



Joint Platform Executive Summary – Updated 10/23/2020

Bay Adapt is a roadmap for the region to adapt better and faster to a rising Bay.

Rising sea level will dramatically affect our way of life in the Bay Area. Flooding, storm surge and groundwater rise will threaten our daily commute, the goods and services we depend on, the places we live and work, and the natural spaces that make the Bay Area so beautiful. While much of the responsibility to adapt to rising sea levels lies at the local city or county level, local-only adaptation will lead to insufficient shoreline preparation and management, both locally AND regionally. This is because we live in a highly networked region, where impacts to one area can have cascading effects all around the Bay and Estuary. Collective action to reduce impacts due to climate change requires collective will, regionwide implementation, and broad leadership. No one agency, jurisdiction or community can or should do it alone.

Bay Adapt creates regional, consensus-driven agreement on the actions necessary to protect people and the natural and built environment from rising sea level.

The Bay Adapt Joint Platform is comprised of a set of guiding principles and priority actions for coordinated Bay Area sea level rise adaptation. The Joint Platform was collaboratively developed by hundreds of volunteers who care deeply about this issue. Our Leadership Advisory Group, executive leaders from the public, non-profit and private sectors, provided direction and will ultimately need to commit to implementing the Joint Platform. Joint Platform actions are based on a strong foundation of climate science, a commitment to the critical roles that frontline communities and local jurisdictions play, and the proactive Bay Area adaptation efforts already proposed and underway. Once implemented, the actions that make up the Joint Platform will guide the region towards common goals, identify how to pay for adaptation, empower communities, cities and counties to become more resilient, and reduce the risk of flooding for residents, ecosystems, the economy, and neighborhoods.

Guiding Principles



Practice Inclusive, Community-Led Governance and Decision Making



Support Socially Vulnerable Communities



Solve Collaborative Problems Together



Go Green Where Appropriate



Don't Hold Back Early Movers but Play the Long Game



Pick the Right Strategy for the Right Place at the Right Time

Joint Platform

REGIONAL VISION AND CONSISTENCY ACTIONS

Action 1 Establish a Regional Adaptation Vision and Consistency Framework

Problem: Sea level rise will flood many areas of the Bayshore yet there is no regional agreement yet on what we should do about it. Individual city and county actions may cause unintended impacts on neighbors. Without coordination and consistency, they will not add up to an adequate response.

Action: Develop a regional vision and consistency framework for adaptation activities around the Bay. Base the vision on best available science and analyses and the consideration of community expertise and equity, while being flexible about future advancements in climate science. Create the **Regional Vision**, in the form of a list of goals, through a transparent and inclusive process. Compel local and regional plans and projects to align with the Regional Vision through the **Consistency Framework**. Achieve alignment by using set criteria to evaluate how well local activities advance the Regional Vision.

Outcome: Agreement on goals and a coordinated regional response. Active participation and use in guidelines by all jurisdictions affected by sea level rise in the Bay Area.

Action 2 Identify a Collaborative Management Structure for Administering Adaptation Activities around the Bay

Problem: Adapting to sea level rise will require action at many levels and on many scales, yet in the Bay Area there is no single entity or authority to manage and coordinate these activities.

Action: Form a working collaborative of agencies jointly responsible for implementing the Bay Adapt platform. Create the collaborative by identifying the existing authorities, capacities, and skill sets of regional agencies and leveraging these assets to administer the various tasks and programs outlined in the platform. Charge the new collaborative with coordinating agencies to develop a regional vision and consistency framework, and to actively engage with the consortium of community-based organizations (CBO Consortium). Assess local adaptation plans, coordinate permitting, oversee funding opportunities, and track progress in implementing the Bay Adapt Joint Platform.

Outcome: An organizational arrangement and structure for administering the actions identified in the Joint Platform.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACTIONS

Action 3 Empower Communities to Lead in Planning for Equitable Climate Adaptation

Problem: While frontline communities will feel the most acute impacts of climate change, these impacts are often not fully considered in adaptation planning, missing an opportunity to create equitable and meaningful actions.

Action: Create spaces and leadership opportunities for frontline communities (including youth) to become leaders in adaptation planning at both the local and regional level. Form a consortium of community-based organizations (CBOs) to collaborate in the adaptation planning process. Develop standards for community-driven, equity-focused decision-making, including how to identify and prioritize frontline communities. Utilize proven environmental justice best practices such as partnering agreements and fee-based consulting roles for CBOs. Establish a program to secure ongoing regional and state funding that will allow CBOs to lead planning for future shoreline adaptation efforts. Provide EJ-focused leadership to other actions and entities outlined in the Joint Platform.

Outcome: Sustained community leadership and an equitable partnership between communities and government in adaptation planning.

Action 4 Prepare Current and Future Climate Leaders through Information Sharing, Education, and Two-Way Learning

Problem: More immediate threats such as COVID-19 and wildfire, the bewildering technical language of sea level rise adaptation, and a lack of understanding of the needs of disadvantaged communities, all hamper progress in climate adaptation.

Action: Support a frontline community-led, multi-level education and capacity-building program that trains communities, government officials, and next generation leaders to prepare for and adapt to climate change impacts. Engage in two-way learning and listening at every level. Facilitate co-learning opportunities for government and communities to exchange and build cultural, place-based, and technical expertise. Launch a mass listening and storytelling campaign to raise climate awareness based on resident’s direct experiences. Elevate youth climate literacy and readiness via partnerships with public schools.

Outcome: Cultural competency and climate literacy of agencies, communities, and youth.

LOCAL-REGIONAL ALIGNMENT ACTIONS

Action 5 Incentivize Local Planning to Meet Both Local and Regional Goals

Problem: Adaptation planning and projects are inherently local, but local actions, taken in isolation, will not meet regional sea level rise challenges, achieve larger Bay Area adaptation goals, or optimize infrastructure efficiencies in the highly networked metropolitan zone.

Action: Encourage the development of local or county plans consistent with regional goals and vice versa. Ensure regional goals support existing local plans by accelerating funding for planning and projects and by providing technical assistance and other incentives. Consider opportunities to optimize priority adaptation area planning by integrating with, or expanding on, existing

planning models such as Priority Development Areas, the Regional Transportation Plans, Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, or local area plans.

Outcome: More local plans that advance both local and regional goals.

Action 6 Audit Cities and Measure Region-Wide Adaptation Progress

Problem: Information about local adaptation barriers, needs, and project progress is not currently monitored and consolidated on a regular basis.

Action: Develop a report and action plan that tracks progress in reaching the Regional Vision. Audit cities and counties to assess needs, capacity, and challenges to adaptation. Use metrics to assess local and region-wide performance on adaptation planning, equity, and project implementation. Use the resulting report card to update best practice recommendations and guidance and suggest any necessary legislative changes to address gaps indicated by metrics. Reset performance goals and update the report every four years, in alignment with Plan Bay Area updates.

Outcome: A regularly updated report, with metrics, on local and region-wide adaptation progress.

Action 7 Align State Planning Requirements for Local Jurisdictions to Reduce Duplication and Improve Adaptation Outcomes

Problem: Local jurisdictions must comply with a multitude of California state planning requirements, including planning for sea level rise. Juggling multiple disjointed planning processes, all with different requirements and timelines, can strain local government staff and resources.

Action: Provide recommendations to the State of California on how to align adaptation planning more closely with other local planning requirements. Review state planning requirements. Suggest changes, including legislation if necessary, that support more integrated, impactful and comprehensive planning for climate adaptation. Increase funding for collaborative, comprehensive planning that engages multiple jurisdictions and stakeholders, and achieves multiple benefits.

Outcome: Updated California legislative mandates, reducing duplicative or contradictory planning requirements and making funding available comprehensive and collaborative local climate change planning.

Action 8 Improve Coordination in Permitting for Adaptation Projects

Problem: Despite some recent efficiencies, permitting remains a lengthy, resource-intensive and at times unpredictable process.

Action: Coordinate and improve the permitting process for climate adaptation projects around the Bay. Build on existing models like the San Francisco Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT). Create a project review checklist and incentives for multi-benefit, multi-goal projects. Develop guidance on best adaptation practices for permit applicants. Increase

interagency coordination through existing interagency forums or a new regulatory working group. Promote the Wetland Regional Monitoring Program, which will help collect critical data that can inform permitting. Lobby for more state and federal resources, and/or financial partnerships with large permittees, to increase support for permitting staff.

Outcome: Permitting accomplished in less time and using fewer resources, but achieves multi-benefit, well-designed projects without detrimental impacts.

Action 9 Update Environmental Regulations and Policies to Allow for More Innovation in Sea Level Rise Adaptation

Problem: Laws, regulations, and policies created in the past to protect Bay resources from adverse project impacts may today add costly, time-consuming, and unnecessary hurdles to the construction of experimental or beneficial adaptation projects.

Action: Reform policies and remove unnecessary regulatory hurdles to climate adaptation projects and innovation in shoreline protection and restoration. Form a regional working group or team to explore the need for additional legislative and policy updates and reforms. Review and suggest changes to the following plans and acts to facilitate innovation and adaptation activities: BCDC's Bay Plan, RWQCB's Basin Plan, the California Endangered Species Act, California Environmental Quality Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Federal Clean Water Act and/or Federal Endangered Species Act, among others.

Outcome: A more logical and efficient approach to permitting the types of projects not necessarily contemplated when most laws were adopted (i.e., habitat restoration and SLR adaptation).

FUNDING AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

Action 10 Develop a Regional Adaptation Funding Plan

Problem: The costs and benefits of adaptation are still unknown, but the Bay Area lacks a sustained source or distribution method for project funding, and for related city and county land use planning.

Action: Develop a regional adaptation funding plan based on cost-benefit analysis and priorities for the entire Bay Area. Develop adequate financing mechanisms for all project phases, including planning, development, maintenance, monitoring, and adaptation to changing future conditions. Designate a lead agency to implement the funding plan. Identify funding priorities based on equity and environmental quality concerns, legislative approach, cost sharing formulas, and long-term funding needs. Lay out a targeted federal, state, regional, and local approach to paying for adaptation projects.

Outcome: A long-term funding plan, financing tools, and a mechanism for distributing funding.

Action 11 Establish a Regional Adaptation Legislative Working Group

Problem: The Bay Area lacks a regional forum for strengthening collaboration between local, regional, state, and federal leaders, making climate adaptation unnecessarily cumbersome.

Action: Convene a region-wide group of adaptation leaders to shape and champion legislative initiatives supporting Bay Area adaptation activities. Task the group to bi-annually create shared priorities, review proposed legislation, and build support for state and federal adaptation legislation that helps advance the region’s adaptation goals. Build relationships with Bay Area legislators to advocate for the region’s needs and work with them to refine proposed legislation that supports regional sea level rise adaptation.

Outcome: State and federal policy, informed by the Bay Area’s needs and conditions, that incentivizes multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction collaboration and alignment of regional and state policy priorities.

DATA, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT ACTIONS

Action 12 Create a Bay Area Climate Science Services Consortium

Problem: Climate science and adaptation models can be difficult to understand and apply to real life projects.

Action: Create a Bay Area Climate Science Services Consortium to provide a robust science-based technical assistance program for practitioners, planners, and the public. Focus the consortium on prioritizing, funding, coordinating, translating, and curating the full range of sea level rise adaptation science so that it is more accessible and useful to the region. Expand efforts to coordinate regional research, monitoring, and data and tool development through the consortium to support decision-making. Develop community-science initiatives to ensure that local adaptation knowledge and the needs of disadvantaged communities are central to the prioritization of research, the development of data and tools, and the interpretation of science.

Outcome: A Consortium that provides collaborative prioritization, coordinated synthesis, and communication of research, science, and monitoring information. Coproduction, by scientists, adaptation practitioners and community members, of research priorities and products.

Action 13 Establish an Adaptation Resource Hub to Support Local Planning

Problem: The state and the region offer cities and counties very little support or centralized guidance on how to do adaptation planning on their own, let alone coordinate with their neighbors or the region.

Action: Develop a one-stop-shop Adaptation Resource Hub, expanding upon existing resources. Collect and provide resources within the Hub that support local adaptation planning and implementation, coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, alignment with regional goals, and prioritization of equitable action in the most vulnerable areas. Provide targeted, curated, and concise resources, guidance, and best practices information. Offer hands-on guidance on how best to use Hub resources, and how best to interact with the Bay Area Climate Science

Services Consortium, the Community Based Organization Consortium, and the state's Adaptation Clearinghouse. Provide direct support services such as adaptation facilitators, financial coordinators and a consultant bench.

Outcome: A well-staffed, responsive, easily navigable Resource Hub that also provides targeted assistance for all phases of adaptation planning through implementation.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Action 14 Establish Place-Based Stakeholder Groups to Plan and Implement Projects Across Larger Landscapes

Problem: Locals need tools, structure, resources, and capacity to collaborate effectively across jurisdictional lines, and move larger scale projects from concept to reality.

Action: Establish place-based groups to address adaptation challenges across jurisdictional boundaries and large landscapes with shared physical characteristics. Hold recurring meetings of these groups to develop relationships among local experts, enhance communication and transparency among overlapping jurisdictions, and identify champions of landscape scale adaptation. Expand place-based conversations to connect communities to projects they care about and promote local stewardship activities. Create dedicated facilitators for the place-based groups to help bring communities and stakeholders together and develop successful large-scale, sub-regional projects.

Outcome: Better conceived and coordinated large-scale multi-jurisdictional projects, including more equitable projects resulting from productive community engagement.

Action 15 Improve Construction Contracting and Logistics for Adaptation Projects

Problem: Adaptation projects along Bay shorelines or creek mouths present unusual construction challenges ranging from difficult equipment access and conflicting work windows for special status species to impacts on local communities, difficulty in attracting qualified contractors, and lack of clean fill.

Action: Improve construction contracting and logistics for adaptation projects. Pursue initiatives to streamline construction steps. Develop training programs to increase the pool of qualified contractors, a centralized database of construction bids, and best practices for reducing construction impacts to local communities. Involve contractors early in co-design of projects, and in the development of construction management general contracts, to better manage expectations and outcomes. Use working groups to discuss construction barriers, develop best practices, encourage regional coordination of fill, and build more flexibility into funding for adaptation projects.

Outcome: More efficient construction process for critical adaptation projects.