

## **CJWG Meeting**

**WebEx- 03/24/2021**

### **At a Glance:**

- Updates on Data Analysis
- Discussion on Methods to Combine Indicators
- Information regarding meetings and materials can be found on [www.climate.ny.gov](http://www.climate.ny.gov)

### **Participants:**

#### **CJWG Members -**

- Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director, UPROSE
- Sonal Jessel, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, WEACT for Environmental Justice
- Eddie Bautista, Executive Director, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
- Rahwa Ghirmatzion, Executive Director, PUSH Buffalo
- Jerrod Bley, Clean Energy Program Director, Adirondack North Country Association
- Mary Beth McEwen, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County
- Dr. Donathan Brown, CEO & Co-Founder, Adirondack Diversity Solutions
- Abigail McHugh-Grifa, Executive Director, Climat Solutions Accelerator
- Rosa Méndez, Director, Office of Environmental Justice, DEC
- Chris Coll, Director of Energy Affordability and Equity Program, NYSERDA
- Neil Muscatiello, Director of the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology, Center for Environmental Health, DOH
- Joseph McNearney, Director of Stakeholder Engagement, DOL

#### **Presenters –**

- Amanda Dwelley, Illume Advising
- Alex Dunn, Illume Advising

### **Welcome & Roll Call**

### **Business Items**

- Reflections on 3/12/2021 meeting.
- 3/12/2021 meeting minutes approved.

## Data Analysis Update

Alex: Test, Develop, Apply. Testing scenarios and comparing. Need guidance on what feels right.

Amanda: Where we left off last time. 56 indicators bucketed by threats and vulnerabilities. There may be subgroupings within each. Making sure we represent all concepts from legislation and working group members.

In some cases we have several metrics for one concept. For example, income or environmental hazards. We are looking at each on their own and in combination. Looking at the data quality and distribution.

Eddie: did we whittle down the number of indicators? Thought we were over 100 earlier?

Alex: we used the evaluation rubric to narrow down to 70. Now are looking at gap analysis of data we are pulling for the indicators. Some still need analysis. Some may need transformation. Some were put aside because not good quality data.

Eddie: what are examples of why data is insufficient?

Amanda: Some were not at census tract. Some are still there but we are filling gaps in the data. Example of formaldehyde – highly correlated with benzene and is based on modeling. Since it follows similar distribution and benzene has higher correlation to health we chose benzene. Access to Transportation is one we are still looking at but doesn't have every transit system covered.

### Threats Slide

Amanda: EJ Screen data was also looked at. DEC staff is working with us on where there may be better data from the state at state level. For example, waste water discharge. Others are only available from state level data.

Ones at the bottom fall into two categories: no data to support collected yet others are those that we have data but not fully transformed.

Eddie: can we share what was documented as to the data decisions?

Alex: have that in the huge data list with the gap analysis but will document in a simpler format with what data is being tested and what was not sufficient.

Chris: will post working list in SharePoint.

Eddie: there are cases where there is brownfield remediation but then later on over time the site has some VOC gases that get compressed, vapor intrusion, into neighboring sites. Even a site may be remediated, does DEC monitor neighboring sites?

Amanda: Pillar three is looking at vulnerability to climate change. Here is environmental and land characteristics. Legislation mentioned storm surge, sea level rise, and heat.

Still working on those data transformations. This pillar is one where we are missing the most.

Looking at heatwave conditions. Also looking for distance from hospital data.

Abigail: is home internet similar to hospital distance? Do they help get to identifying rural areas?

Amanda: will check if its access or distance. Some are gray area between whether put under land or people. Will help with identifying challenges for rural communities.

Eddie: why is storm surge and sea level rise not readily available?

Amanda: all data points are available but in a different format so there is transformation work. They are in shapes. We are working on this with GIS to take the public data and analyzed into census tract level.

Eddie: how will or can we access cross pillar threats? Example, NYCEJA waterfront justice project that looked at community resiliency and unique threats of industrial waterfront areas to storm surge. Overlaid storm surge with city zoning maps.

Amanda: kind of showing as pillars as an organization. Doesn't mean the organization affects weight or consideration. They work in interaction. Many are correlated. Planning to roll up into a threat or a vulnerability score.

Alex: pillars help us conceptualize. But they are sort of a false dichotomy and don't want to present in a way that there are groupings.

Jerrod: can we create a "lintel" category//bucket that addresses conceptual space for related indicators? Show where the connections are?

Amanda: will consider how to represent that. Any you see that we should include?

Alex: what are the different indicators that are more important? Feedback from the group.

### Vulnerabilities Slide

Amanda: heat related illness we talked to DOH about it. Challenge is that the data can be coded in a lot of different ways. Less certainty because of that and the geographic level.

Neil: the numbers issue from geographic level is one of the primary challenges.

Amanda: land use variables may be another way to capture. Also have other health vulnerabilities that correlate with heat concerns.

Sonal: hard to get around privacy concerns. There are other items that cover heat illness that you are using. One is premature births but can't recall if that is on the list. Also air pollution.

Amanda: discussed low birth weight and premature births. Asthma hospital is also correlated with ED visits so went with ED as the more comprehensive.

Neil: good suggestion. Would have to look at the numbers. FOLLOW UP.

Eddie: may be problematic ways data is being collected. City council passed heat related bills last year. One is asking DOH to clarify how they calculate heat related deaths in NYC. We've seen ranges in different studies. Pretty wide gap. Looked at the methodology. Only categorized when there is an official heat wave. So might not be picking up deaths from heat. Hard to get true vulnerability.

Neil: can confirm with other colleagues on how its collected. FOLLOW UP. We are also interested in when heat related illness isn't recognized and recorded.

Alex: here we might do a better job capturing indirectly by looking at threat components coupled with other correlated vulnerabilities.

### Combining Indicators

Alex: Big buckets of threats and vulnerabilities.

Amanda: many ways to do combining. Have not done any weighing at this point.

Options: multiply or add the threats with vulnerabilities for an overall score. Then look at overall and select top X percent.

Or can filter and intersect. You can be high threat and low vulnerabilities or low threat and high vulnerabilities or other combinations. Filter and intersect would take top X percent of each to get to overall designation.

Alex: Other states have multiplied (CA) or added. What happens there is that very high in one area but very low in another would result in being designated although that population is not vulnerable. Filter and intersect reduces that occurrence. Shows adaptative ability of community as well.

Jerrod: would like to see more examples to fully understand.

Neil: filter and intersect approach keeps more transparency on why a community was designated. May be more straightforward.

Eddie: when you deal with statistics its part of territory. Need to sit with it a bit. There are different vulnerabilities. Not all are alike. What weighs on me, is that what's missing is the medical vulnerability? May be more vulnerable to less urgent health exposures. How does the differences of vulnerabilities play?

Alex: the health components are listed in vulnerabilities. But there are many ways to do this. One of the issues is there are many ways to accomplish this goal. Looking for what is methodologically sound and that feels right to the working group.

Amanda: first step is to narrow list down.

Alex: welcome questions at any time. Want your gut check on these.

CA overlaid income after the fact.

Trying to understand how things work out if done this way.

Eddie: what does 43% reflect?

Alex: NYC represents 44% of the census tracts of the total of NY's tracts. The 43% is what NYC tracts make up in the DAC tracts if done this way. The 72% is same metric but in a scenario where there is no restriction on regions. So in that scenario 72% of tracts in the DAC are from NYC.

Amanda: Scenario A is one where NYC top 25% that meet criteria are considered DAC and the top 25% of the rest of the state is considered a DAC.

Scenario B is one where just the top 25% of the scores are considered as DAC.

It's a choice the group needs to make.

Elizabeth: Concern is that focusing on census tracts doesn't always tell the story. Income has to be a priority but it should be centered on race and not just income. WE have an opportunity to be a model that transforms how people collect data. Problem may be the data sets that are coming from a conventional way. Even terms from census are inappropriate because it erases important elements of race.

Alex: recommendations for what can be gathered and how for future iterations.

Rahwa: Western NY – when looking at areas in Western NY would be great to break out city of Buffalo. Issues of white flight and urban sprawl. Is there a way to get to the meat that Buffalo is third poorest and sixth most segregated city in America.

Alex: plugging the groundtruthing exercise as one way to help us get to those critical issues for assessing scenarios. Invitation for the one on ones.

Eddie: email description of the differences would be helpful.

Sonal: grappling with what are the implications.

Alex: will create a memo. And moving into specifics, ideally with maps for visuals.

Elizabeth: terms of accountability. Important that we understand. Need the clarity. Also needs to be done in a way for public to understand.

Rosa: next steps include finishing up groundtruthing exercise, preparing memo on the scenarios and indicator decisions from the evaluation rubric, and following up with CA.

Meeting End

