

Puerto Rico: Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies

Ernesto L. Díaz (Director) & Kasey Jacobs (NOAA Fellow)
Puerto Rico Coastal Zone Management Program
Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, Puerto Rico

The Puerto Rico Coastal Zone Management Program initiated the development of the Climate Adaptation Project to collect and synthesize information about climate change risks to Puerto Rico through increasing coordination of efforts and compiling all best available scientific and local knowledge. This project is developed as part of the approved Coastal Zone Management Act Section 309 Strategy for Puerto Rico. The PRCZMP promoted the establishment of a partnership with over 130 scientists, planners, practitioners, and communication experts, collectively known as the Puerto Rico Climate Change Council (PRCCC). The PRCCC is working to accurately assess vulnerability to life and property and identifying and assessing feasible adaptation strategies for government, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and civil society.

The PRCCC is working towards the following objectives

- I. To use the best available scientific knowledge to identify the communities and ecosystems most at-risk from coastal hazards and climate change.
- II. To identify, assess, develop, and prioritize effective adaptation strategies and policies that could be implemented in Puerto Rico.
- III. To communicate findings, consensus, and recommendations to government, civil society, the media, and the private sector.
- IV. To cultivate a well-informed Puerto Rican society about coastal hazards, climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The PRCCC identified communication and sharing of information is an early priority. Their newly created Puerto Rico Climate Research Library has over 480 documents related to climate change and the Caribbean and they have established a PR-CC-Listserv for announcements and sharing of relevant publications.