Sea Level Rise Scenarios for Coastal Adaptation

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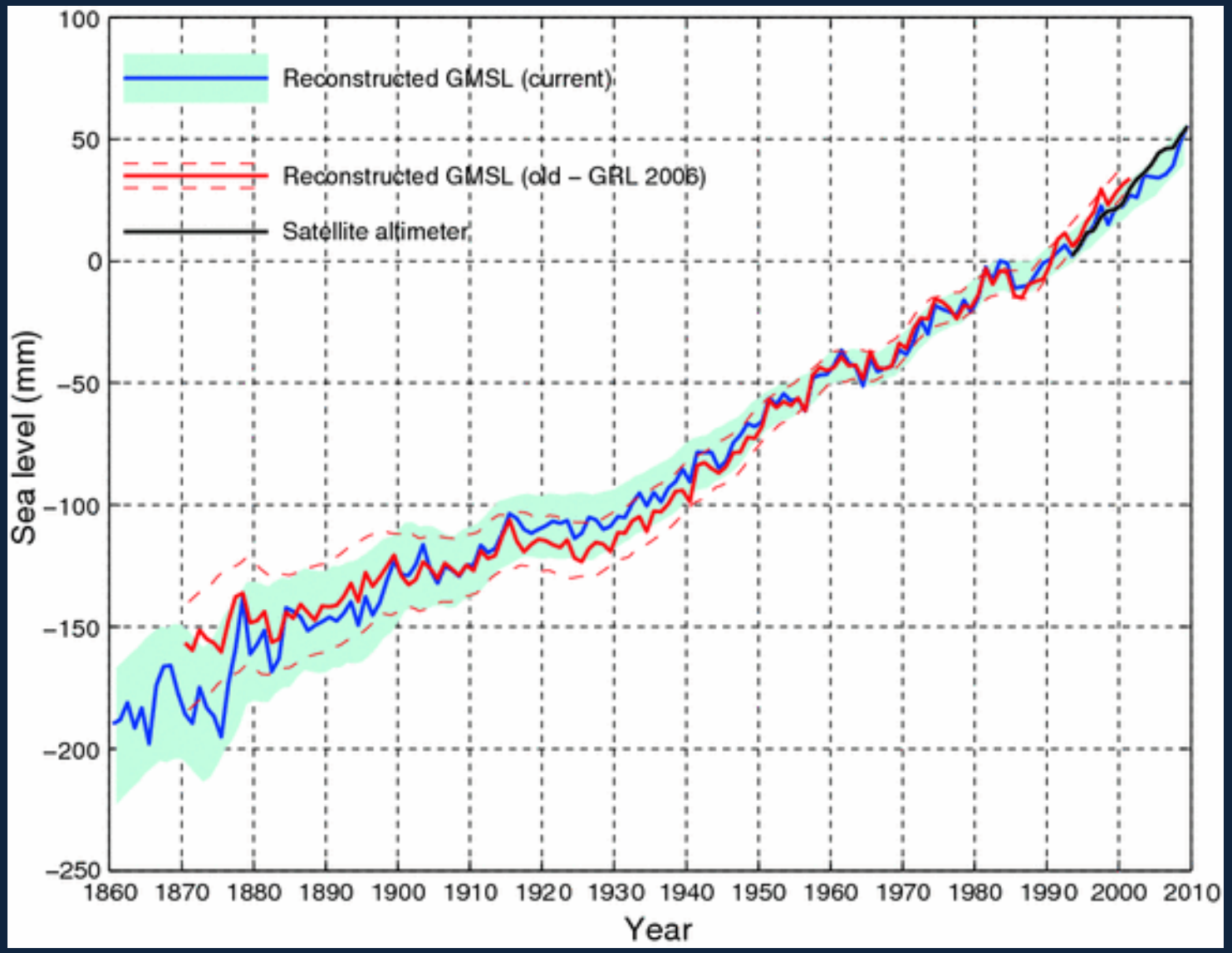
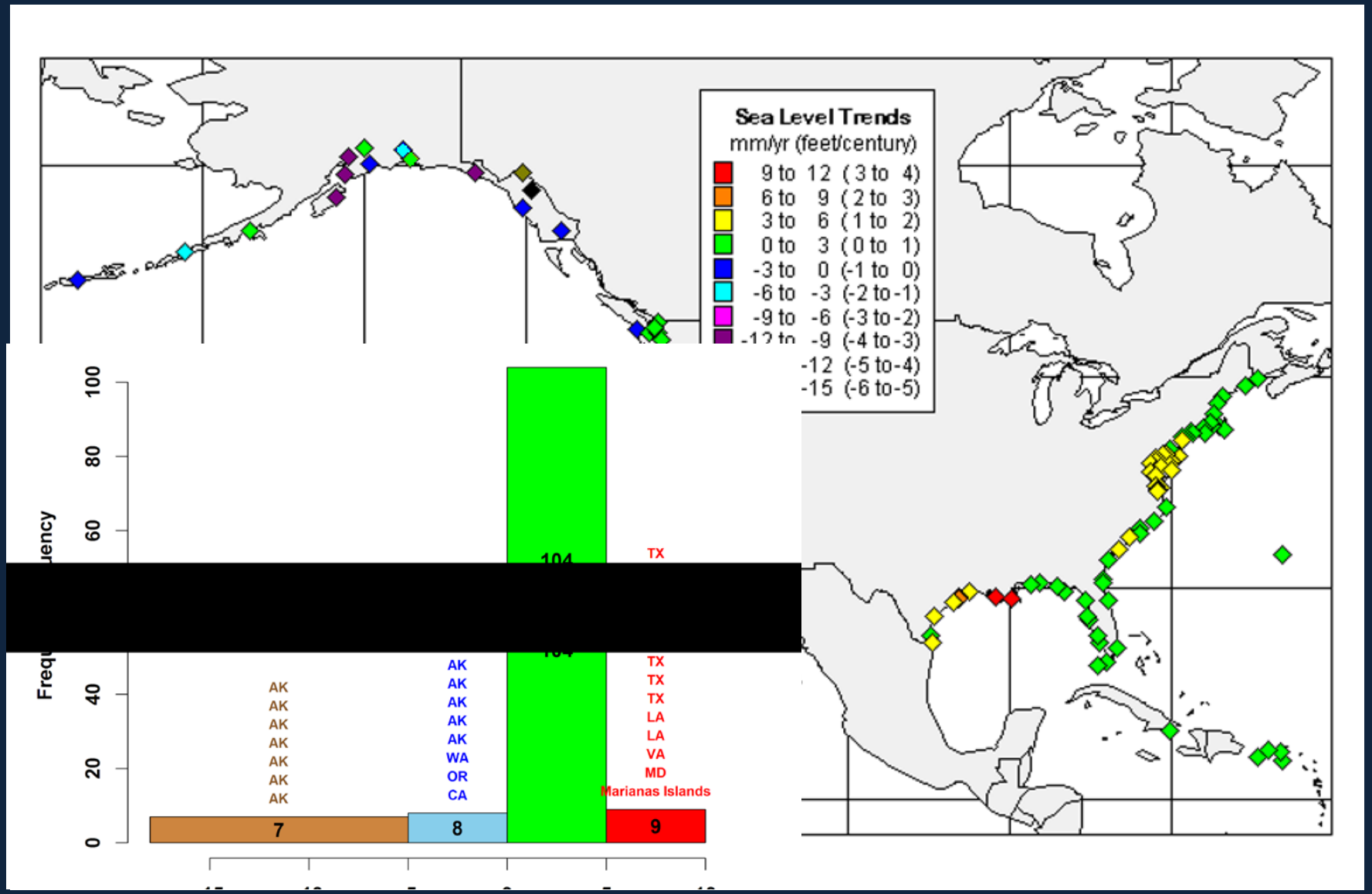
Sea level is rising - globally



Data Source: Church & White 2011

Sea level is rising - locally



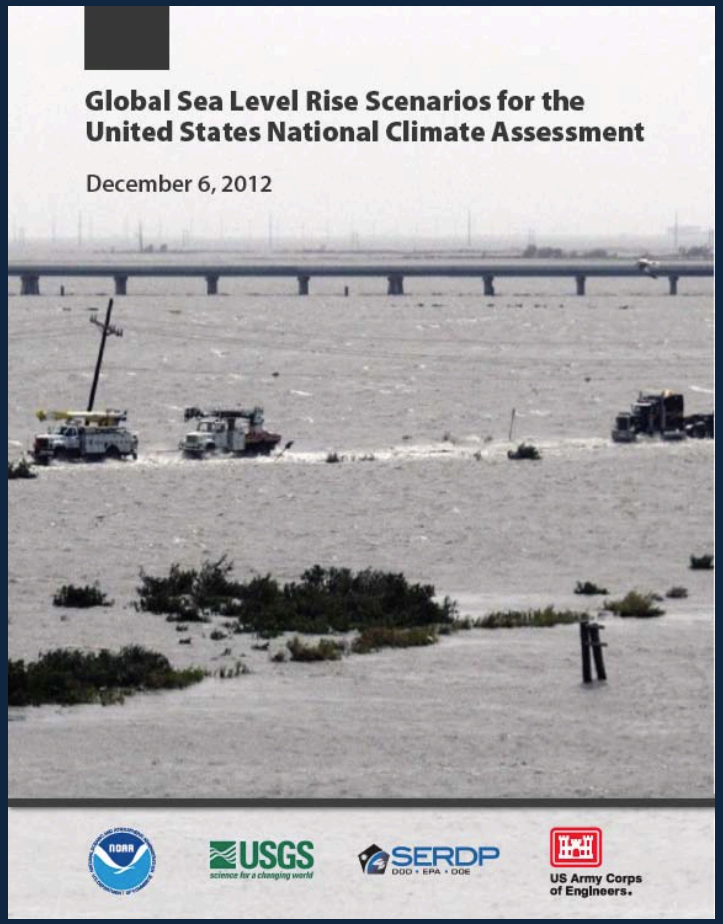
Data Source: NOAA CO-OPS

Economic, cultural, and ecological assets near sea level

Any amount of SLR will increase coastal flooding

Spencer Platt Getty Images

An Interagency Effort



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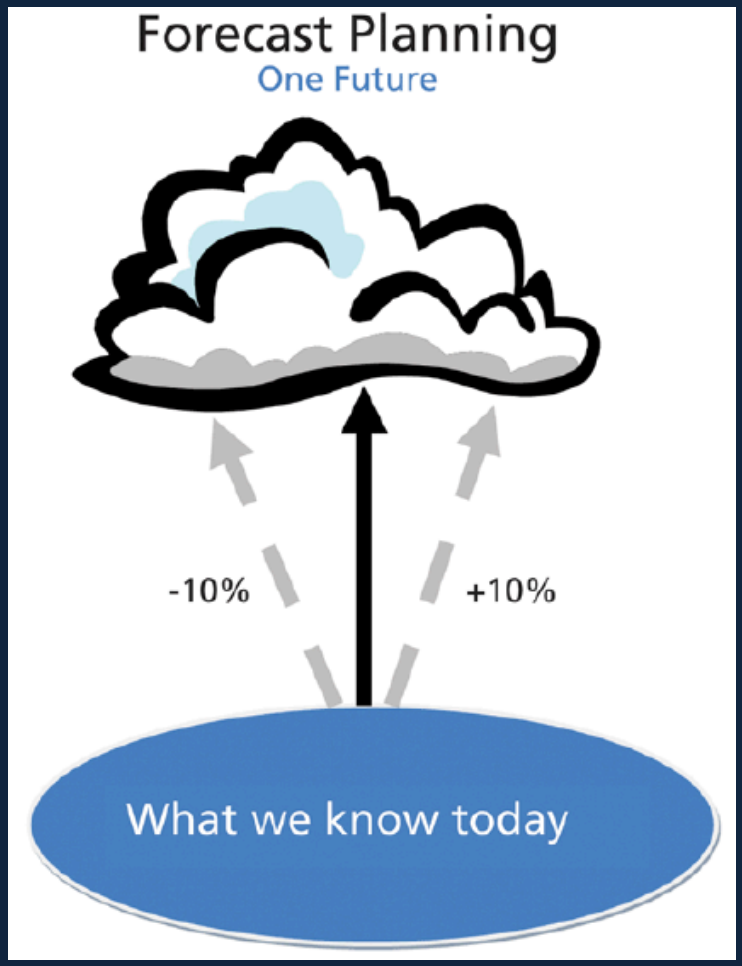
SCENARIOS…

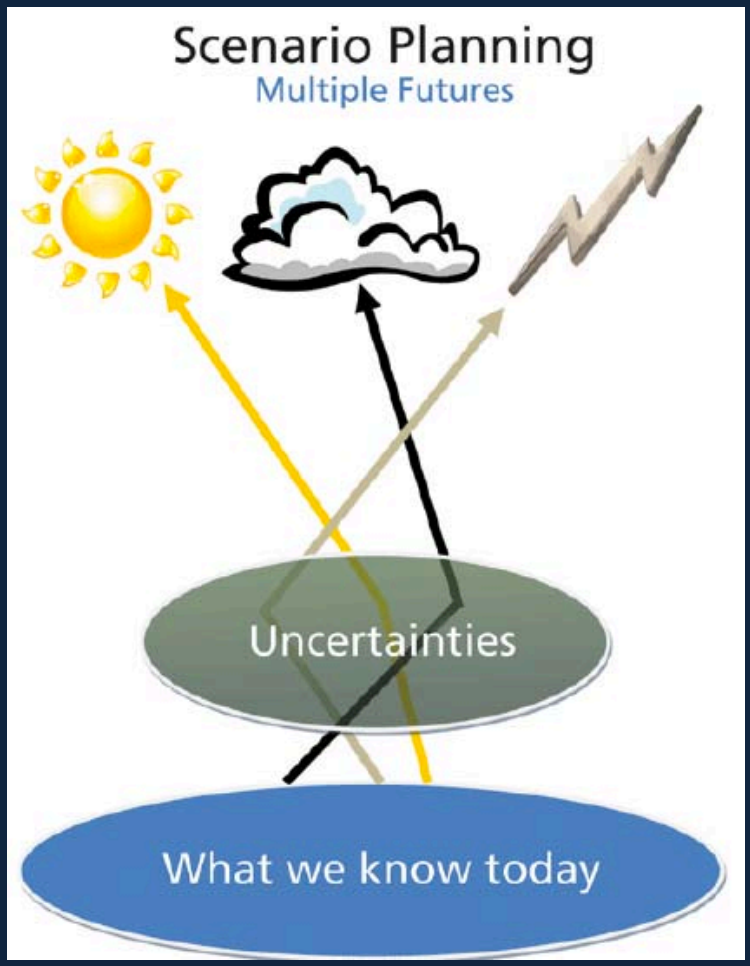
…**ARE** trajectories of environmental change for the purpose of risk and vulnerability assessment to inform the development of robust adaptation options

…**ARE NOT** predictions or projections of what will happen

…**ARE NOT** formed under the assumption of reducing uncertainty

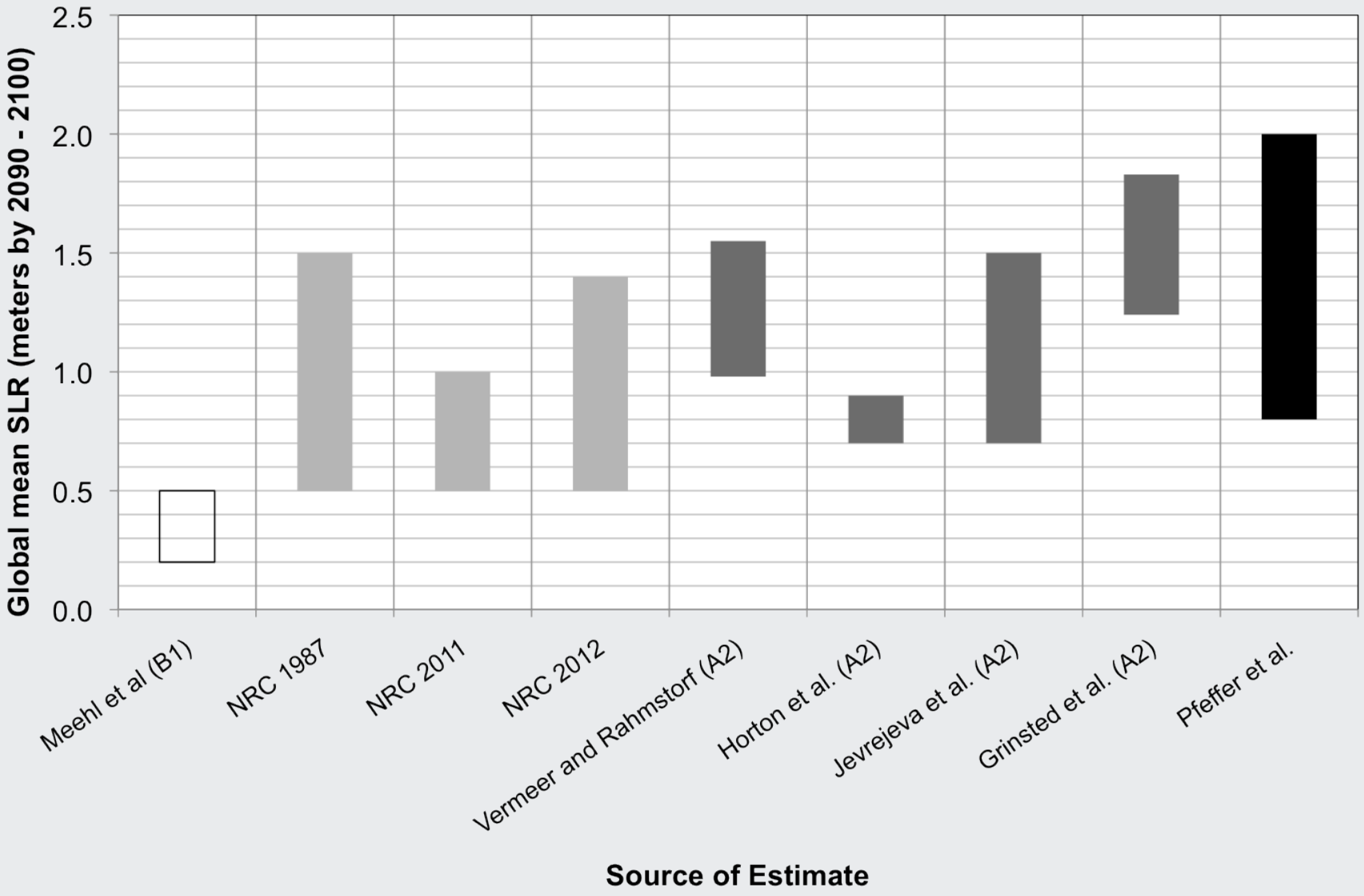
Why use Scenario Planning?



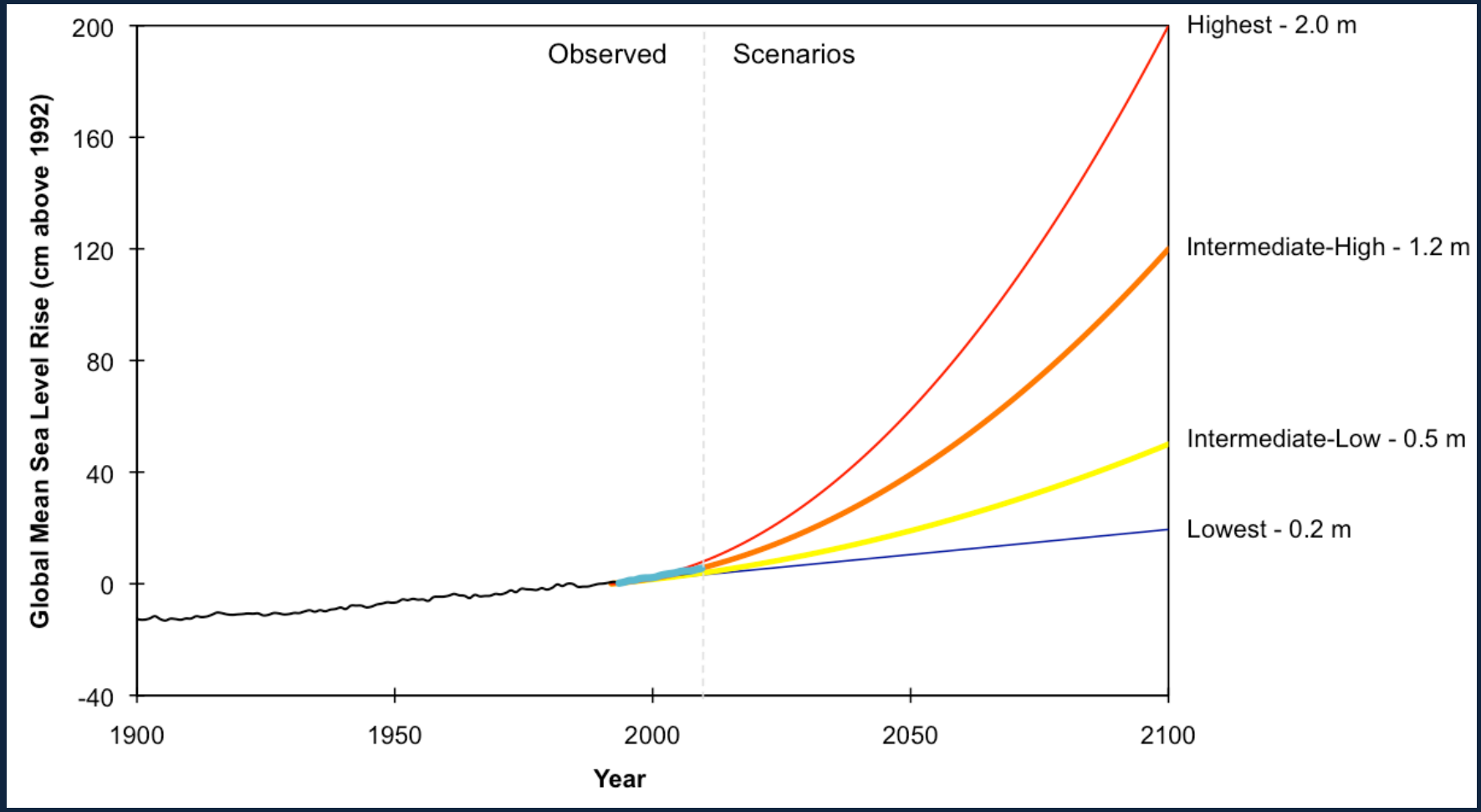


Source: Global Business Network Weeks et al 2011

What does the literature say?



Global SLR Scenarios

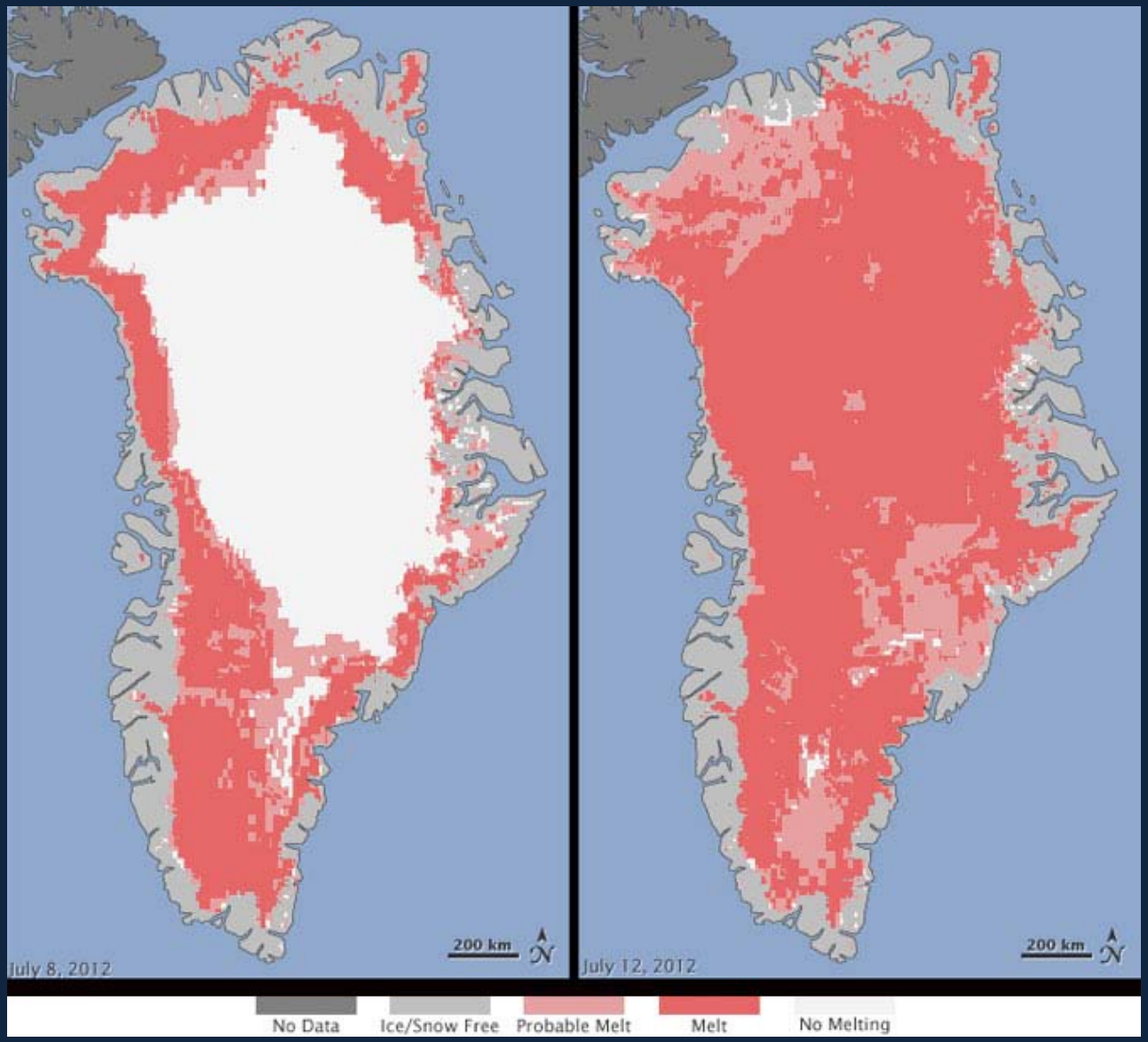


Risk-based framing

We have very high confidence (>9 in 10 chance) that global mean sea level will rise at least 0.2 meters (8 inches) and no more than 2.0 meters (6.6 feet) by 2100.

Confidence Level	Possible Contributing Factors
Very High	Strong evidence (established theory, multiple sources, consistent results, well documented and accepted methods, etc), high consensus
High	Moderate evidence (several sources, some consistency, methods vary and/or documentation limited, etc.), medium consensus
Medium	Suggestive evidence (a few sources, limited consistency, models incomplete, methods emerging, etc.), competing schools of thought
Low	Inconclusive evidence (limited sources, extrapolations, inconsistent findings, poor documentation and/or methods not tested, etc.), disagreement or lack of opinions among experts

Greatest source of uncertainty



Source: NASA

A decision analogy

Tomorrow there is a chance of rain, but what do you have planned for tomorrow?

Why such a large scenario range?

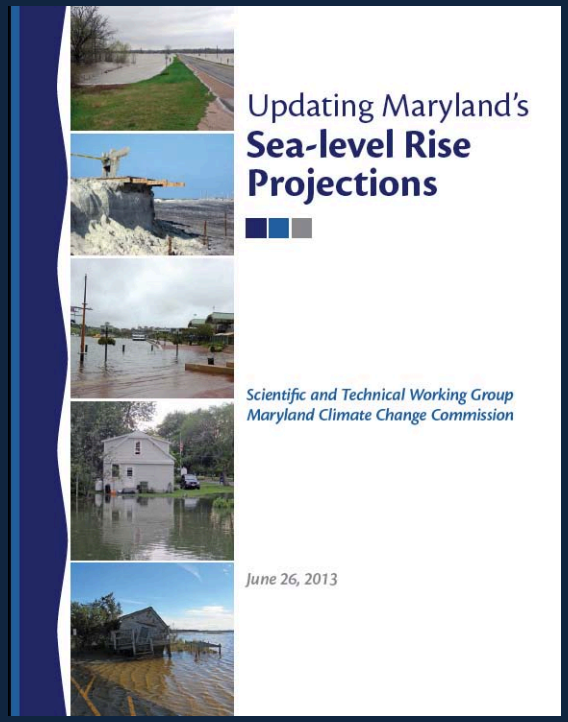
Higher risk tolerance:

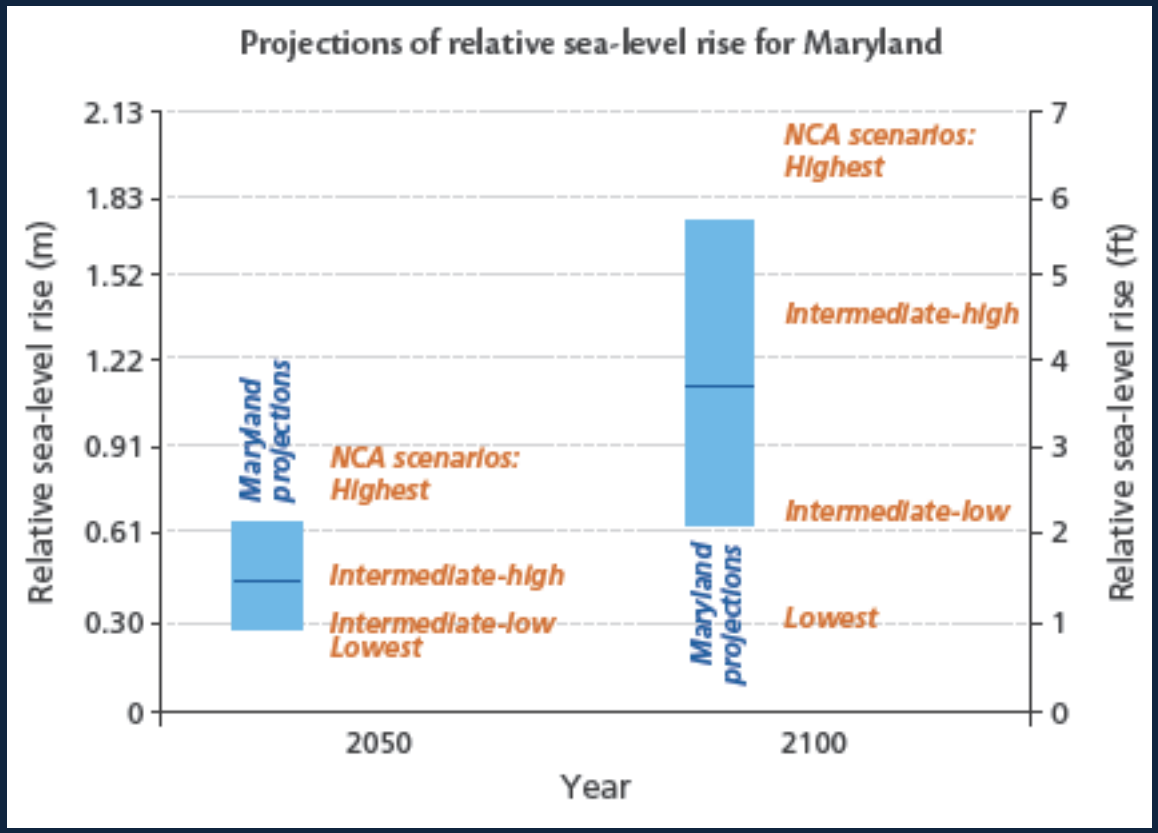
- Greater flexibility to accommodate flooding
- Lower consequence
- Ability to change in near term

Lower risk tolerance:

- Little flexibility to accommodate flooding
- Higher consequence
- Inability to change in near term

Adaptively manage risk through planning





Boesch, D.F., L.P. Atkinson, W.C. Boicourt, J.D. Boon, D.R. Cahoon, R.A. Dalrymple, T. Ezer, B.P. Horton, Z.P. Johnson, R.E. Kopp, M. Li, R.H. Moss, A. Parris, C.K. Sommerfield. 2013. Updating Maryland's Sea-level Rise Projections. Special Report of the Scientific and Technical Working Group to the Maryland Climate Change Commission, 22 pp. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Cambridge, MD.

Develop your own regional and local scenarios

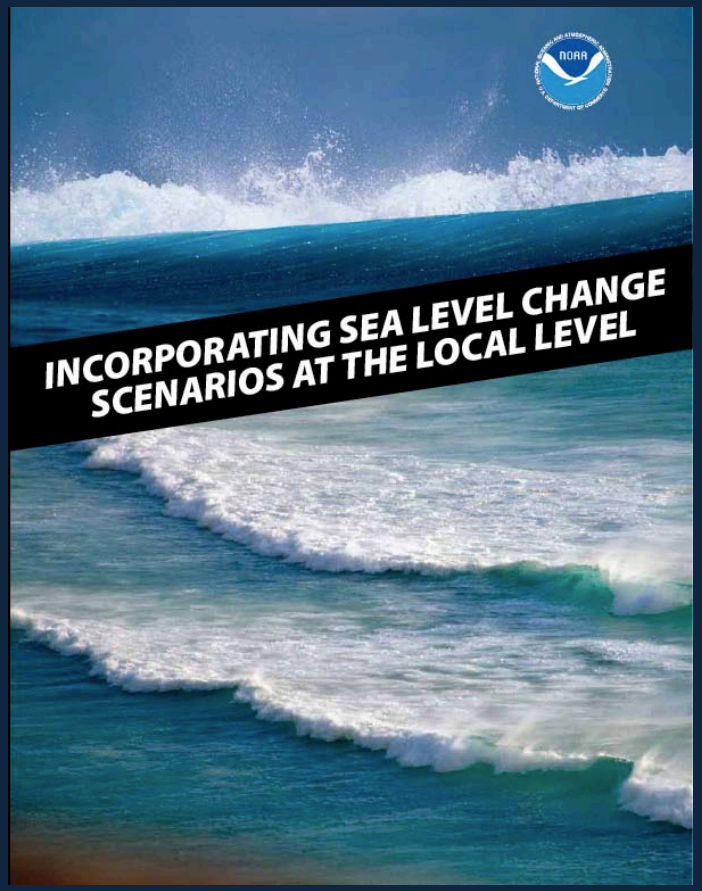


Table 1. Components of Sea Level Change

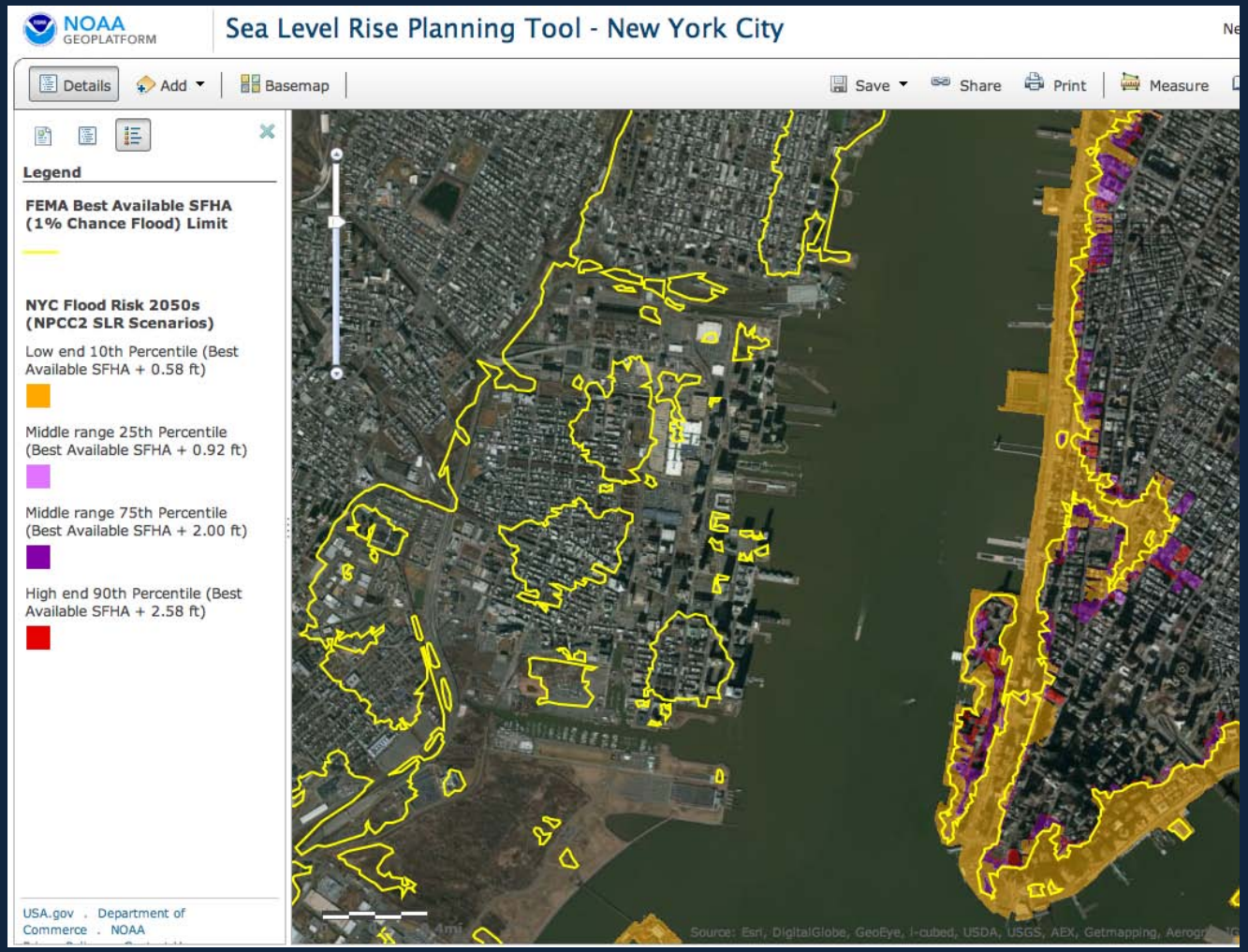
Component	Quantity	Source	Where to locate the Information	Certainty
Component I: Historical Local Relative Sea Level Trends	+10.0 to -15.0 millimeters (mm) per year	Measured	NOAA tide gage records	Highly Certain
Component II: Localized Vertical Land Changes (Subsidence, Isostatic Rebound)	-8.0 (subsidence) to +20.0 (uplift) mm per year	Modeled/Measured	NGS, State Advisor, USGS published subsidence/rebound rates, CO-OPS estimates from tide gage records	
Component III: 20th Century Historical Global Sea Level Change	+1.7 to 1.8 mm per year	Measured	Historical global tide gage analyses and global isostatic adjustment models	
Component IV: Global Sea Level Change since 1993	+3.1 to 3.3 mm per year	Measured	Series of satellite altimeter missions since 1993 and global tide gage records	
Component V: Future Climate Change Scenarios	Acceleration constant 2 centimeters (cm) per decade increasing by 3 cm per decade each decade	Modeled	IPCC 2007, various research papers since IPCC	
Component VI: Regional Tidal Elevation Surface	Uncertainty of modeled surfaces area-dependent: 16 cm to 45 cm 95% CI	Modeled	VDATUM	Less Certain

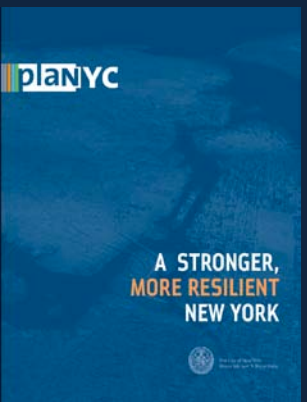
CI – Confidence Interval
CO-OPS – Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services
IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NGS – National Geodetic Survey
NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
State Advisor – State National Geodetic Survey Advisor
USGS – United States Geological Survey
VDATUM – NOAA Vertical Datum Transformation Tool

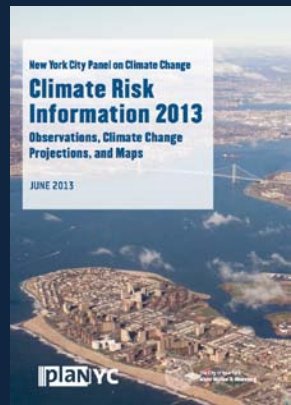
NOS SLR tech report http://www.csc.noaa.gov/publications/slc_tech.pdf

Incorporating Sea Level Change Scenarios at the Local Level - http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/publications/slcscenarios

Reference in developing local standards/plans





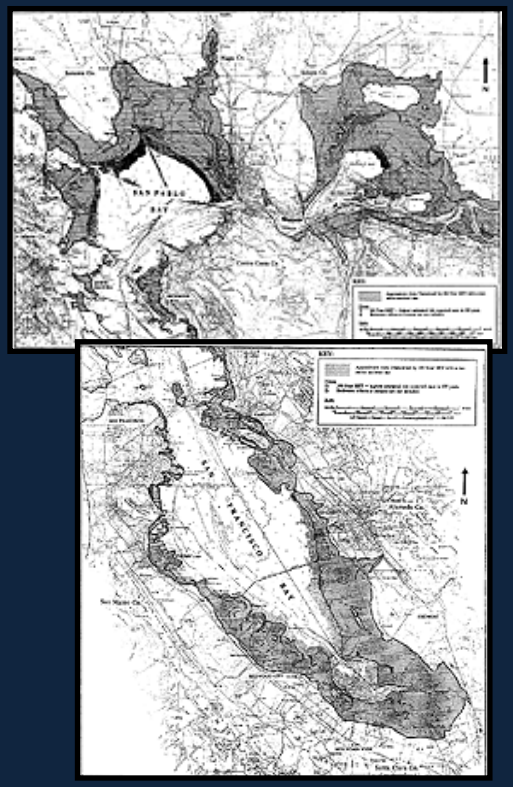


Limiting factors from a local/regional perspective

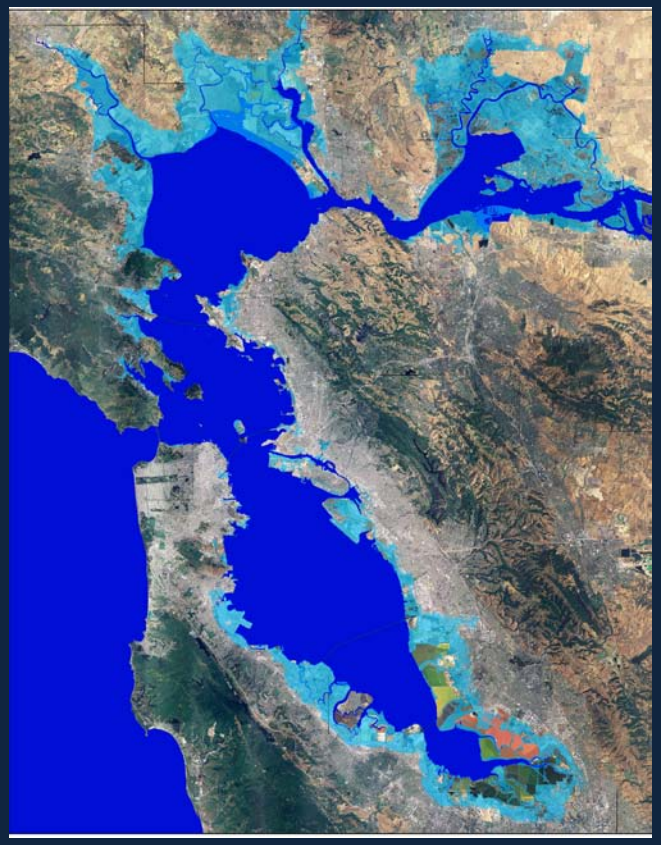
- Additional analysis on flood recurrence required
- Rates of Vertical Land Movement (VLM)
- Shoreline change

Don’t wait for perfect information

Pacific Institute, 1988



BCDC, 2007



USGS, 2009