

# Adaptation Response Open House

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## ADAPTING TO RISING TIDES PROGRAM


### Purpose

Participants gain familiarity with the components of an adaptation response and provide feedback on the draft adaptation responses that have been developed for the project area.

#### Three Components of an ART Adaptation Response

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- 1 The **vulnerability(s)** being addressed by the adaptation response. The inclusion of this in the response provides a direct link to the assessment findings, and is a transparent way to ensure that each adaptation action is relevant to the problem (i.e., the vulnerability) it addresses.
- 2 **Adaptation actions** (one or more). While some vulnerabilities can be addressed by a single action, most require multiple, often coordinated actions. Some actions can be taken at the same time, while others require a series of sequential steps that incrementally build towards resilience. A response should describe key characteristics of the action that are relevant to its implementation; for example, if it is an action requiring a long lead time to implement.
- 3 **Implementation options** for each action. These provide alternatives for initiating adaptation actions such as incorporating them into existing planning or processes or creating new initiatives. The options also should identify the agencies and organizations – public and private – that have a role in implementing the actions.

Refer to the adaptation response card below and the **ART Subregional Adaptation Responses** () for further description and examples of these components.

### Approach

Using an open house format, project participants visit multiple stations, each of which has a large format poster of draft adaptation responses prepared by staff for each sector (e.g., transportation, utilities, natural areas), set of assets or issues. With a project team member at each adaptation response station,

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participants learn about, discuss and provide input (detailed and general) on actions, actors, implementation processes and other components of the responses. The open house is followed by a group discussion to share key feedback, questions and concerns.

## Outcomes

1. On an individual level, participants gain a better understanding of what is included in an adaptation response, and agencies' and organizations' roles as implementers, partners, funders or interested parties.

The adaptation response approach is valuable because unlike a simple list of adaptation actions, responses include a substantial level of detail about roles and responsibilities, implementation options and timing and sequencing of actions. The open house provides a relatively rapid way to inform asset managers and project participants of the format and content of the adaptation responses developed for the vulnerabilities identified in the assessment.

2. The project team receives input on draft adaptation responses.

3. Collectively, the project team and participants can identify options for implementation, such as upcoming projects, for near-term coordination and action, as well as challenges on which to take further action, such as agencies responsible for critical infrastructure that have yet to be engaged in planning efforts.

4. The project participants are ready for next steps in the the project: evaluating adaptation actions and identifying and committing to taking next steps – within their own organizations and/or in coordination with others – for key planning issues and actions.

## When to use this exercise...

This exercise is appropriate later in a planning project, after the assessment has been completed and the key planning issues for the project area have been defined. Furthermore, project participants should be at a point when they have developed good working relationships with each other and are familiar with the issues and specific vulnerabilities, because, among other things, they may be asked to discuss their own possible roles (and responsibilities) in the implementation of the draft actions within each response.

## Logistics

The length of this exercise varies depending on the follow-up discussion. At minimum, 50 minutes is needed.

- Allow 40 minutes for the introduction to the exercise and the open house and 10 to 15 minutes for a group debrief.

If the exercise is followed by further in-depth conversation(s) about next steps for adaptation, allocate another 30 minutes.

This exercise can require several project staff to run.

- At least one project team member who is very familiar with the adaptation responses is needed at each station to introduce the material and answer questions. It is helpful to have another staff member assigned to each station to take notes.

# 1. Prepare

Preparing for this exercise requires developing adaptation responses for the vulnerabilities that underlie each key planning issue. To make it easier to follow the same format as the examples below, the ART Portfolio includes:

- An adaptation response card reference that defines each component of the responses, and
- Responses developed for the vulnerabilities that were identified at a sub-regional scale in the ART Project. These can serve as starting points for developing a set of responses that is tailored to your project needs.

The Design Your Project section of the ART Portfolio provides additional guidance for moving through this step in the planning process.

## Adaptation Response Card Information

**Vulnerability:** One or two sentence description of the key planning issue and/or vulnerability(s) being addressed by the response

Actions	Action Characterizations	Implementation Options	
		Processes	Actors / Partners
The action or actions to address the identified vulnerability. Some responses include a series of related actions that could or should be taken together.	<p>Local, Regional, State, Federal: Scale(s) of implementation.</p> <p>Unlocking: Necessary to enable other actions.</p> <p>Dependent: Requires other actions first</p> <p>Do it Yourself: Land owner or manager could implement within existing laws/policies &amp; existing funding sources.</p> <p>Multi-Benefit: Confers benefits beyond sea level rise and storm event resilience.</p> <p>Long Lead Time: Urgent due to long implementation timeframe, near-term impacts, complex planning process, or many actors.</p>	Mechanism(s) through which the action could be implemented. Some processes exist and are possibly ongoing, while others will be new initiatives. There can be more than one process by which to implement any given action.	Actors: Agencies and organizations that could be involved in implementing the action. Actors include lead agencies (often asset owners or operators), as well as regulators, funders, and other potential partners. Partners include neighbors, regulators and other interested parties that may not implement the action but would have a role.

Identify the types of feedback that you are looking for from participants. Some questions to pose could include:

- Do the actions make sense for the vulnerabilities that they are supposed to address?
- Are the role assignments (for actors) correct? Working with right partners?
- How do these actions fit into ongoing local and regional efforts?

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# Supplies

Supplies for this exercise include:

- Large format printouts of the adaptation responses that participants can easily read from a few feet away when they are posted on a wall or laid on a table. See above for descriptions of content for these poster-sized response “cards”. Try to divide the responses evenly to avoid overloading a station, while still having content logically grouped.
- Name tags for the stations
- Power point slides or a handout with: a description of an adaptation response; purpose of the exercise, station descriptions, amount of time for the exercise, and questions to be considering.
- Tape, pens and markers.

Depending on a variety of factors, the project team may want to follow this exercise (at the same meeting) with focused, small group discussion(s) about next steps for adaptation – within participants’ own organizations and/or in coordination with others – for moving forward on priority issues and actions. The suitability and success of this type of in-depth conversation depends on the comfort level of the participants with each other and the issues identified for their assets or management areas.

The primary purpose of this conversation is for participants to gain a better understanding of what is included in an adaptation response, and their agencies’ or organizations’ roles in implementation. There can be other benefits to having this discussion, such as increasing participants’ readiness to take action by helping them identify near-term, feasible tasks that they can initiate to get the ball rolling. Project participants can also come away with leverage for gaining support within their organizations for continued adaptation work. For instance, they may be able to develop clear next steps to pursue internally, and create a sense of urgency by showing that owners and managers of neighboring and/or critical assets and services are moving ahead and that there is a window of opportunity to coordinate with them.

To set up a follow-up discussion, the project team should identify one or two key vulnerabilities for which early action is needed, because impacts are already occurring and/or adaptation actions have a long “lead-time” before the benefits can be achieved. Example discussion questions could include:

- If we committed to solving these issues, what more would we need to know?
- Is this the right group of people? Who else needs to be part of the discussion?

What is the timeline? When would action need to be initiated? How long will it take to both plan for implementation and reap the benefits of action?

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## 2. Do

### 1<sup>st</sup>

Introduce the purpose for the exercise, and explain that participants will be visiting different stations (at their own pace) over the next 45-60 minutes to learn about and discuss adaptation responses to address the vulnerabilities identified in the assessment. Review the components of an adaptation response (e.g., on a slide). Go over the questions that they should be considering and providing input on at each station.

- Do the actions make sense for the vulnerabilities that they are supposed to address?
- Are the role assignments (for actors) correct? Working with right partners?
- How do these actions fit into ongoing local and regional efforts?

Leave up the slide with the questions during the open house.

Ask participants to pick a station and get started.

### 2<sup>nd</sup>

At each station – especially for the first batch of participants – the station leader should orient participants to the format of the responses, and go over any components and terms that might be unclear. Allow participants to review, ask questions and provide comments at their own pace. Try to note their comments and encourage them to write feedback directly onto the large response card printouts because it will be challenging to keep track of and remember specific input after the meeting.

### 3<sup>rd</sup>

Give a 5-minute warning before its time to reconvene the group for the wrap-up. During the wrap-up prompt the group (if necessary) for their thoughts on the format and content of the responses by re-posing the initial questions.

### 4<sup>th</sup>

Time permitting, and assuming that the project team is prepared to lead further, in-depth conversation(s) about next steps for adaptation, pose one or two questions based on key vulnerabilities (from the open house) for further discussion. Explain that the goal is to agree on some shared objectives that can help participants move forward within their organizations and with outside partners on adaptation. Give participants 15-20 minutes to: clarify the issue(s) that these vulnerabilities cause for their organizations, the assets that they manage, and/or the communities with which they work; and to scope their near-term needs to be able to take action on these issues. Use the discussion questions to help initiate and focus the conversation:

- If we committed to solving these issues, what more would we need to know?

- Is this the right group of people? Who else needs to be part of the discussion?
- What is the timeline? When would action need to be initiated? How long will it take to both plan for implementation and reap the benefits of action?

Gauge different participants' levels of comfort, and if appropriate encourage participants to speak to specific, feasible actions that they can or will take on (e.g., talking with colleagues within their organization to develop a clearer internal long-term vision for an asset that they manage), and ask them to suggest timeframes for these efforts. Try to choose a reasonable point in the not-too-distant future for all or a subset of the group to meet and continue making progress on next action steps. Identify who needs to be brought to the table as well, and if appropriate, who from the project team or working group will reach out to them.

## 5<sup>th</sup>

In the final wrap-up, the project team should stick to very broad comments about the discussions, and avoid calling out participants about ideas or next steps that were mentioned, unless they volunteer this on their own.

Let participants know the next steps the project team will take to incorporate their input, and to share revised materials and continued work.

# 3. Follow-up

Review and incorporate the feedback from the open house into the adaptation responses. As needed, hold follow-up conversations with working group members and other stakeholders to gather additional or clarify feedback. Provide participants with revised materials (that address the assets that they manage or own) for their review and incorporate their comments prior to sharing these publicly.

# Example Materials & Outcomes

## Response Cards

When the open house exercise was used in one of the ART planning projects, staff presented the adaptation responses at four stations: Utilities, Structural Shorelines, Natural Shorelines, and Local Government. This organization allowed staff to group related vulnerabilities and responses that logically flowed together without overwhelming any one station with too many responses.

### EXAMPLE OPEN HOUSE RESPONSE CARD

LOCAL GOVERNMENT													
11. Businesses and community land uses rely on power, water, access roads and other systems and services to function. If these systems or services are disrupted due to storm events and sea level rise, the businesses and land uses that rely upon them will also be disrupted.													
Action	Where to Implement	Actors	Process	Interested Parties or Adjacent Landowners	Action Characterization								
					Local	Regional	State	Federal	Dependent	DIY	High Priority	Multi-benefit	Unlocking
11.1 Review and update city, county and facility emergency plans to address sea level rise and storm event contingencies and secondary impacts such as power outages and transportation disruptions	City of Hayward, Alameda County, Region	City of Hayward Fire Department, Alameda EMA, ABAG, CalEMA	Emergency and Hazard Planning	Private landowners	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
11.2 Prepare for flooding by stockpiling materials, establishing turn-key agreements for equipment rental, and pre-positioning emergency power generation capacity, portable pumps, and debris removal equipment	Public and privately owned facilities	Private land owners and asset managers	Operations	Private landowners	✓	✓					✓		✓
11.3 Develop policies or incentives to encourage/require access to auxiliary water or power sources, portable generators, or pre-negotiated rental or leasing agreements for portable sources	City of Hayward, Alameda County, State	City of Hayward Fire Department, Alameda EMA, ABAG, CalEMA	Emergency and Hazard Planning	Private landowners	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
11.4 Identify specific facilities served by limited or sole access-ways that are vulnerable to sea level rise and storm events and prioritize their protection or develop alternative access to these facilities	City of Hayward future flood zone	City of Hayward Fire Department, Alameda EMA, ABAG, CalEMA	Emergency and Hazard Planning	Private landowners	✓	✓	✓					✓	
11.5 Consider relocating critical facilities or components that are necessary to maintain continuity of utility services to areas that are not at risk from sea level rise and storm events	City of Hayward, Alameda County	City of Hayward, EBDA, Caltrans, CalPine	Long-range planning	Private landowners, ratepayers	✓	✓							

## Follow-up Discussion

An example that worked well in one of the ART planning projects addressed an environmental education and interpretive center located in a tidal marsh habitat. The center is already experiencing high tides that nearly reach critical equipment under the building, and in the long term (e.g., beyond 2050) the center and surrounding trails cannot be maintained in the current location. Following on the open house exercise, participants who included the manager for the center and its educational programming, as well as managers for the natural areas and some of the built infrastructure surrounding the center were asked:

*How can we preserve regional environmental education and recreation in this area of shoreline?*

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They identified some relatively low-cost retrofits for the building that would allow it to continue to function as an environmental education center in the near and mid-term. To preserve the functions of the center longer term, they felt there was a need for a coordinated environmental education and interpretive program for the broader region with a comparable curriculum that would be implemented throughout. After brainstorming about this idea, they identified a couple of other leaders in the region on environmental education and interpretation to approach for assistance. A key point about this example is the manager of the center had been an engaged participant in the project, and had, through the course of the planning process, developed a clear understanding of the short and long term vulnerabilities of the center and felt comfortable discussing issues and options.