Some Lessons Learned

Getting to Sustainability in the Face of Climate Vulnerability
Partnerships and Student Training

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Basis for Lessons Learned

- Climate vulnerability assessments we’ve led, especially the Chicago Climate Action Plan

- Development and implementation of the University of Illinois campus and online major in Earth, Society, and Environmental Sustainability
Assessment of potential climate impacts on Chicago

www.ChicagoClimateAction.org

Published in J. Great Lakes Research, 2010
Lessons Learned: Regional Climate Assessments

• Regional climate assessments get the understanding of climate change to the level of personal concern
  ➢ Through statistical and dynamical downscaling of climate and analyses of resulting impacts
  ➢ Through evaluation of the social implications of climate change

• Assessments identify advances in the underlying science, provide critical analysis of issues, and highlight key findings and key unknowns

• Assessments can provide the scientific underpinnings of informed policymaking
Best Practices Chicago Climate Assessment

- Two-way interactions with city and other stakeholders crucial in defining key analyses
- Use state-of-the-art, well-documented climate models, historical station data, and well-evaluated downscaling approaches
- Address likelihood and range of uncertainties in future projections
- Translate climate projections into relevant impacts information
- Sector experts crucial to vulnerability analyses
- Communicate findings to the intended audience in a relevant, accessible manner
Major Sectors of Potential Climate Vulnerability

- Water Resources
- Energy Supply and Use
- Transportation
- Agriculture
- Ecosystems
- Human Health
- Society and Infrastructure
Partnerships with Stakeholders

- Need to go beyond climate science
- Need to relate the science to vulnerabilities and adaptation considerations
- Need to be able to communicate across many disciplines: economics, law, business, culture, policy, ...
How take what we learned about the importance of partnerships into the classroom?
Undergraduate Degree: Earth, Society and Environmental Sustainability

BS degree at the University of Illinois

- I started to develop this major in 2004
- Offered since 2007
- Our graduates have to gone into grad schools (including Medicine, Law, Policy, Ecology) and a very wide variety of jobs (environmental consulting, building consulting, graphic design, computer game development,...)
- ~200 current Majors on the Urbana campus
- 55 students graduated last May
Thank You