Using Federal & State policy to address the needs of Vulnerable Populations

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My state doesn’t even know what environmental justice is…

If you don’t tell them, they won’t do it…

They won’t even say the word climate change….

Even with data, it doesn’t seem to make a difference…

They never give the money directly to us….

We are still trying to recover from Hurricane Irene…
When **justice** is not a part of the ‘climate change’ equation
How can states address resilience in vulnerable populations?

- Equity/Environmental Justice MUST be an intentional piece of the policy
- Prepare EJ communities to compete
- Account for cumulative impacts
- Ensure that mitigation does not exacerbate existing EJ issues
- Conduct purposeful engagement
- Equip communities to adapt & bounce-back
Opportunity 1: **EPAs Clean Power Plan (CPP)**

- Sets state-specific CO$_2$ emission rate-based goals on existing power plants
- Most likely will result in reductions of other co-pollutants
- Provides ‘flexibility’ on mitigation choices for state implementation planning purposes
Using the **CPP** to address the needs of vulnerable populations through **mitigation**

- Bring vulnerable communities **to the table**
- Explore the **pros and cons** of mitigation options (i.e. reducing hot spots)
- Provides comments to EPA to require the final rule to include:
  - A *proximity analysis*
  - Require a state level ‘EJ analysis’
  - Reductions in ‘hot spot’ communities
  - Energy efficient opportunities
Opportunity 2: Adaptation
National Disaster Resilience Competition

- $1 billion available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

- About $820 million will be available to states & local governments that experienced a Presidentially-declared major disaster in 2011, 2012, and 2013
What should states consider in the National Resilience Competition?

- Identify vulnerable communities
- Remove the ‘barriers’ or ‘reasons for exclusion’
  - No internet connection (increase availability)
  - Unavailability of data, records (use what they have)
  - Not understanding of the process (Training)
  - Insufficient lead time (more time)
  - Lack of resources (create ‘partnerships’)
How can we address the needs of the most vulnerable?

- Determine who is ‘climate vulnerable’ in your state
- Consider the benefits/detriments of mitigation solutions
- Make new friends & bring them to the table “at the start”
- Remove the ‘barriers’ to resources
- Make equity a part of ALL policy
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