Assessing Climate Vulnerability to Advance Climate Justice
Think Tank

California Adaptation Forum: August 1, 2023
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Defining Social Vulnerability

OurCounty

Vulnerability is not an indicator of weakness but of the factors, almost all of them outside of the individual's control, that make people more at risk for negative impacts. Various factors can make certain people more susceptible than others, such as:

- **Inequities in infrastructure and access** to the benefits of education, economic opportunity, social capital, health protection services, and/or other services;

- **Institutionalized bias** or exclusion from political and decision-making power;

- Inequities in **environmental and living conditions** and health status

- Differences in individual health, age, and ability for which systems are not adequately designed

*This framing is informed by the *2017 Advancing Climate Justice in California: Guiding Principles and Recommendations for Policy and Funding Decisions*

Climate hazards in LA County

Extreme heat is projected to increase in frequency and severity, impacting much of the County

Wildfire events are projected to be considerably larger, more frequent, and more destructive by mid-century

Droughts are happening more often and are lasting longer

Inland flooding will likely increase in the future with drier springs and summers and wetter winters throughout the state

Coastal flooding events may become more frequent and severe, even with small increases in sea level rise

Social Sensitivity Index
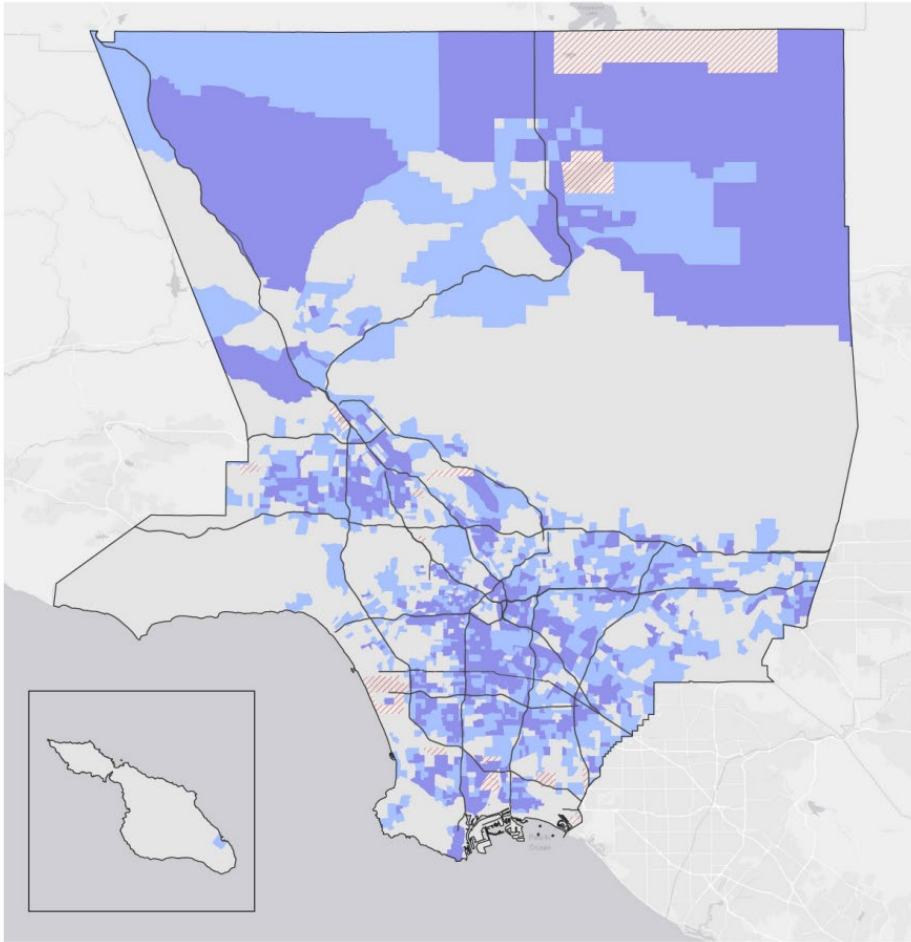
Figure 1: Map of Social Sensitivity in LA County

Relative Sensitivity Level

- Low, bottom third in sensitivity score
- Moderate, middle third in sensitivty score
- High, top third in sensitivity score
- No Population

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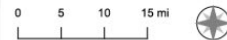
Sources: United States Census Bureau, CEHTP and OSHPD, Los Angeles County ISD, SCAG.

Quantitative Data on Social Sensitivity

Social sensitivity is assessed using a range of indicators across the following categories:

Age + Gender

Community + Language

Education

Health

Housing + Mobility

Income + Wealth

Occupation

Race / Ethnicity

Stakeholder engagement overview

Advisory Committee

Public Workshops / Cities Summit

Listening Sessions (6)

Key Informant Interviews

Webpage

FEELING THE HEAT

Some of the communities at risk in LA County

Reseda & Winnetka
- Extreme heat
- Limited-English households
- Many people with health conditions

Long Beach & San Pedro
- Extreme flooding from sea level rise
- Many low-income homes in flood zones

Santa Clarita
- Extreme heat and wildfire
- High proportion of older adults
- Low transit access

Racialized Vulnerabilities

Source: Genaro Molina, Los Angeles Times
Poor neighborhoods bear the brunt of extreme heat

- Latinx people make up 49% of LA County's population, but, in communities with high vulnerability to extreme heat, Latinx people make up 67% of the population.

- Black Angelenos are more likely to work outdoors, unsheltered, at greater risk of exposure to harsh environmental conditions

Solutions & Community Responses to Climate Impacts

Further Opportunities for Adaptation & Resilience-Building

Policy

- State: AB-1567, Climate Bond
- Local: climate resilience districts (webinar)

Funding

- Community Resilience Center grant program (SGC)
- Regional Climate Collaborative grant program (SGC)
- Extreme Heat and Community Resilience grant program (ICARP)
- Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation grant program (ICARP)

Communications

- Social Media Toolkit – extreme heat awareness (LARC)
- California Climate Resilience Grant Program Tracker (ARCCA)

Thank You!

OurCounty

Find the CVA Report and related materials at:
https://cso.lacounty.gov/the-plan/cso-current-initiatives/

Scan the QR code or click here to go straight to the CVA Mapping Tool:

Contact the LA County Chief Sustainability Office at:

sustainability@lacounty.gov

@CSO_LACo

Breakout Groups

Group 1: Using Data

Strategies to highlight community priorities for planning and grant-writing, facilitated by **Aileen Qin** (Gateway COG)

Group 2: Getting Around

Climate-resilient streets and equitable mobility infrastructure, facilitated by **Amy Wong** (Active SGV)

Group 3: Staying Cool

Resilience centers and equitable cooling amenities, facilitated by **Natalie Hernandez** (Climate Resolve)

Group 4: Adapting the Home

Equitable policies and investments for resilient housing and energy, facilitated by **Sarah Smyth** (Buro Happold)

Contents

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