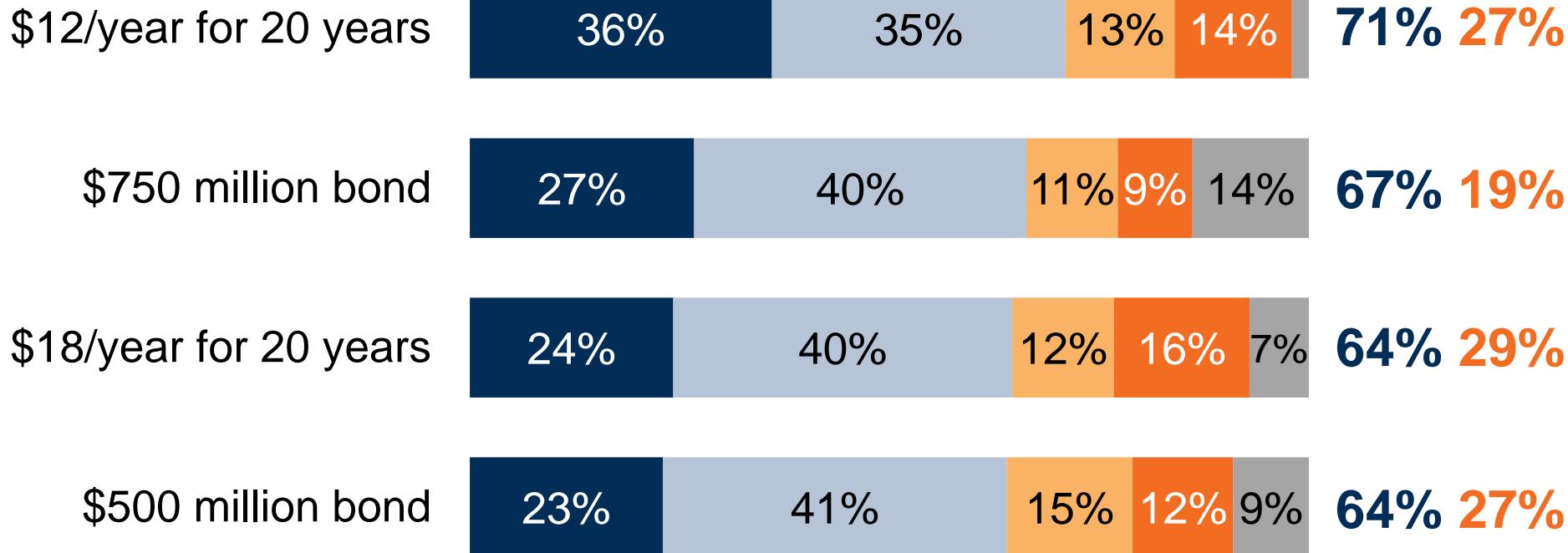
# Among a range of finance options, a \$12 parcel tax was the only one that topped two-thirds support...

*If a vote on this measure were held today, would you vote  
yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it?*

- Def. Yes
- Prob./Undec. Lean Yes
- Prob./Undec. Lean No
- Def.No
- Undecided

Total  
Yes

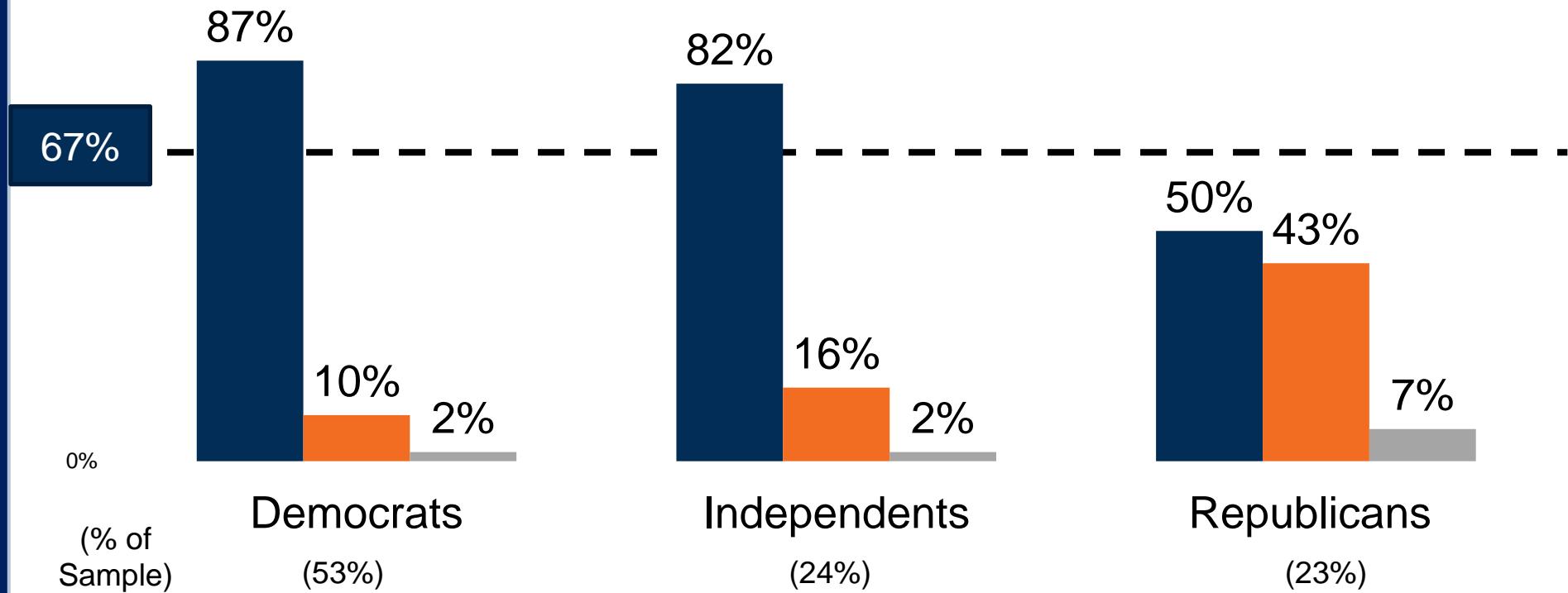
Total  
No



# Throughout, the data showed that partisanship was the biggest dividing line in support for Measure AA.

*Initial Vote by Party*

■ Total Yes ■ Total No ■ Undecided



# The top tier of messages focused on future generations; fish contamination; and the diverse ways that people experience the Bay.

■ Very Conv. ■ Smwt. Conv.

**(GENERATIONS)** If we want our children and grandchildren to inherit a clean and healthy San Francisco Bay – one that will be part of their lives the way it is part of ours – we need to act now to clean up and restore it.

48% 33% **81%**

**(FISH)** Pollution of the Bay has put the health of fish and wildlife at serious risk. Fish from the Bay are contaminated with harmful chemicals like PCB's, mercury, and pesticides. Restoring the Bay is the key to reducing the toxins that threaten our fish and wildlife.

43% 38% **81%**

**(ALL OF US)** San Francisco Bay is a part of all of our lives – whether we live along the Bay; work there; walk, jog, or visit parks along its shores; or simply appreciate it as we drive over a bridge. The Bay is essential to our quality of life, and this measure is a critical step to keeping it clean and healthy.

42% 38% **81%**

# A number of opposition messages had credibility.

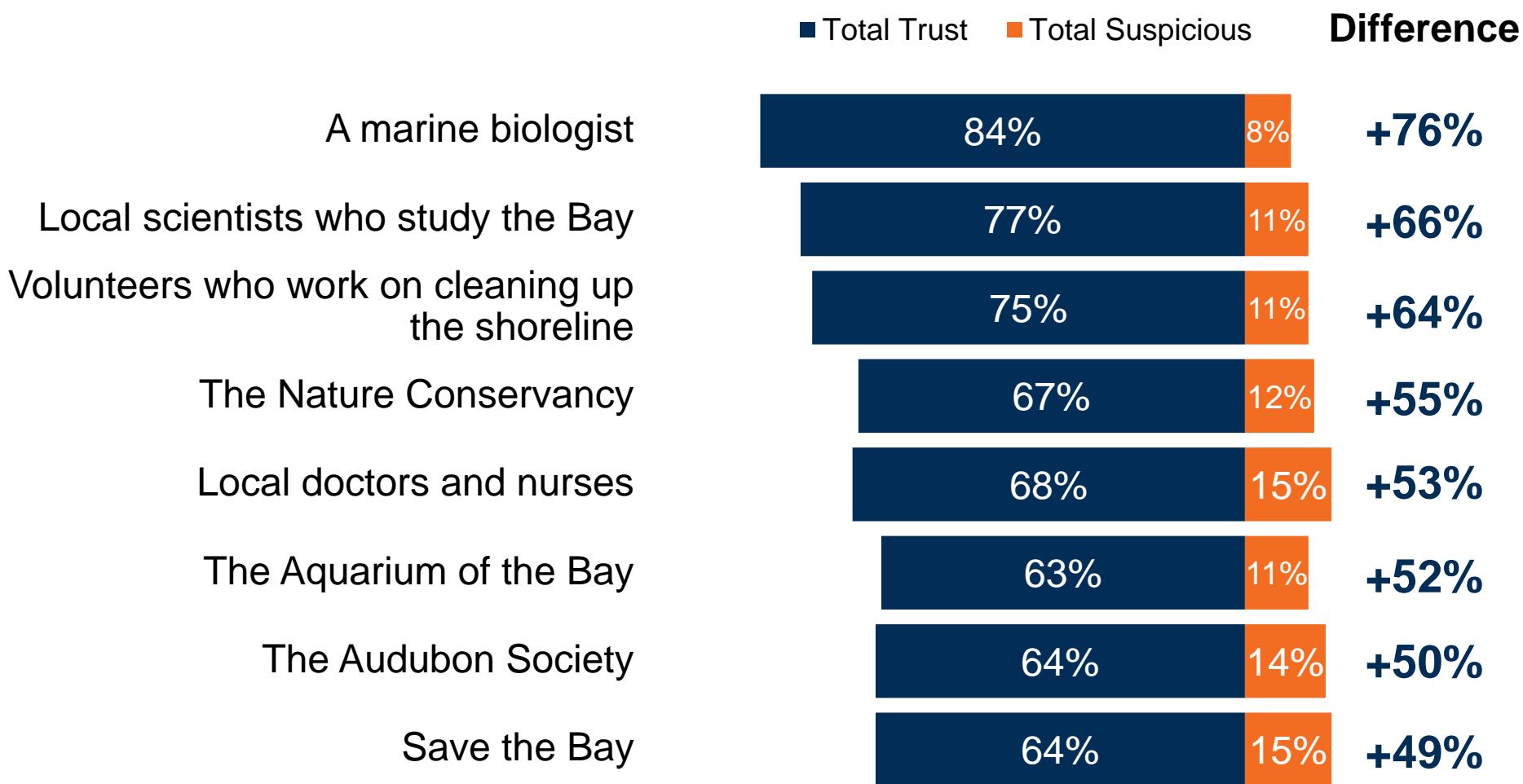
**(UNFAIR)** Measure AA is unfair. It will establish a new parcel tax on all Bay Area property owners, whether or not they live anywhere near the Bay and whether or not they can afford to pay. It's not fair to make someone who lives far inland and faces no risk of flooding pay the same amount in taxes as someone who lives in an expensive house right on the Bay shoreline.

**(AUTHORITY)** Measure AA is a waste of money. It will give hundreds of millions of dollars to a new government bureaucracy, with no track record of managing money effectively, and responsibilities that overlap with existing government agencies. Taxpayer money will end up being misspent and wasted.

<sup>^</sup>**(EXISTING)** If we are truly concerned about San Francisco Bay, there are many existing sources of federal, state, and local funds that we can use to restore its wetlands without creating a new, bloated, and expensive bureaucracy. Measure AA would spend an additional half billion dollars of our money. Vote NO to send a message that the taxes we already pay are more than enough to restore San Francisco Bay wetlands.

**(COST OF LIVING)** Our region's high cost of living is hurting seniors on fixed incomes and middle class families. Housing costs have skyrocketed and it has gotten harder and harder just to afford a place to live. Adding a tax like this will only make the problem worse.

# Environmental organizations and scientific experts are the most trusted messengers.



Q15. Here is a list of people and organizations that may take positions or offer information on Measure AA. Please tell me if you would generally trust each person or organization's opinion on Measure AA, or if you would be suspicious of it. Split Sample

# The End Result – 70.3% “Yes”



County	% Yes
Alameda	75.2%
Contra Costa	65.1%
Marin	72.3%
Napa	56.8%
San Francisco	77.6%
San Mateo	71.6%
Santa Clara	70.0%
Solano	53.9%
Sonoma	63.3%

# **Other Message Guidance**

# Key Messaging Do's and Don'ts

- **DO** stress the joint economic and environmental benefits of policies to prepare for a changing climate.
- **DO** stress the need for *planning* and *preparedness*.
- **DO** recognize that extreme weather events can significantly impact local opinion – but that those effects may be limited by time and distance from the events.
- **DO** focus on the need to protect communities for future generations.
- **DO NOT** overemphasize the role of government or the mechanics of policy changes.
- **DO NOT** be drawn into debates about science and data.
- **DO** focus on shared values like good health, happiness, safety, and economic prosperity.
- **DO** be sure to use credible messengers.
- **DO** use visuals wherever possible.

# **DO stress the importance of upgrading our nation's water infrastructure.**

*Some people have proposed increasing the federal investment in rebuilding our water infrastructure - including pipelines, pumps, treatment plants, reservoirs and other facilities - to ensure a safe, reliable supply of drinking water for all communities. Does this sound like something you would support or oppose?*

<b>Demographic Group</b>	<b>% Support</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>87%</b>
18-34	87%
Men Age 35-44	94%
55+	88%
18-34	85%
Women Age 35-54	81%
55+	88%
Party	
Republicans	83%
Independents	84%
Democrats	93%

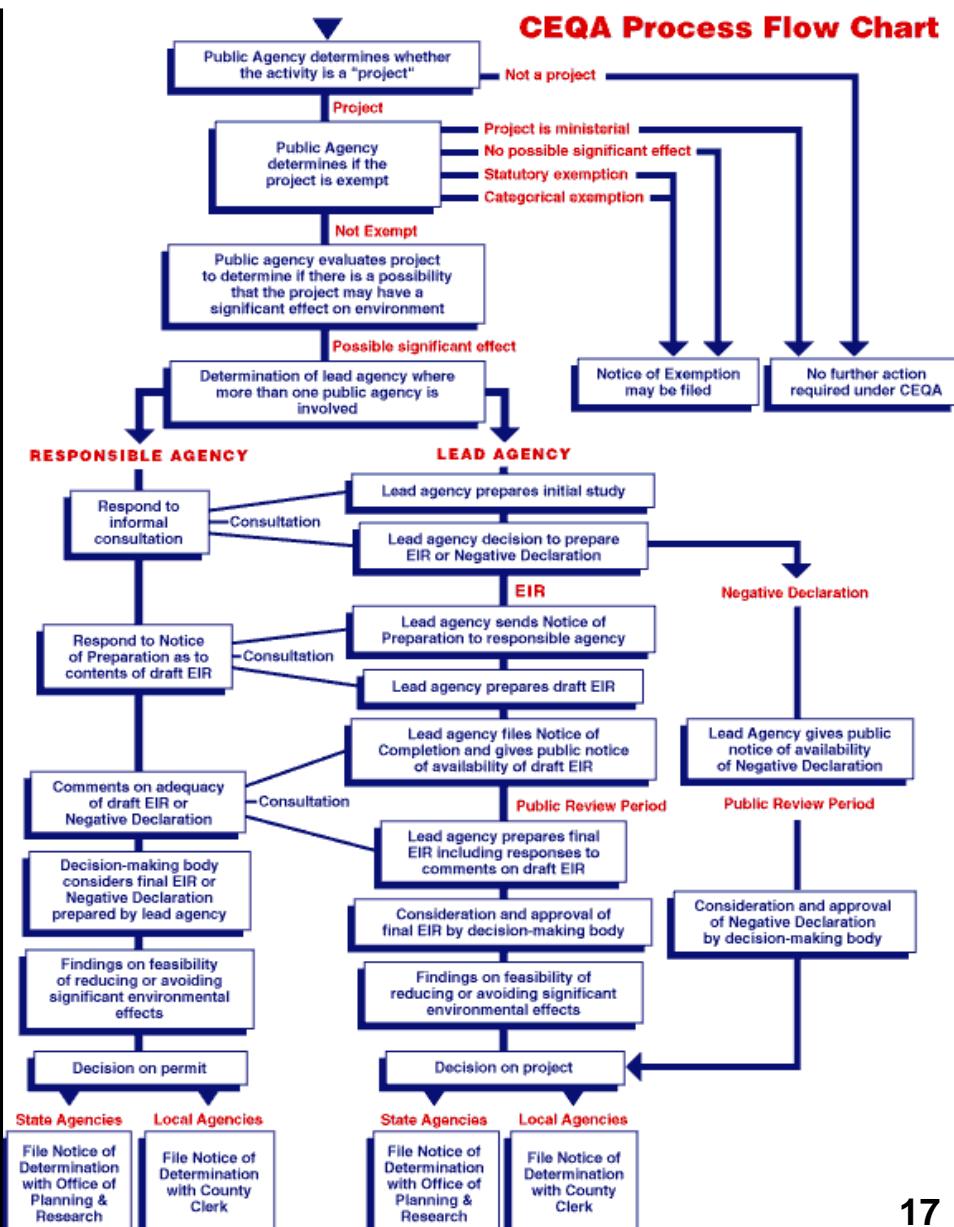
# **DO highlight the important role of “green infrastructure” – but don’t call it that.**

<b>Best Description of Concept Ranked by Voters</b>	<b>Voters</b>	<b>Opinion Elites</b>
Nature-based solutions	43%	39%
Natural Defenses	21%	18%
Natural Infrastructure	17%	24%
Green Infrastructure	14%	14%

# **DO be disciplined about using language that works.**

<b>Bad/Confusing Words to Avoid</b>	<b>Good Words to Use</b>
Adaptation	Planning
Regulation	Clean Air
Market-Based Solutions	Restore/Repair/Fix
Resilience	Clean Energy/Energy Efficiency
Green Infrastructure	Leadership
Ecosystem	Action
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Preparedness
Crisis/Catastrophe	Safeguards
Taxes/Fees	Solutions
	Innovation/Technology
	Infrastructure

# Finally, talk benefits – not process.



# For more information, contact:



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# **Understanding Values and Social Factors in Adaptation Finance**

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Funded By National Science Foundation



# Rising to the Challenge

Increase support for your project by understanding

1. Cognitive and social factors that influence decision making for types of adaptation, timeframes and acceptance of finance
2. How to integrate into your work -- every day...



# METROPOLE Case Study



Selsey, UK



Santos, BRAZIL

**Workshops with local officials, gov. staff, organizations, neighborhood leaders and experts/scientists**

- Surveys before and after workshops
- Groups reviewed local SLR/SS risks, costs of damage and ROI for specific adaptation options.

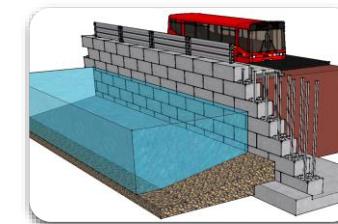
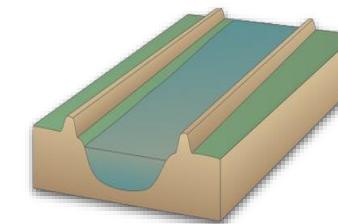


Broward County, US

# Which Adaptation Options Should Local Government Implement and When (Now/10/25/100/Never/Unsure?)

Same pattern in all 3 countries

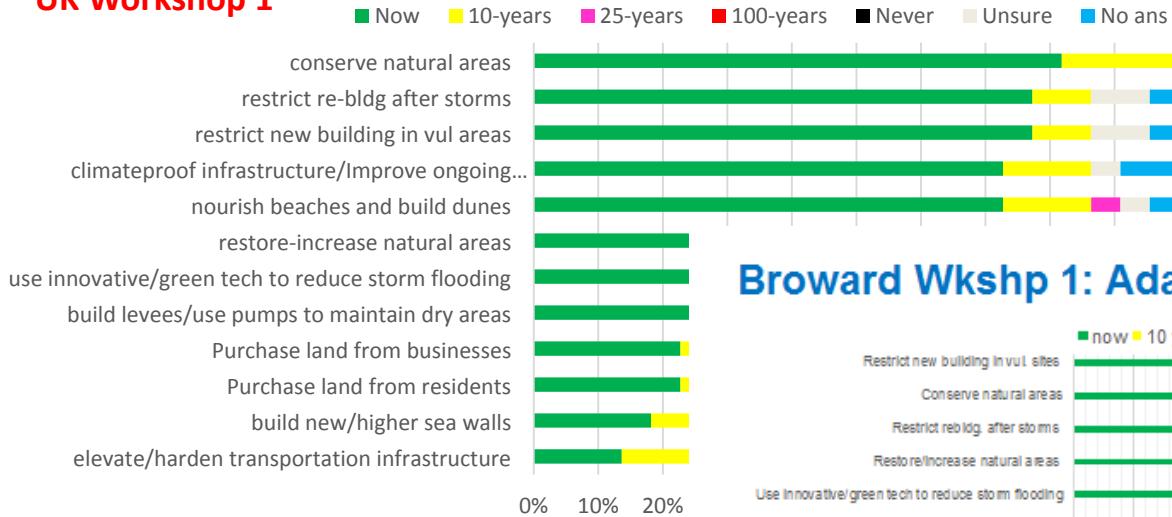
- Local Gov Should Act **NOW** and **10 Years**
- Same top options: development policy and nature-based
- Delayed large “grey” projects and voluntary buy outs



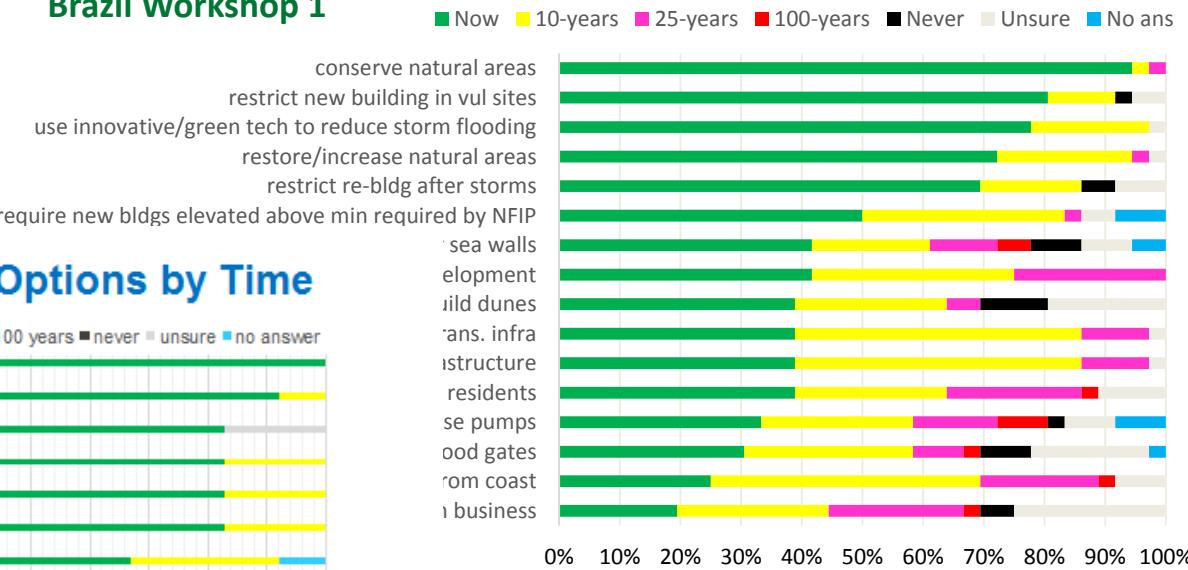
# Adaptation Option & Times

Green = Now, Yellow = 10 years

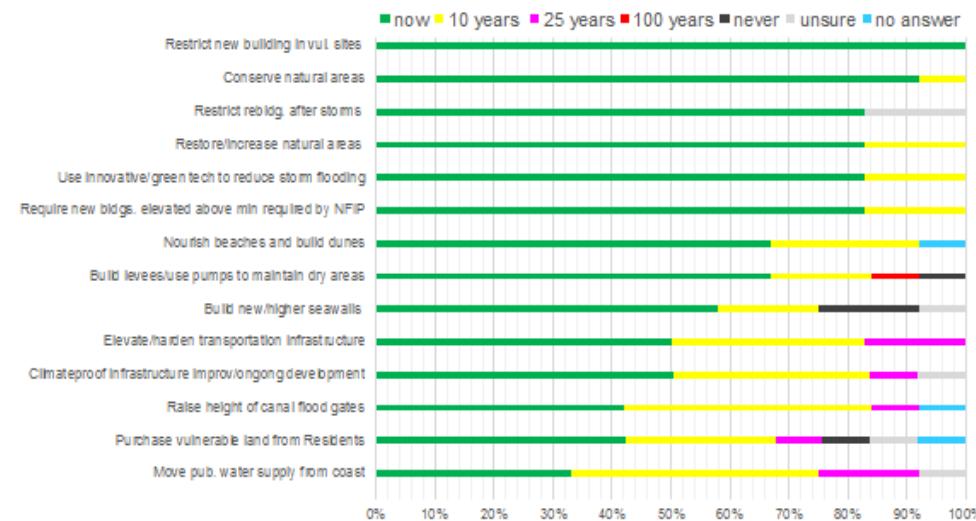
## UK Workshop 1



## Brazil Workshop 1



## Broward Wkshp 1: Adaptation Options by Time



# What should we think about this?



# Social Factors that Influence Adaptation

Preferences for nature-based solutions (think big green spaces)

- Offers co-benefits *now* -- aesthetically pleasing, recreation, improves community
- Perception of fiscal savings, less government costs
- “Delayed gray”...uncertainty of future risks/needs, dislike of large projects, and concerns about quality of life



# Social Factors that Influence Adaptation

Why would “*Restrict new development/redevelopment in vulnerable areas*” get high “now” scores?

Some comments

- Common sense – stop the stupidity! We know enough now....
- Love/protect paradise
- Anti-urbanism attitudes – dislike density
- Perceptions/misperceptions and judgements – i.e. beach front condos = rich/tourists

BUT later mayors said “We need/rely on that tax base/revenue....”

# 5 Key Factors Influencing *Time Priority*

1. Formal and informal **leadership roles** and personality traits.
2. Action is **GOOD!** (\*unless you oppose the issue.)
3. **Social group norms**  
perceptions of what others would do in similar situations
4. Personal **experience** with hazards **increases concerns** about threats.
  - Concern influences overall support for adaptation. (ASU 9 Country Study)



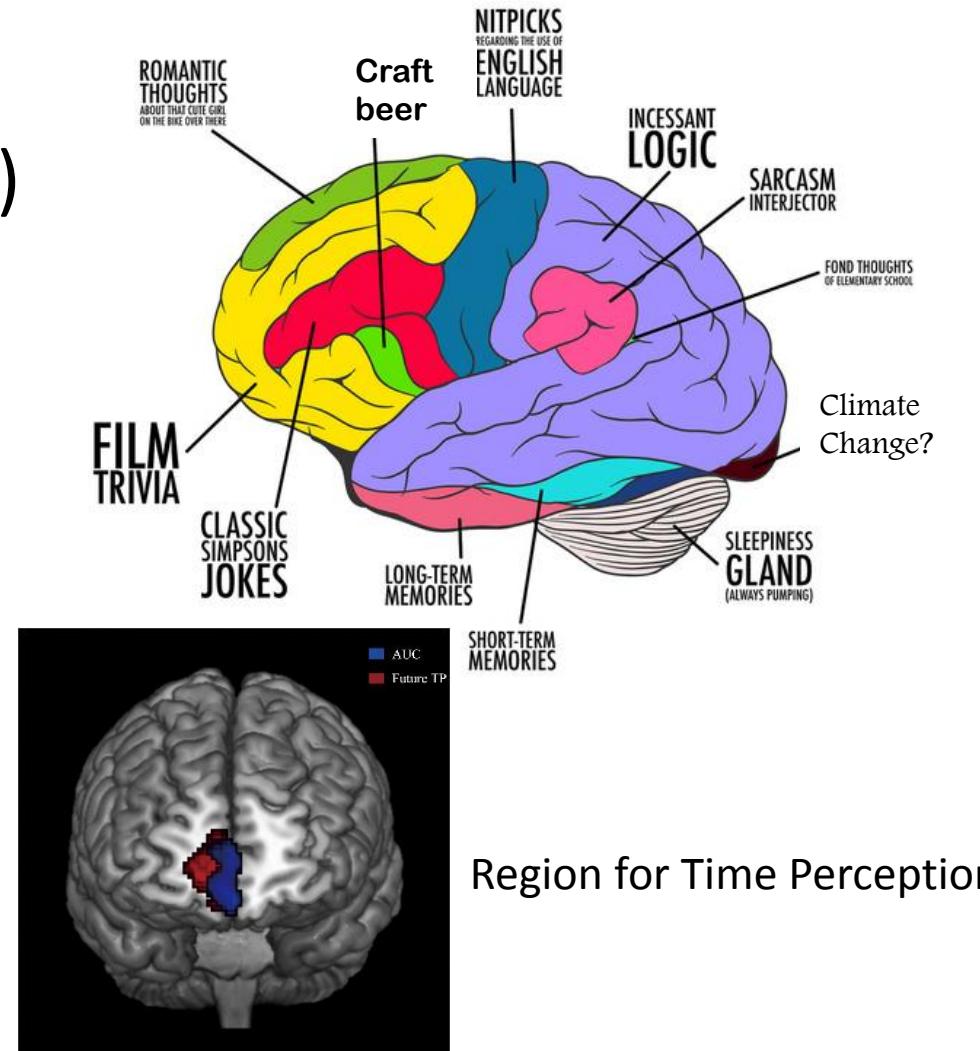
# 5 Key Factors Influencing *Time Priority*

## 5. Cognitive functions

### Future discounting (behavioral economists)

- Immediate benefits are valued more than future benefits
- Prefer SMALL rewards sooner over LARGER rewards later
- Longer time frame = increased discounting of future benefit

**Hard to imagine future beyond 15 years –**  
(international futurist research Tonn)



# How You Might Use This – *Engagement*

- Encourage reflection – role as leader, social norms
- Explain it's hard to “see the future”
- Use NOAA and other viz tools to show risks
- Use attractive illustrations to show future scenarios
- Facilitate positive visioning discussions/exercises
- Define incremental actions/steps



# **How do leaders want to pay for adaptation?**

## **Which public finance tools are more or less acceptable?**

### **And why?**



# Acceptability of Public Finance Mechanisms

Ratings Scale: 1 = not acceptable to 5= totally

1. Create low-interest loan program for flood proofing and elevating residences
2. Develop special district assessment for properties in highly vulnerable areas
3. Issue a bond to finance public infrastructure improvements
4. Create a new county-wide resiliency fund based on property taxes
5. Add flood resiliency surcharge on water utility bills
6. Custom option: US/sales tax, BR/transfer tax, UK/development tax

# Acceptability of Public Finance Mechanisms

**Surprisingly similar pattern in Brazil and US. UK was different.**

## Rank Order of Acceptability

- More acceptable: “targeted” fees/taxes on property at risk and/or user gets the benefits (special districts)
- Moderately acceptable: Mechanisms that enable financing for adaptation (bonds / loans)
- Lowest: General charges to all community payers

# **Gender, Age and Politics are Factors**

- Identified differences in finance acceptability among women and men, and age groups
- Political Affiliation – same ORDER but different acceptability scores

**Consider these as focus groups pointing you to key questions.  
Need bigger studies!!**

**Your Take-away:**  
**No such thing as "general public"**  
**Imagine perspectives of multiple audiences**



# Social Factors – Fairness of Finance

Fairness – deeply held core value.

But “fair” means different things....to different people

- “We all share the risk (city) and everyone contributes.”
- “You incurred the risk and will get the benefit -- so you should pay.”
- “I don’t want to pay now, when others will benefit in the future.....”
- When people think institutions function fairly, they are supportive of those institutions
- Perceptions of process fairness – influence policy support
- Ideology moderates perceptions of system fairness

# Special Districts and Resiliency

**Many special districts in Florida – take a new look to identify potential to generate funding for adaptation and resiliency projects**



Aligns with perceptions of fairness

- Focuses fees/costs on those who benefit from the services/improvements -- as opposed to everyone.
- Empower citizens to govern their own neighborhood or community.
- Possibility to promote regional collaboration

Check out the DEO Special Districts Accountability Program for information.

<http://www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/special-districts/special-district-accountability-program>

# How You Might Use This – *Education*

Work with your CFO/Attorney or League to develop Municipal Finance Education sessions for officials and business leaders

- Adaptation financial tool kit – what's in it, what can we afford?
- Socio-economic community impacts – not just property!
- Communicating to peers and community
- Exercises for risk and financial trade-offs



# **How You Might Use This – Outreach**

**Know what your audience(s) value -- consider age, gender, politics**

## **Tips for strategic framing**

1. Link funding to local benefits (not just avoided risk)
2. Explain different tools for different purposes
3. Define project needs, impacts
4. Integrate fairness themes
5. Explain trade-offs and consequences of NOT investing/  
acting
6. Clearly defined steps, costs, benefits, and timelines

# **Checklist for Integrating Social Factors Into Adaptation Planning and Finance**

1. Simplify finance and build savviness BEFORE asking for support
2. We protect what we love
  1. Lead with nature-based, green technology and land-use
  2. Focus on innovation, use tools AND show positive design visuals
3. Define local co-benefits, appeal to multiple values
4. Address perceptions of fairness -- risk, use, individual vs community benefits and “who pays”
5. Timeframes and steps – now, 5 years and 10 years

# To Download Our Presentations

- Monday go to <http://metropole.marine.usf.edu/>



Advancing International Adaptation Research and Local Planning Methods in Coastal Communities

Coastal communities – from small towns to major metropolis -- face increasing management and fiscal challenges. Innovations in collaborative research action are needed to transform governance and community engagement practices to better mobilize our communities.

The international METROPOLE research project funded by the Belmont Forum brought together social, economic, environmental scientists and municipal practitioners and officials to assess the socio-economic

Researchers and stakeholders address coastal vulnerability and freshwater security