



Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc.

2809 Fish Hatchery Road, Suite 204, Madison, WI 53713

Phone: 608-274-0123 Fax: 608-274-0696
Website: www.floods.org Email: asfpm@floods.org

Priorities for Climate Change Adaptation: ASFPM Policy Statement

The Earth's Climate is Changing

Even if the Earth's climate stabilized today, land stopped subsiding, and humans never emitted another pound of CO₂, we still face an unacceptably high risk of loss and yet continue to invest in harm's way. Monitoring systems are observing the loss of protective natural features such as wetlands and marshes, and increases in the frequency of extreme storms and the rate of Sea Level Rise. ASFPM strives to help communities understand and prepare for the flood risks these changes present.ⁱ

Adaptation to Climate Change

Since disruptive climate impacts are already underway and anticipated to increase, ASFPM adopts this policy statement to support efforts to reduce the risk of loss of life and property due to flooding, regardless of whether a given flood risk or event is attributable to or exacerbated by climate change. ASFPM's policy priority is to help prepare our members and the Nation to respond to all flood challenges, including those that may be associated with or worsened by climate change. ASFPM policy prioritizes adaptation strategies for the built environment, including structures, infrastructure, cultural resources, commerce, and industry, and related natural resources within and dependent on the floodplain. Consistent with long-held policy, ASFPM emphasizes hazard mitigation measures that are cost-effective, permanent, and socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable.

ASFPM supports a risk management approach that restores and preserves natural coastal and riverine dynamics. Although more national attention has been paid to sea-level rise and coastal flooding concerns, ASFPM policy emphasizes as co-equal the need for data, planning, hazard mitigation, and implementation of adaptation strategies to address changing inland climatic patterns as well.

Multidisciplinary, Multisector & Multilevel Approach

ASFPM promotes the development and adoption of policies that involve all relevant disciplines, sectors, and levels of government. Consistent with long-held policy, ASFPM supports approaches that:

1. Acknowledge appropriate roles and responsibilities for decision makers at the local, regional, State, and Federal levels of government, with an emphasis on nonfederal land use authority;
2. Leverage expertise across professions, including planners, engineers, emergency managers, resource managers, insurers, real estate professionals, elected officials, and public policy specialists; and
3. Engage across public, private, academic, and advocacy sectors, for inclusive and partnered efforts to develop and implement the most effective strategies to identify and manage risk.

ASFPM's focus is on promoting adaptation strategies for communities to contend with the potential adverse impacts of climate change. Additionally, ASFPM recognizes the role natural floodplains play in carbon absorption, filtering polluted runoff, and recharging water supplies, among many other benefits. Finally, we are committed to environmentally sustainable corporate management principles and encourage our members to adopt sustainable practices.

ⁱ ASFPM is developing an organizational whitepaper on climate change adaptation, anticipated late 2010.