

## Transitions to a lower risk coast: Resilience in the face of sea-level rise

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### Preliminary Results (November 2019)

From three stakeholder workshops focusing on coastal flood and risk management and shoreline management planning we found:

- There is widespread agreement on the need to improve coastal planning and management, even for current sea-level and climate conditions. Future challenges, especially in relation to large storm events and long-term climate change remain highly uncertain.
- Many incremental improvements of the existing approach are possible, such as explicit consideration of rapid and slow policy transitions and how to achieve them.
- In terms of the concept and practise of coastal resilience, there is considerable disagreement across stakeholders on what this means and how this might be applied
- Even when pushed at the workshops to consider resilience, the most frequently used words (of 23,000 words spoken) are: Plan\* (398 times), Fund\* (236 times), Community\* (207 times), Risk\* (188 times) and Protect\* (165 times). In contrast, resilience was mentioned just 17 times.

The project team has analysed suggested policy proposals and approaches to resilience.

- A high level prototype policy understanding of coastal resilience to floods and erosion has been developed and trialled to serve high level goals, such as (1) State of the Nation national assessment (2) National Policy Allocation and (3) local Policy Selection.
- This concept of coastal resilience can be operationalised. Enhancing resilience involves: minimising damage to health, assets, the economy and the natural environment; reducing residual risk; and maximising community preparedness.
- The policy options (“building blocks”) to deliver this type of approach to coastal resilience already exist in the UK and can be derived from existing EA and DEFRA policy suggestions.
- Central to any methods to evaluate coastal resilience, is a need for coastal system data, including coastal processes, climate change and socio-demographic and economic variables. This project has identified a spectrum of indicators that are required to inform decisions about coastal resilience – whatever tool is used to evaluate it.
- Many datasets or data proxies to characterise resilience are available, although this may require development of new national datasets.
- Operationalising coastal resilience planning will require multiple departments working together in new ways, implying a major transition in coastal governance.

### Next Steps

- Developing Web Site: <https://www.channelcoast.org/ccoresources/coastalres/>
- Webinar in early 2019 – your attendance is welcome. Please contact Sally Brown (contact details above) if you wish others to be invited.
- Policy Brief under development
- Academic outputs
- Other suggestions welcome