

FY2022 Accomplishments Report NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team



This report provides brief summaries of some of the FY2022 Accomplishments by NOAA's [Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team](#) (SECART). The summaries are organized by the three SECART strategic goals. SECART is one of eight NOAA Regional Teams in NOAA's [Regional Collaboration Network](#).

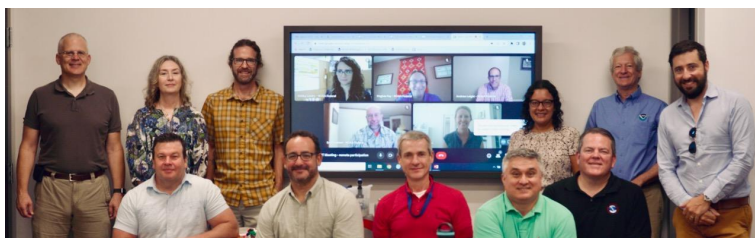
Goal 1: Engagement - Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission execution through engagement across NOAA line offices and with partners

State Representative and NOAA Discuss the Blue Economy in Florida

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosted a discussion with Representative Kelly Skidmore-FL and her office staff to inform them about NOAA's current investment in Florida and grant programs that support Blue Economy efforts. Representative Skidmore had introduced a bill to create an Office of the Blue Economy in Florida. The Team successfully facilitated valuable connections with individuals and programs including NOAA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, NOAA Fisheries, and National Sea Grant Office. The informative session raised awareness of NOAA's involvement in the Blue Economy and opportunities for support for activities in Florida..



SECART Holds First In-person Team Meeting in Three Years



The NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team met in Beaufort, SC 14-16 June 2022. We had an excellent meeting,

accomplishing the four primary objectives: 1) learning about resilience efforts in the Beaufort, SC area, 2) learning about the ACE Basin NERR, 3) kicking off our FY23 planning, and 4) reconnecting as a team. While we focused on the "in-person experience" (12 team members on site), we also hosted the meeting as a hybrid event each of the three mornings of the meeting. This went well and allowed participation of team members (eight at various times) who were unable to travel to the meeting.

NOAA in the Southeast and Caribbean Video is LIVE!



SECART completed a [video](#) that highlights NOAA's work in the Southeast and Caribbean Region. The video will help inform partners and stakeholders about NOAA's mission and will be used to inform potential employees about the types of job opportunities available with NOAA.

Goal 2: Improve Economic, Environmental, and Social Resilience of Communities to Weather, Water, and Climate Impacts

2022 Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series Informs Stakeholders

To increase understanding and awareness of new products and services provided by NOAA in advance of the hurricane season, NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosts an annual [Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series](#). The 2022 series supported by the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory and the National Hurricane Center, occurred during May and early June, and featured six webinars, including one in Spanish. Topics included the Hurricane Forecast Collaboration in the Caribbean, informing the public of hazardous events during the pandemic, providing information to mariners during hurricanes, tropical cyclones genesis forecasts, information on how NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration responded to Ida, and how NOAA gathers data from inside the storm. The webinar series included 775 of our partners, emergency managers, broadcasters, and the public and received numerous positive comments from across the region. The webinars are recorded and available.



Caribbean Region is now Available on the Climate Resilience Toolkit

The U.S. Caribbean Region page of the [Climate Resilience Toolkit](#) is now available. The Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team helped coordinate the development of regional sections for the [Southeast Region](#) and [the Caribbean](#) region. The impacts of climate change are immense in the Caribbean Region. This Toolkit is a volunteer effort from partners across the region and includes general information on challenges that local communities face as well as the effects of climate change on natural systems, local economy and public health. Tagged resources for the region include climate data tools, case studies, reports, and training opportunities.



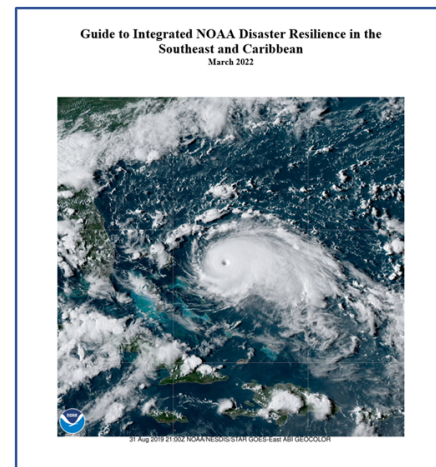
Photo credit: E. Figueroa, CARICOOS.

Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean

NOAA has varied and complex authorities and responsibilities related to disasters. It is often not apparent to our partners which NOAA offices have what responsibilities, and coordination across offices is not always ideal. The NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team, held a series of workshops (2017-2019) to improve cross office awareness and coordination related to disasters (before, during and after).

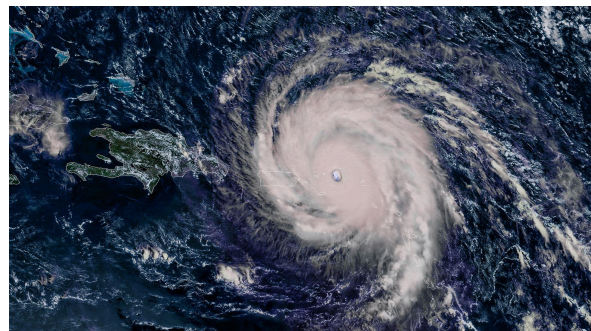
Workshop participants requested a “guide” that would articulate NOAA office roles and responsibilities within the region and provide contact information for those offices. In response, SECART prepared the [Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean](#).

Identifying roles, responsibilities, and resources related to disasters is a valuable asset for the region that is aimed at improving communication and coordination among regional NOAA offices and partners in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. (NWS, NOS, NMFS, NESDIS, OMAO)



Conference Addresses Climate Change in the Caribbean

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, with their unique histories, cultures, and geographies, are vulnerable in the face of climate change. These climate challenges require science-based and culturally-informed solutions. To strengthen the sharing of information on climate impacts, adaptation, and mitigation measures, NOAA’s Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team participated on the planning team (along with other federal and territorial agencies and organizations) for the 3rd Caribbean Climate Change [virtual] Conference: Promoting Climate Resilience in Puerto Rico & U.S. Virgin Islands. (19-20 April 2022). SECART also organized sessions with NOAA and partner speakers and provided a summary presentation. This conference gathered experts in government, private sector, universities, and nonprofits to share experiences, increase awareness of available resources, and propose solutions to the urgent challenges caused by climate change and support climate resiliency efforts in Caribbean Island communities. A wide variety of speakers showcased new projects and discussed place-based projects and policies needed to address climate change challenges.



Building Capacity for Heat Resilience through Community Monitoring, Planning, and Intervention



The Heat Resilience Pilot Project follows successful 2021 Climate and Equity Roundtables and aims to enhance understanding of local-scale extreme heat impacts and improve heat awareness communication and intervention across agencies and organizations. Four municipalities are collaborating with us: Charleston, SC; Miami, FL; Las Vegas, NV; and Phoenix, AZ. Project partners engaged local

communities to gather on-the-ground heat conditions using sensors. The sensor data will then be used to develop realistic tabletop exercises with federal, state, municipal, and non-governmental partners in each community to evaluate opportunities and limitations to reduce heat risk. The exercises (Dec 2022-Mar 2023) will result in a set of recommendations for improved communications and interventions to reduce heat risk for vulnerable populations. Priority recommendations will be implemented in the final phase of the pilot project.

Goal 3: Promote the sustainability of the region's coastal and marine ecosystems

Technical Support for Southeast Shellfish Managers



Shellfish management affects seafood supply, jobs, and ecosystem services. In order to improve shellfish management in the Southeast U.S. States, the Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team organized and led a Shellfish Sanitation Workshop (3rd annual) with state shellfish managers and aquaculturists to identify NOAA data and tools that would be useful in management and culture operations. NOAA

provides data and expertise to support shellfish managers in the region and has initiated and leads a Shellfish GIS Community of Practice among shellfish managers. This event also included a discussion on harmful algal bloom monitoring by underserved communities in the southeast for improved shellfish management decisions. NOAA's information and tools facilitate more accurate harvest closure decisions, the development of emergency closure tools, and the improvement of existing aquaculture siting tools.

Sharing information among drone operators



NOAA's John Durban and Holly Fearnbach release a hexacopter to photograph and gather breath samples from whales. (WHOI/Veronique LaCapra)

Following a successful “Drones in the Coastal Zone Workshop” in FY21, and working with partners across the region, the regional team supported scholarships

for uncrewed system training offered by Duke University, the first training of its kind in the region. The team also formalized the Drones in the Coastal Zone Community of Practice. The Drones in the Coastal Zone Community of Practice (DITCZ CoP) connects academic, research, commercial, governmental, and non-governmental sectors with common interests in coastal and ocean management to share resources, strategies, and innovations. The goal is to support the transmission and expansion of knowledge and expertise for leaders, learners and professionals across the U.S. Southeast and Caribbean. With support from the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA), the NC National Estuarine Research Reserve, and others, the DITCZ CoP has established a steering committee and a list-serve and hosts quarterly meetings for the UxS and coastal ecosystem management community in the region.



NOAA
SOUTHEAST
& CARIBBEAN

Contact: Region.SECarib@noaa.gov

Website:

<https://www.noaa.gov/regional-collaboration-network/regions-southeast-and-caribbean>