

# Climate risk in New Jersey: A scientific update

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Atmospheric Sciences

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Climate Institute

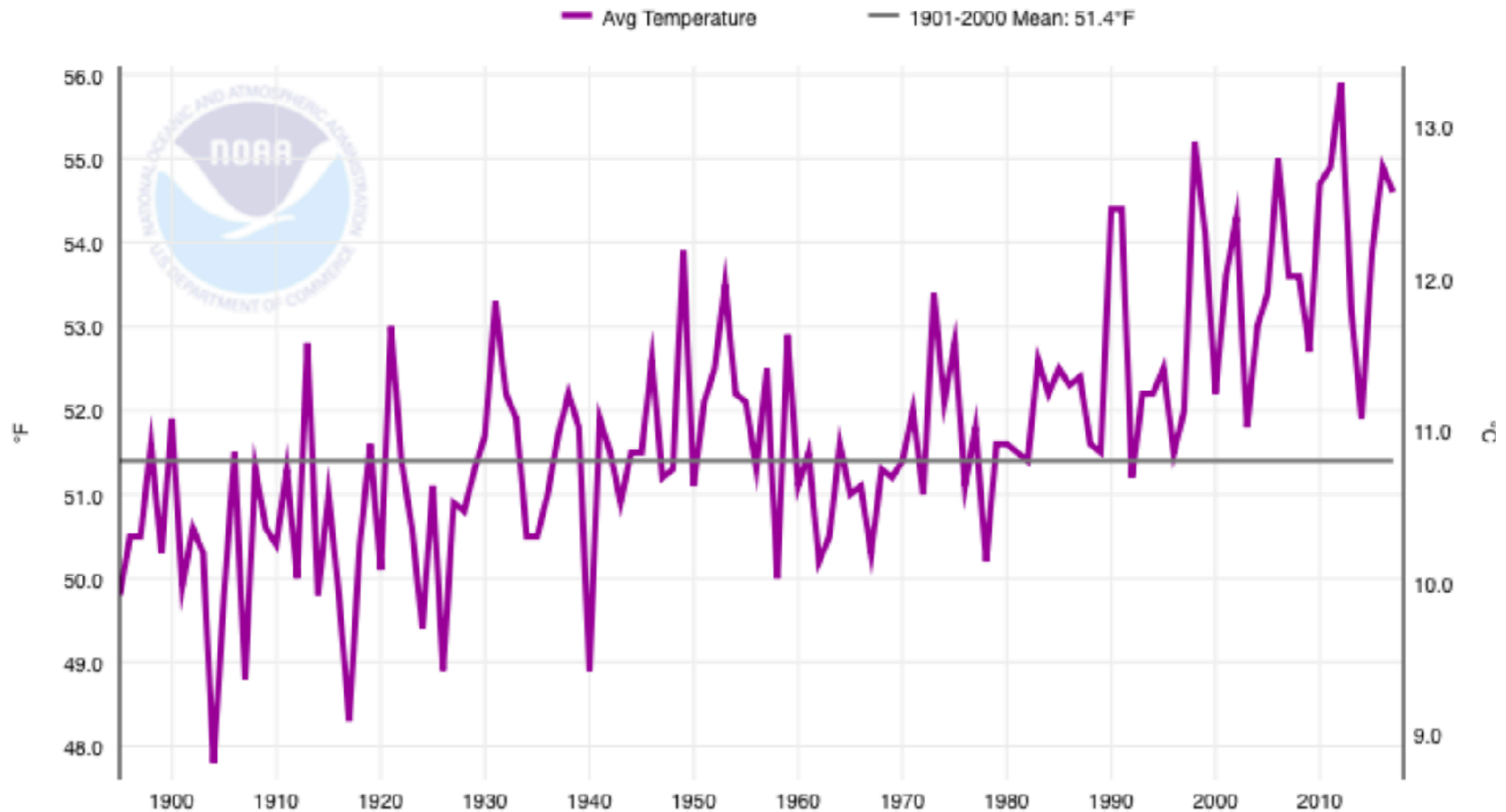
 Climate  
Impact Lab

2018 New Jersey Coastal Resilience Summit: Charting a Course for the Future  
October 9, 2018



# Temperatures are rising in New Jersey faster than the global average.

New Jersey, Average Temperature, January-December

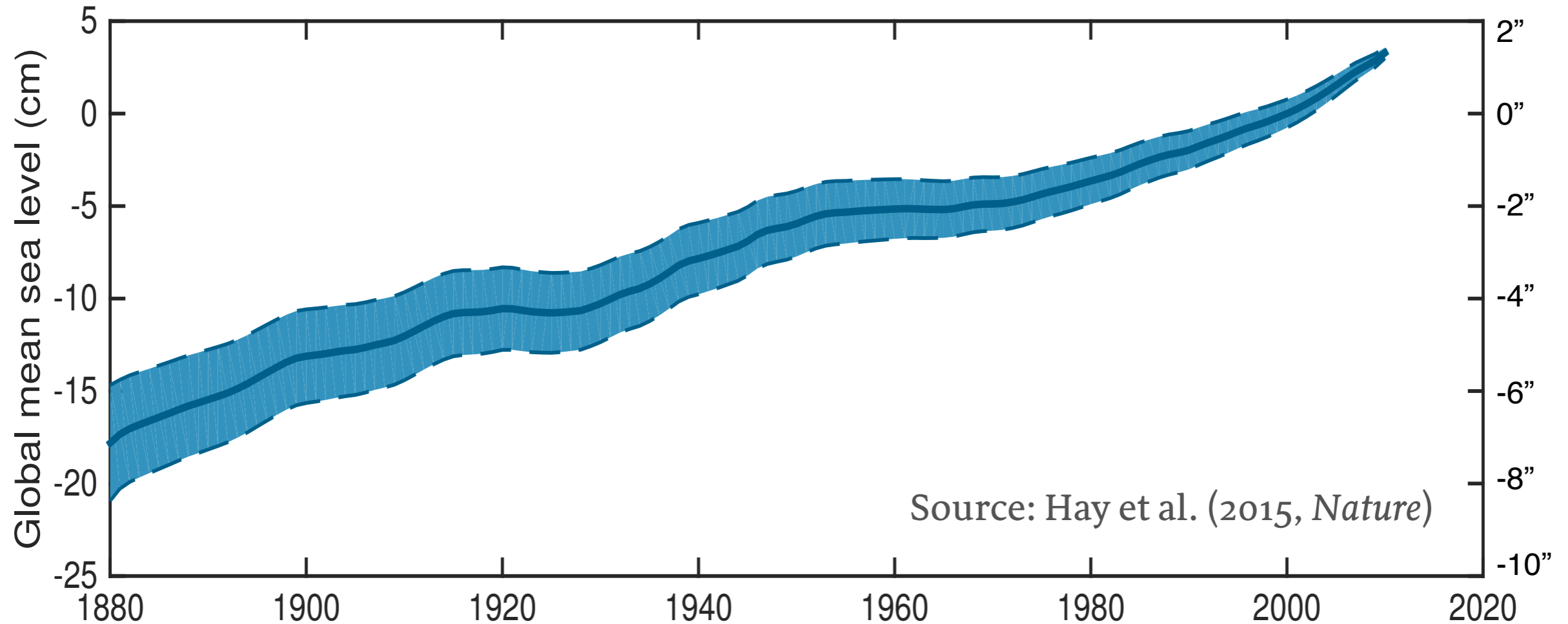


In New Jersey, annual average temperature is now about 3.4°F higher than in the early 1900s.



# The ocean is rising globally.

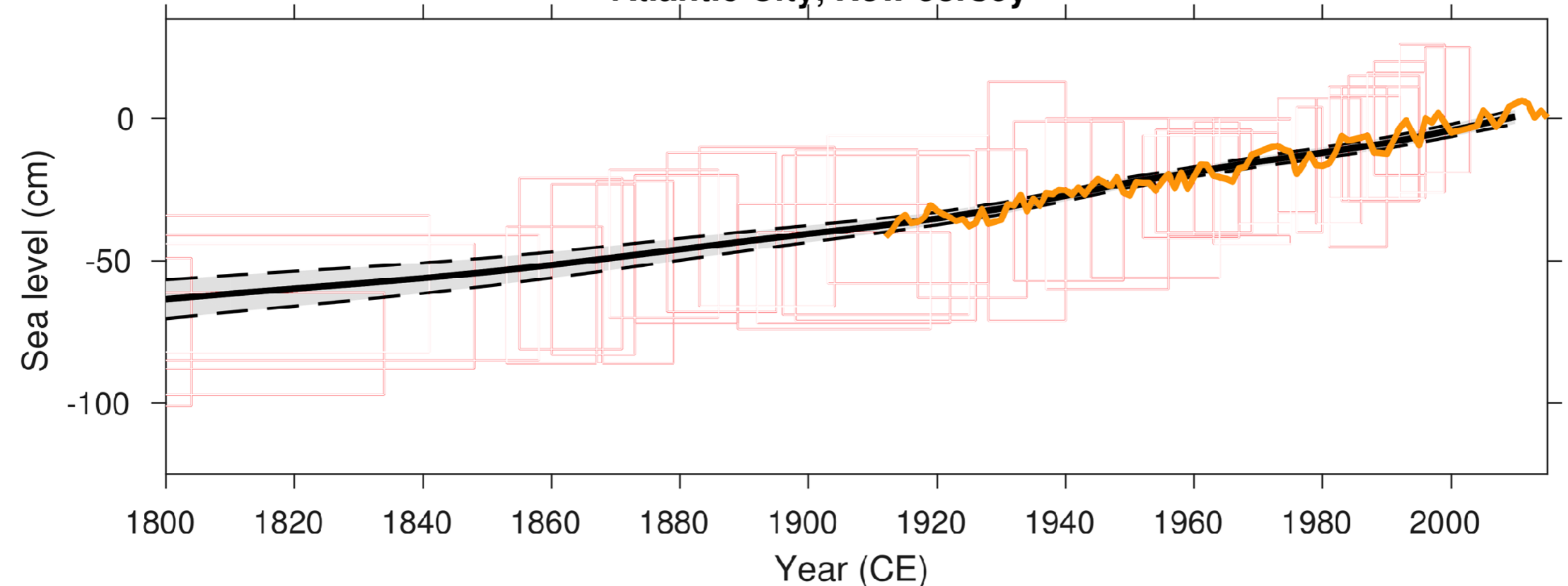
Global mean sea-level rise (cm above year 2000 level)



Rutgers research indicates that the rate of global-mean sea-level rise in the 20th century (about 0.5 ft/century,  $1.4 \pm 0.2$  mm/yr) was the fastest in at least 3000 years. The rate of rise over the last quarter century (1.0 ft/century,  $3.0 \pm 0.7$  mm/yr) was about twice as fast.

# The ocean is rising even faster here in New Jersey.

## Atlantic City, New Jersey



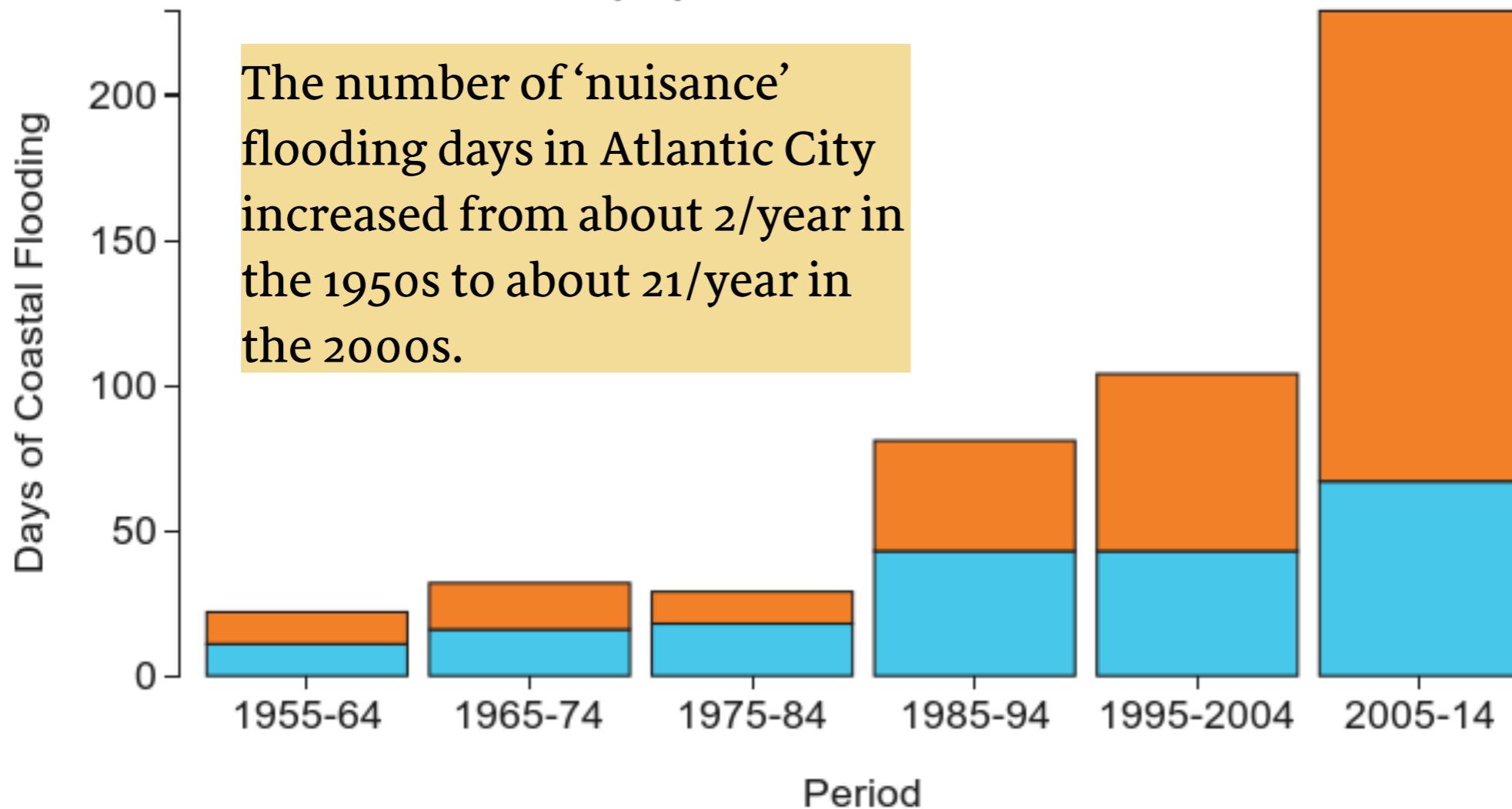
Geological and tide gauge observations indicate that sea level along the Jersey Shore rose about 0.7 ft/century (2.1 mm/yr) in the 19th century and 1.1 ft/century (3.5 mm/yr) in the 20th century. Since 1965, it has risen by about 1.5 ft/century (4.7 mm/yr).

# Sea-level rise is already greatly increasing 'nuisance' flooding.

NEW JERSEY AREA\*

## Coastal flood days

- Driven by climate-linked sea level rise
- Would have occurred anyway



CLIMATE  CENTRAL

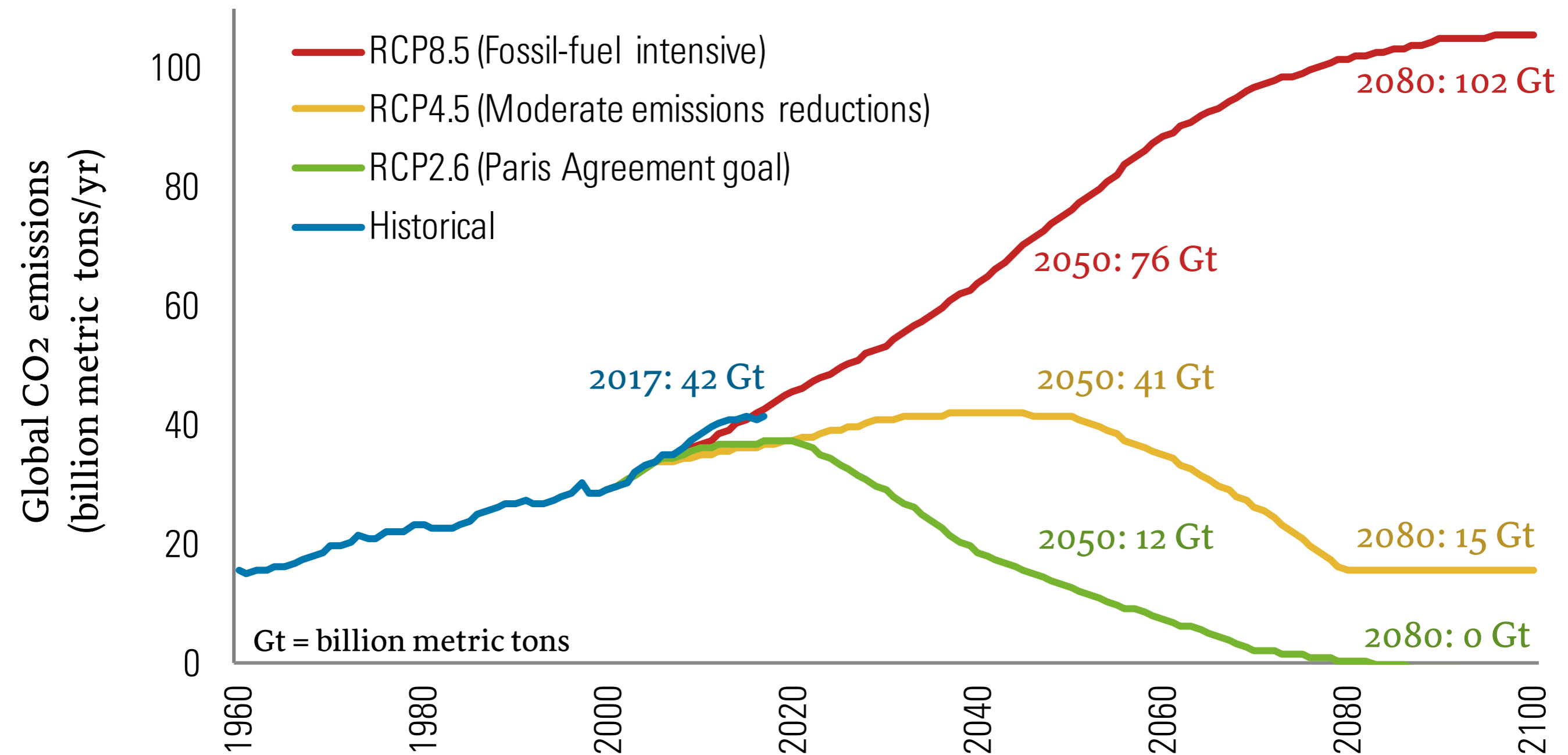
\*Water level station "Atlantic City" is 54 miles from New Jersey and is the nearest station analyzed in the Climate Central study behind this figure.

And sea-level rise contributed substantially to Sandy's devastation.

Human-caused sea-level rise was responsible for about 18% (\$5 billion) of the Sandy recovery costs in New Jersey; it exposed about 39 thousand people in New Jersey to Sandy's flooding (Strauss et al., in prep.).



# Society's choice: Global carbon dioxide emissions under three different "Representative Concentration Pathways"



2080-2099, likely global mean temperature increases relative to 19th century of

RCP 8.5: 6-10°F (3.5-5.7°C)

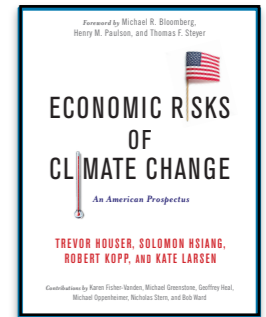
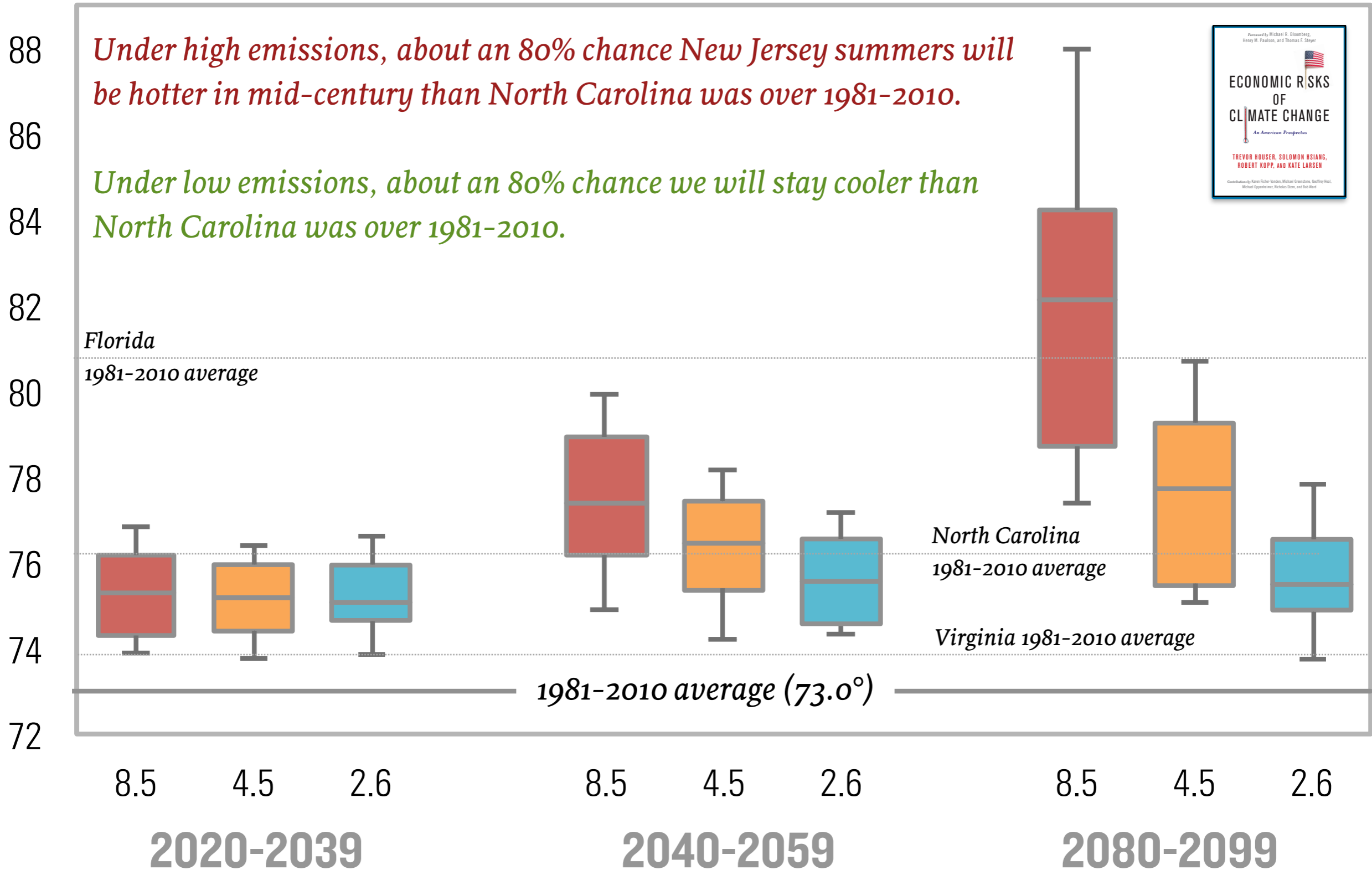
RCP 4.5: 3.5-6.0°F (2.0-3.3°C)

RCP 2.6: 2.4-4.0°F (1.3-2.2°C) [consistent with nominal international target of 2°C]



# Our choice affects how hot it will be

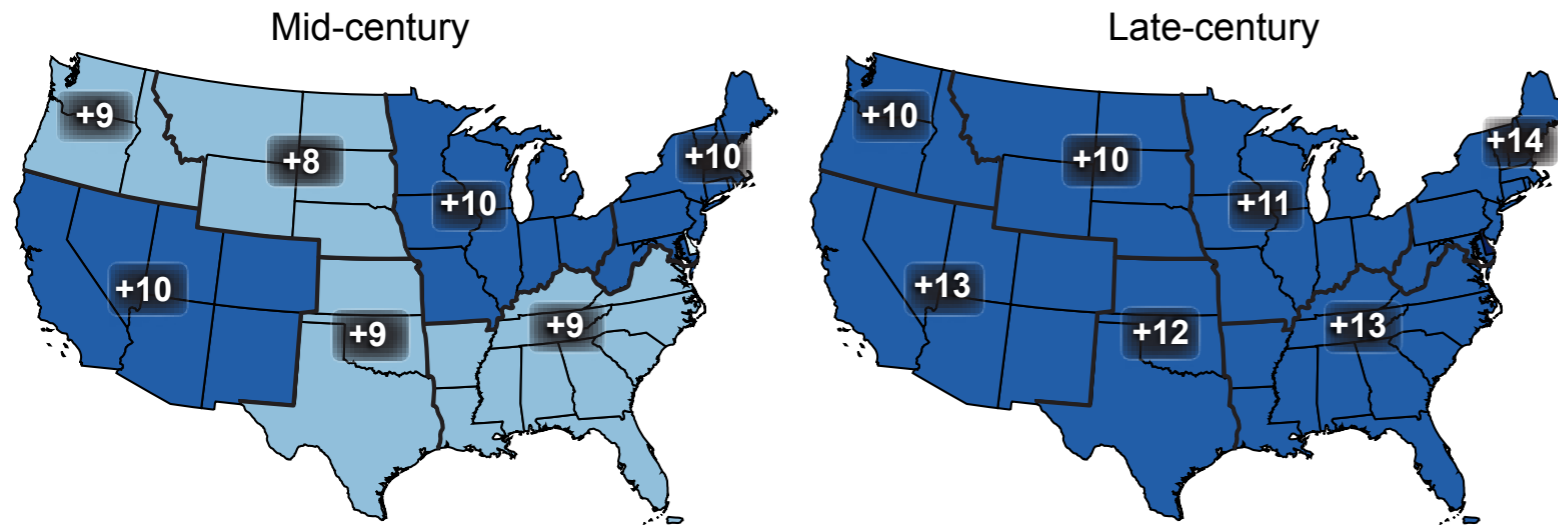
Average summer temperatures in New Jersey, degrees Fahrenheit



# And how much rain-driven flooding there will be

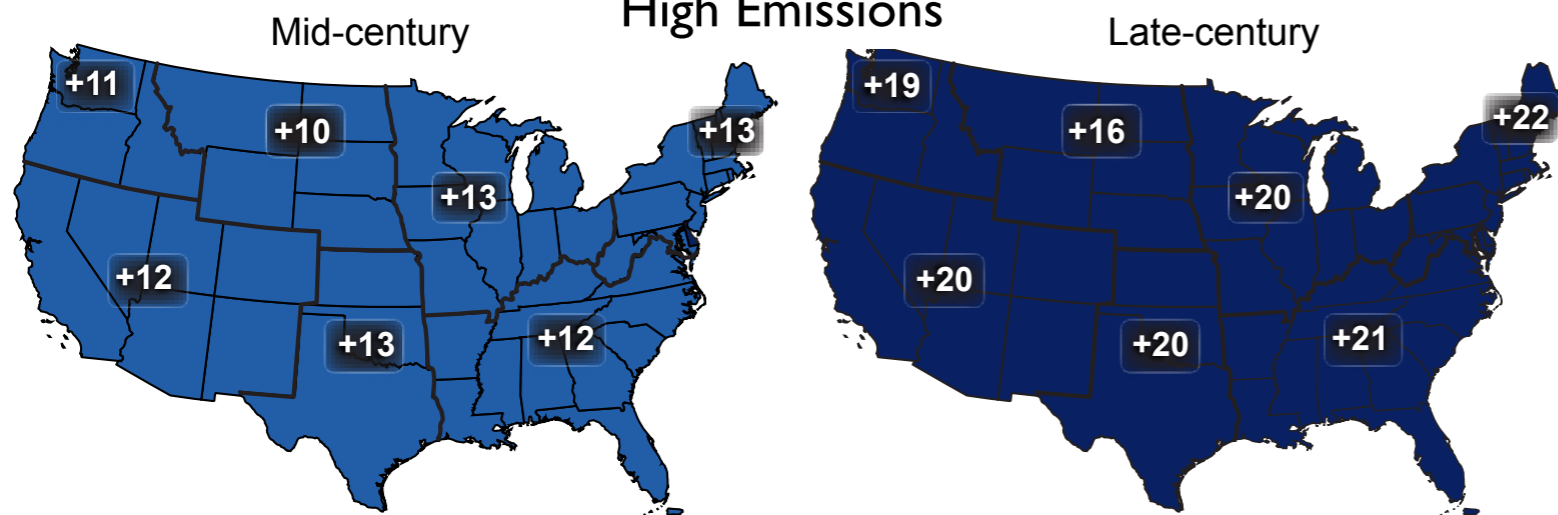
## Projected Change in Daily, 20-year Extreme Precipitation

### Moderate Emissions

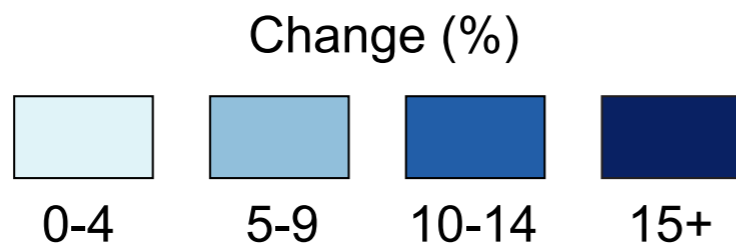


*Under high emissions, the intensity of extreme rain in the Northeast is projected to increase by about 13% by mid century.*

### High Emissions



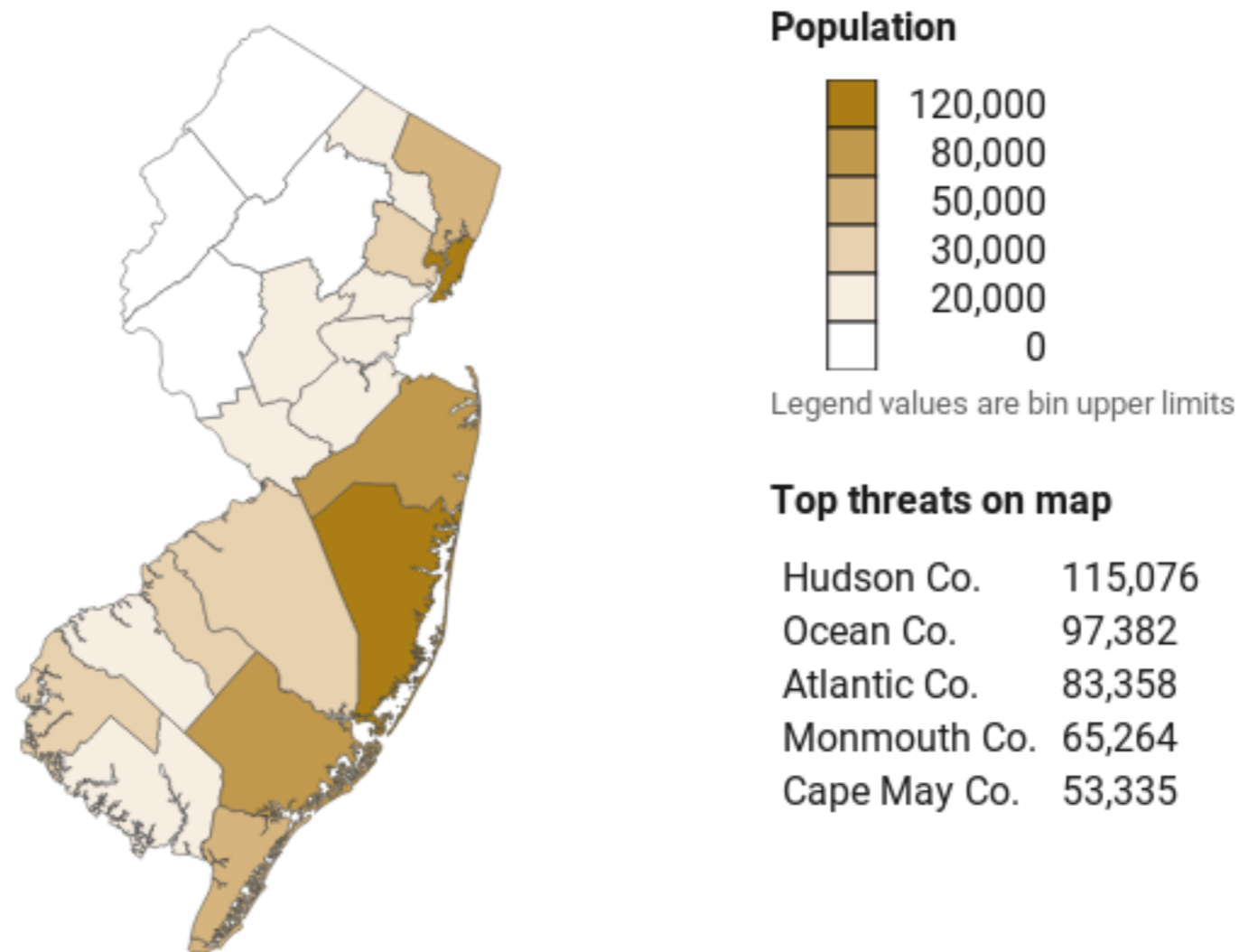
*Under moderate emissions, the intensity of extreme rain is projected to increase about 10%..*





But the biggest risks in New Jersey that we know how to quantify comes (perhaps unsurprisingly) from rising seas...

# Total population below 10ft in New Jersey by county



Values exclude sub-10ft areas potentially protected by levees or other features. Elevation is defined relative to local high tide lines. Source: Climate Central Risk Finder, 2017. <http://www.riskfinder.org/>

CLIMATE  CENTRAL

**About 600 thousands New Jerseyans (about 7% of the total state population) live within 10 feet (3 m) of the high tide line – areas potentially vulnerable to sea-level rise over the next century. About \$190 billion of property is located there.**

# Synthesizing multiple lines of information to project the processes driving global and local sea-level change

## Earth's Future

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

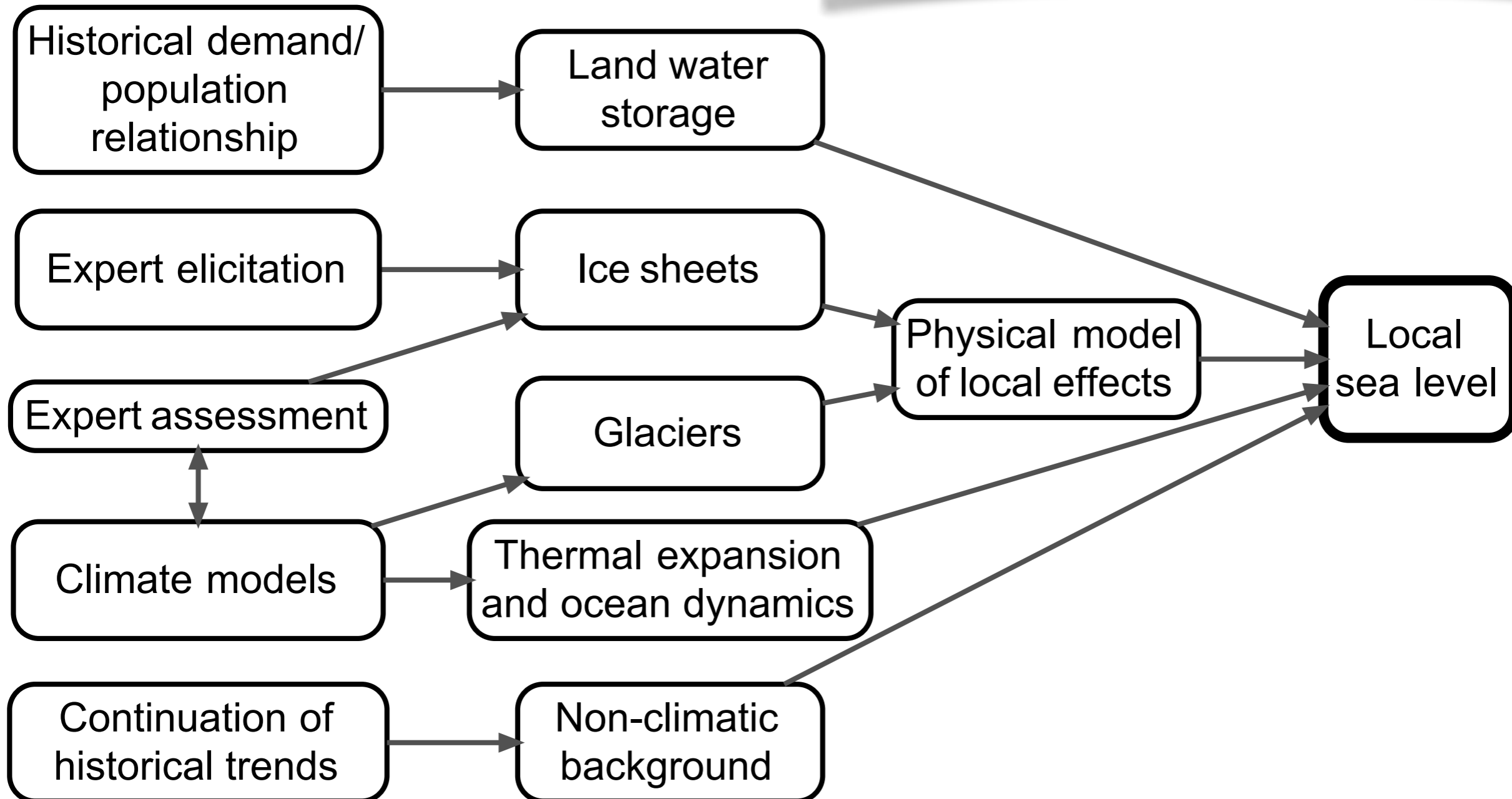
10.1002/2014EF000239

#### Key Points:

• Rates of local sea-level rise differs

### Probabilistic 21st and 22nd century sea-level projections at a global network of tide-gauge sites

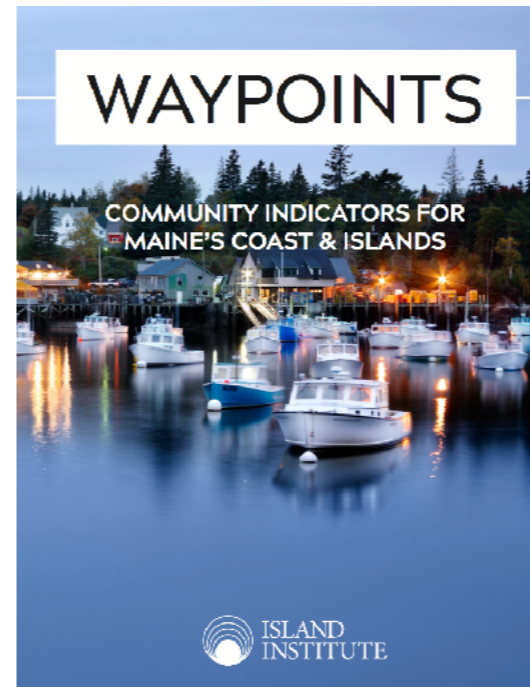
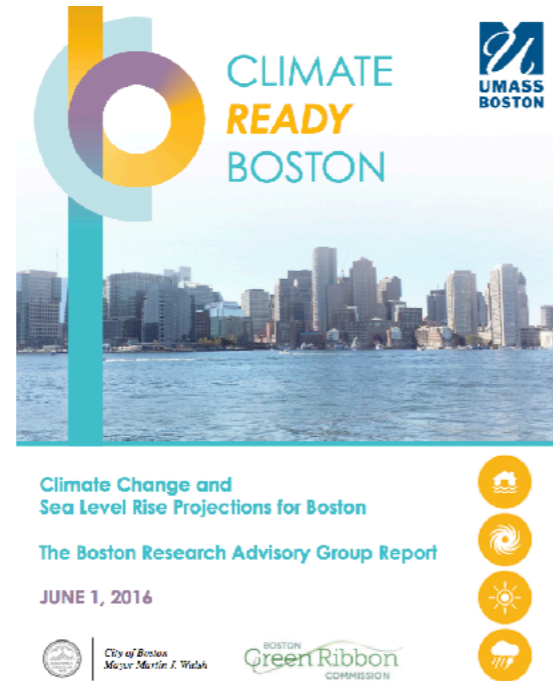
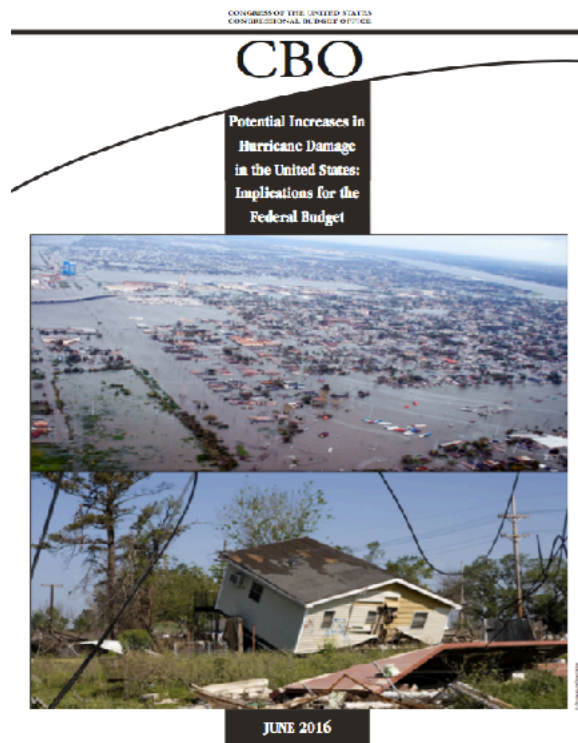
Robert E. Kopp<sup>1</sup>, Radley M. Horton<sup>2</sup>, Christopher M. Little<sup>3</sup>, Jerry X. Mitrovica<sup>4</sup>, Michael Oppenheimer<sup>3</sup>, D. J. Rasmussen<sup>5</sup>, Benjamin H. Strauss<sup>6</sup>, and Claudia Tebaldi<sup>6,7</sup>



This framework has been used, in part or whole, by a broad range of stakeholders.

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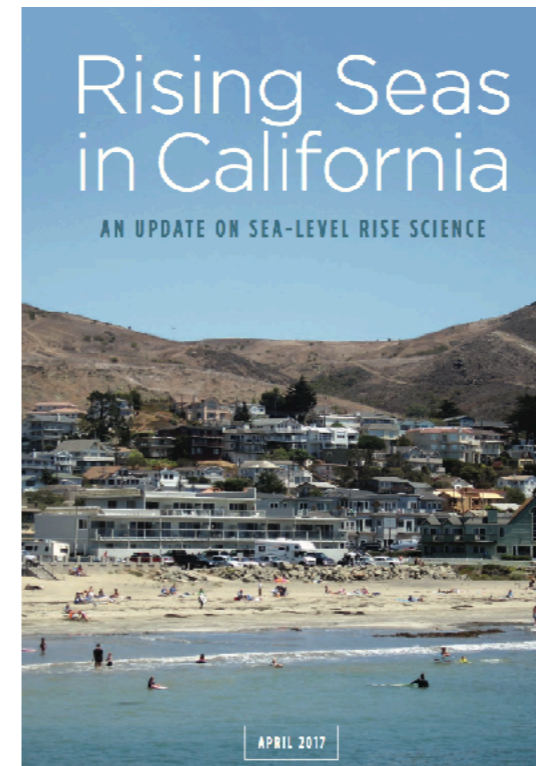
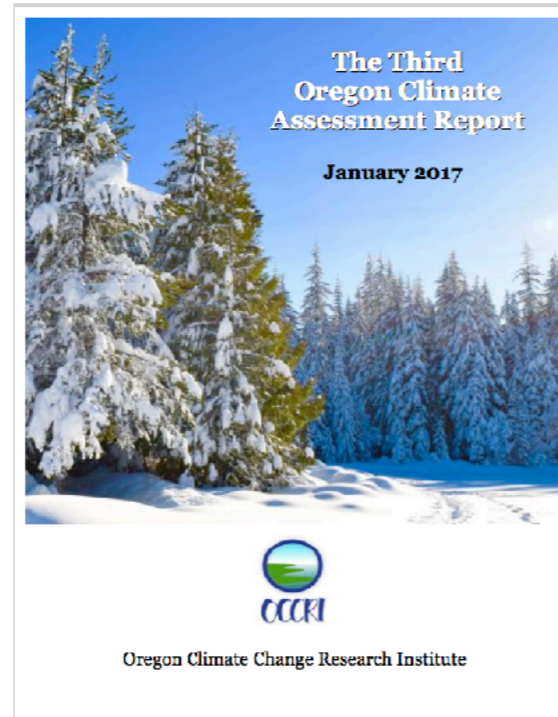
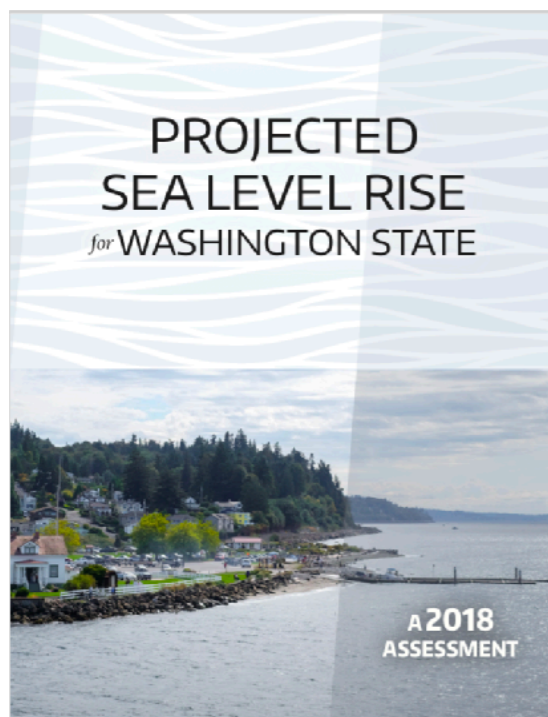


Silver Spring, Maryland  
January 2017



**noaa** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Ocean Service  
Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services



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NJ Climate Adaptation Alliance

**Assessing New Jersey's Exposure to Sea-Level Rise and Coastal  
Storms: Report of the New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance Science  
and Technical Advisory Panel**

October 2016

**Please cite this report as:**

Kopp, R.E., A. Broccoli, B. Horton, D. Kreeger, R. Leichenko, J.A. Miller, J.K. Miller, P. Orton, A. Parris, D. Robinson, C.P. Weaver, M. Campo, M. Kaplan, M. Buchanan, J. Herb, L. Auermuller and C. Andrews.  
2016. Assessing New Jersey's Exposure to Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Storms: Report of the New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance Science and Technical Advisory Panel. Prepared for the New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance. New Brunswick, New Jersey.

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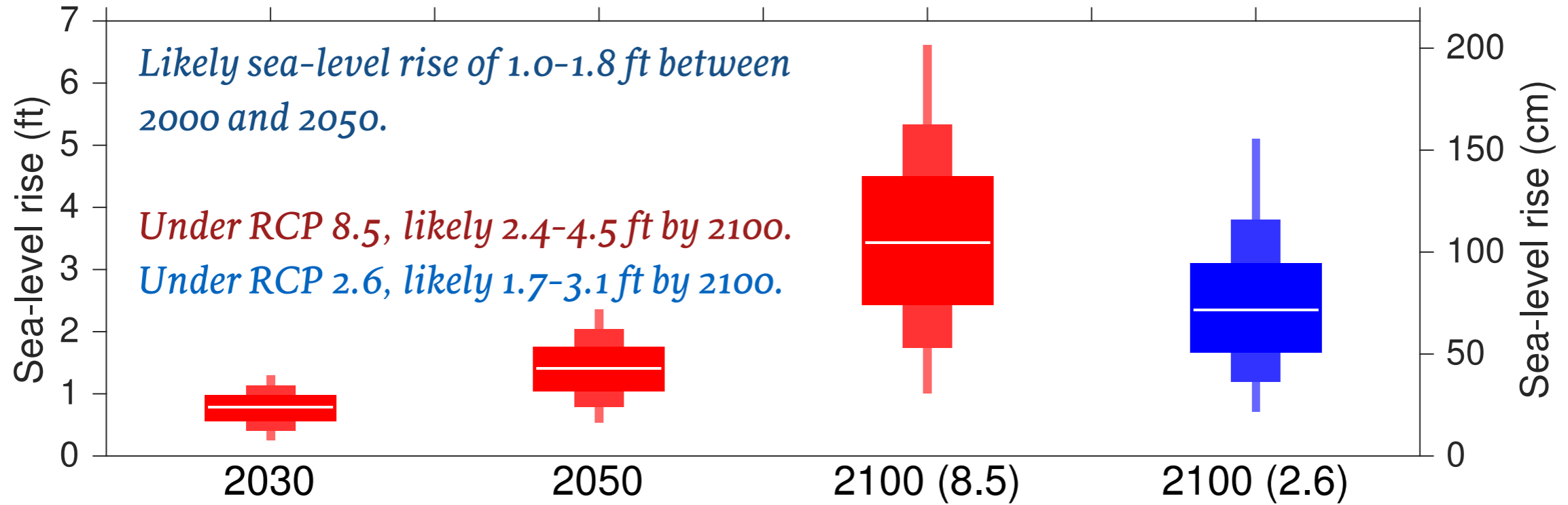
**STAP Members**

Robert Kopp	Rutgers
Tony Broccoli	Rutgers
Ben Horton	Rutgers
Danielle Kreeger	Drexel
Robin Leichenko	Rutgers
John Miller	NJAFM
Jon Miller	NJ Sea Grant and Stevens
Philip Orton	Stevens
Adam Parris	SRI at Jamaica Bay
David Robinson	Rutgers
Chris Weaver	US EPA and US Global Change Research Program



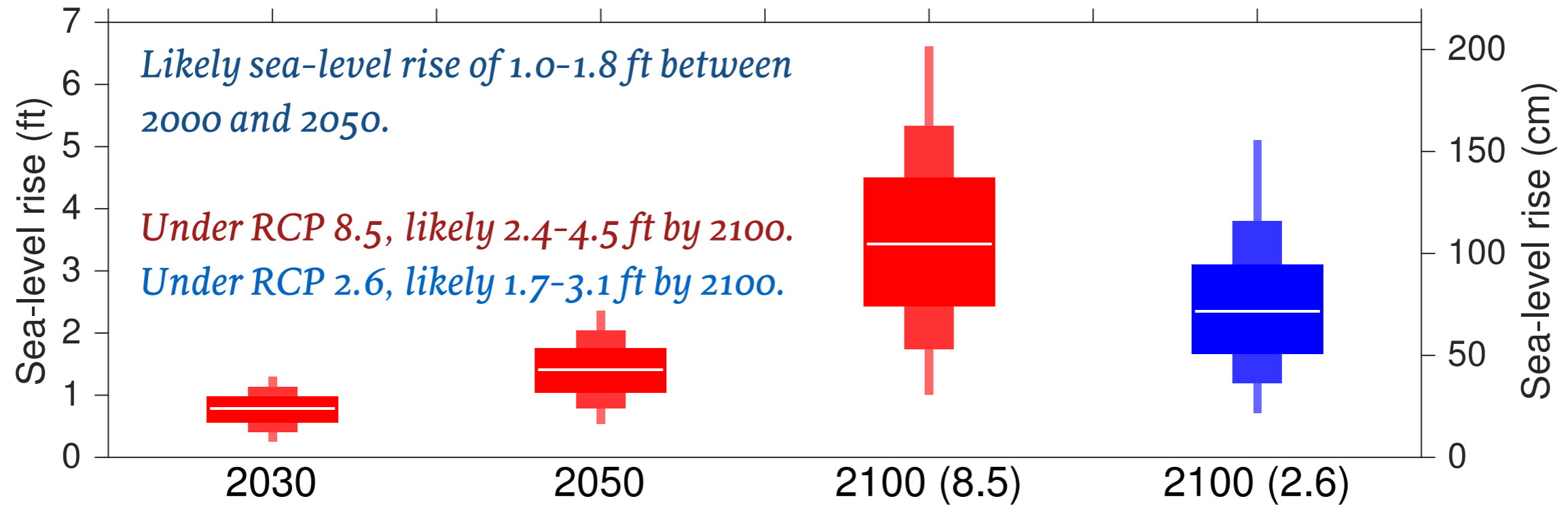
# Sea-level rise along the New Jersey shore

Above 1991-2009 average



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	Central Estimate	Likely Range	1-in-20 Chance	1-in-200 Chance	1-in-1000 Chance
<b>Year</b>	<i>50% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>67% probability SLR is between...</i>	<i>5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>0.5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>0.1% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>
<b>2030</b>	0.8 ft	0.6 – 1.0 ft	1.1 ft	1.3 ft	1.5 ft
<b>2050</b>	1.4 ft	1.0 – 1.8 ft	2.0 ft	2.4 ft	2.8 ft
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The physics of the interactions between ice sheets and the ocean is complex, and the state of scientific understanding is rapidly evolving!

*(photo: Knut Christianson)*



# Alternative models with projections allowing for additional modes of instability in Antarctica

Sea-level rise in coastal New Jersey, above 1991-2009 average levels

## Consistent w/2013 IPCC Report

*Likely sea-level rise of 1.0-1.8 ft between 2000 and 2050.*

*Under low emissions, likely 1.7-3.1 ft by 2100.*

*Under high emissions, likely 2.4-4.5 ft by 2100.*

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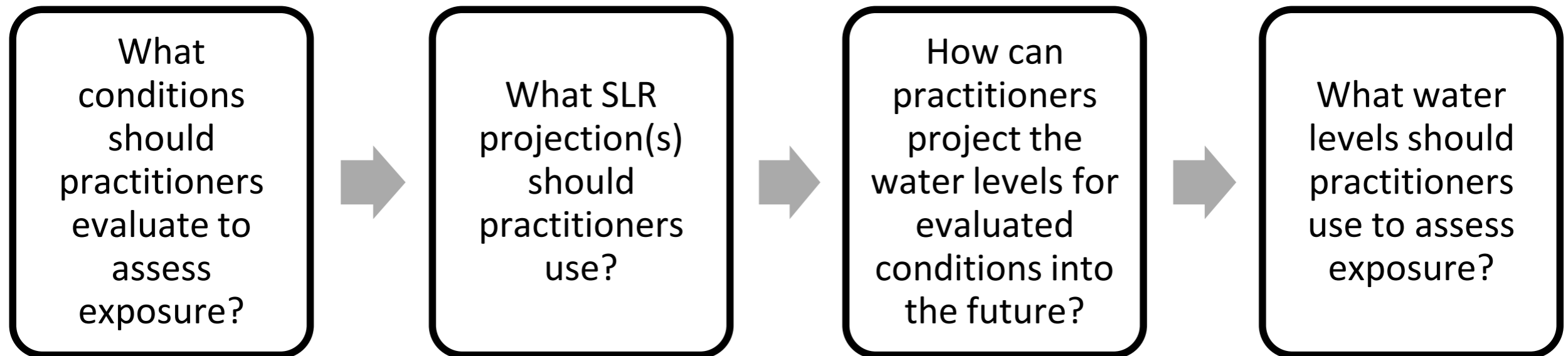
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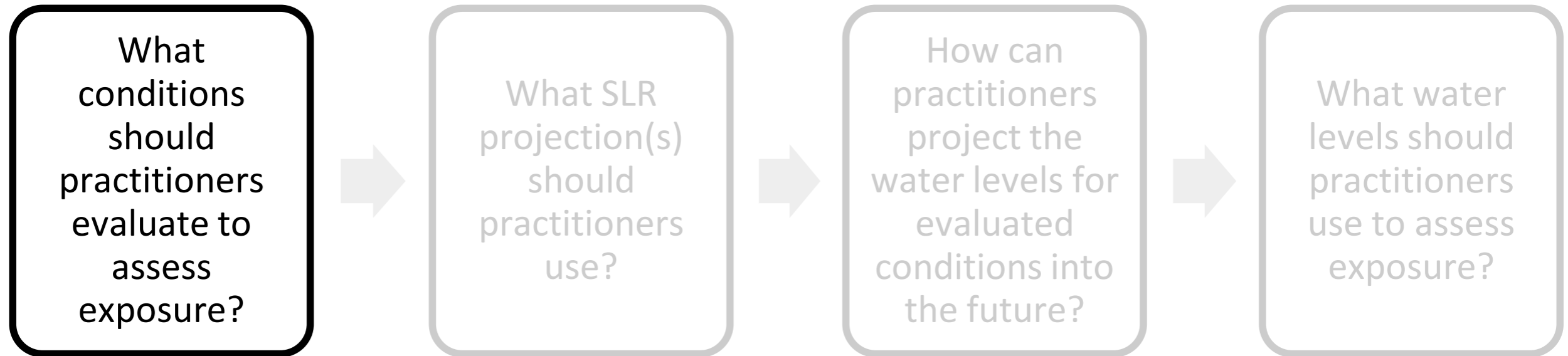
*Under high emissions, likely 4.4-8.3 ft by 2100.*

**The alternative projections aren't necessarily more correct than older one; the science is evolving toward a position that appears to be in between. Considering the two together gives a better sense of the true uncertainty.**

**This shows that projections for 2050 and for low-emissions futures are relatively stable, but the difference in projections for 2100 under high emissions points to the need to give special consideration to projections that are physically plausible but nominally very unlikely.**

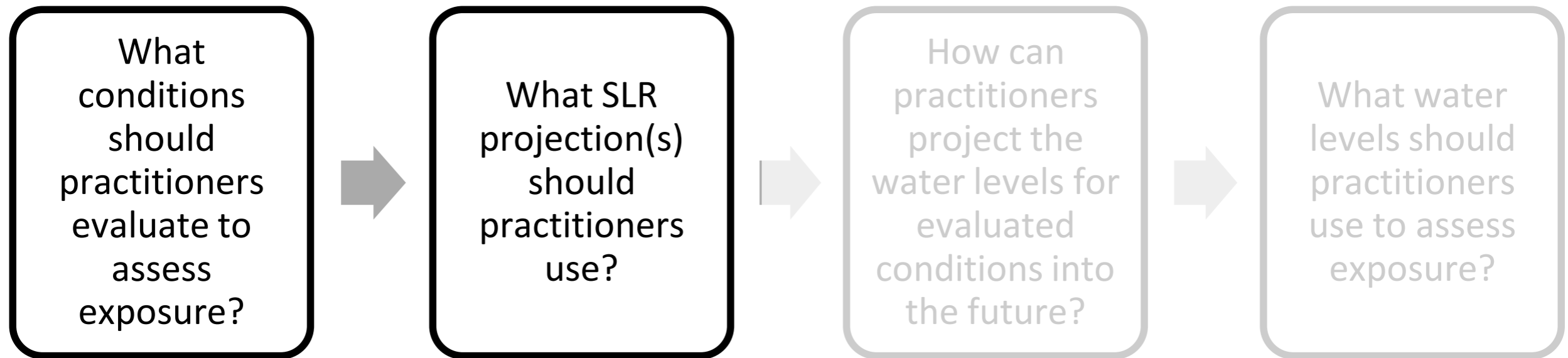


This approach was designed in consultation with the STAP's practitioner panel, and is intended for first-order flood exposure assessment. It does not consider future changes in storm intensity (for hurricanes, likely to increase) and tracks (highly uncertain), which have an uncertain impact on flood probabilities. It is not intended to substitute for more detailed analysis at the project level.



Practitioners should evaluate at least one water level that is representative of each of three flooding conditions:

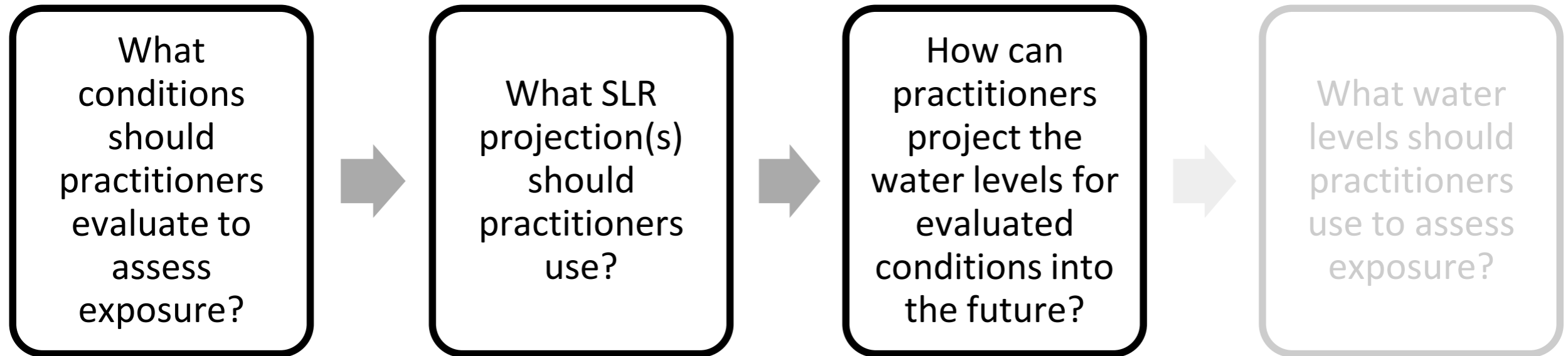
- Permanent inundation
- Tidal flooding
- Coastal storms



A practical approach practitioners can choose is to use at least two projections, with one being a SLR estimate in the likely range and one being a high-end estimate, in order to assess exposure to a range of future flood conditions.

	Central Estimate	Likely Range	1-in-20 Chance	1-in-200 Chance	1-in-1000 Chance
<b>Year</b>	<i>50% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>67% probability SLR is between...</i>	<i>5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>0.5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>0.1% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>
<b>2030</b>	0.8 ft	0.6 – 1.0 ft	1.1 ft	1.3 ft	1.5 ft
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<b>2100 High emissions</b>	3.4 ft	2.4 – 4.5 ft	5.3 ft	7.2 ft	10 ft

# NJCAA STAP Total Water Level Approach



Consider the sum of the SLR projections and representative water levels.

# Expected number of flood events changes significantly with sea-level rise

Expected number of floods events at Atlantic City

Water level: 6' NAVD88

SLR: NJCAA central estimate, high emissions (1.4' by 2050, 3.4' by 2100)

**2012:**

A 10% chance each year that a storm will cause a flood that exceeds 6 feet of inundation



**2062:**

A 99% chance each year that a storm will cause a flood that exceeds 6 feet of inundation



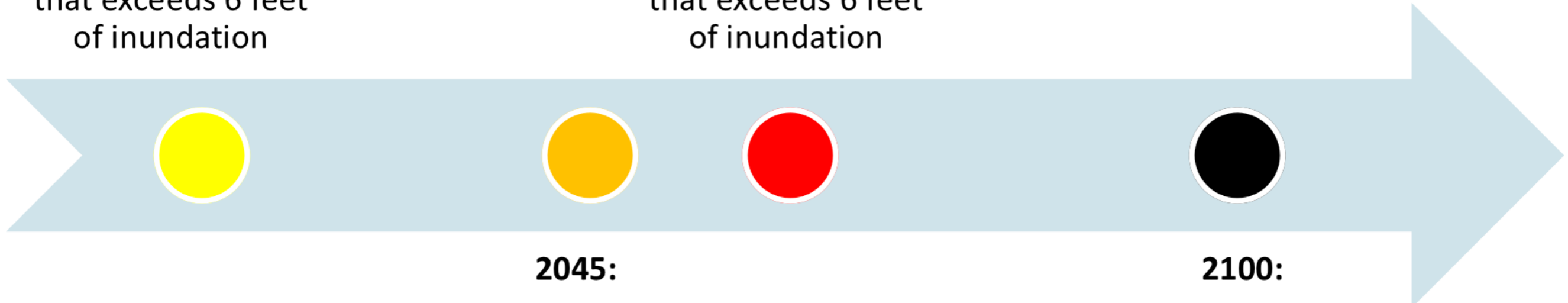
**2045:**

A 50% chance each year that a storm will cause a flood that exceeds 6 feet of inundation

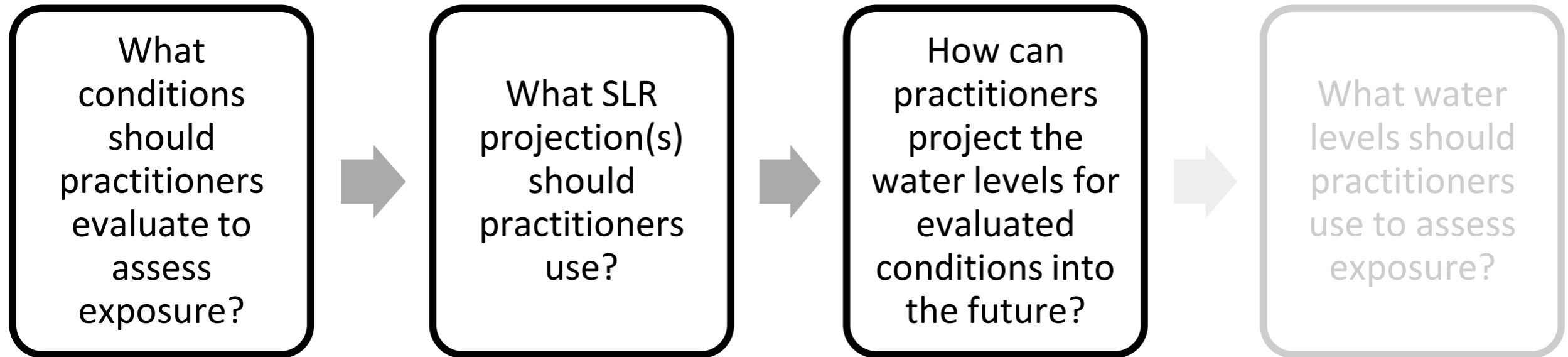


**2100:**

Daily flooding at high tide



# NJCAA STAP Total Water Level Approach

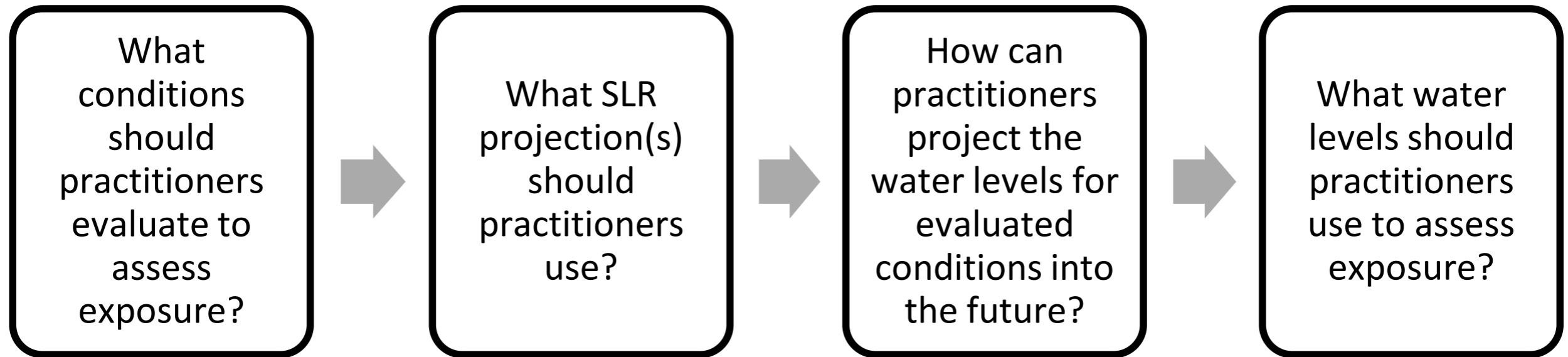


**Table 7: Atlantic City Example Table of Water-Level Projections by Year (ft. above NAVD88)**

Scenario / Year	2015	2030	2050	2100
<b>High-Emissions Central Estimate - 3.4 Ft. SLR by 2100</b>				
1F: 100-year flood (1% AEP)	7.2	8.0	8.6	10.6
1E: 1992 Nor'easter Storm Tide (Atlantic City, NJ)	6.7	7.5	8.1	10.1
1D: Sandy Storm Tide (Atlantic City, NJ)	6.1	6.9	7.5	9.5
1C: 10-year flood (10% AEP)	5.7	6.5	7.1	9.1
1B: Annual flood (99% AEP)	4.0	4.8	5.4	7.4
1A: Permanent Inundation (MHHW)	2.4	3.2	3.8	5.8
<b>High-Emissions 1-in-20 Chance Estimate - 5.3 Ft. SLR by 2100</b>				
2F: 100-year flood (1% AEP)	7.2	8.3	9.2	12.5
2E: 1992 Nor'easter Storm Tide (Atlantic City, NJ)	6.7	7.8	8.7	12
2D: Sandy Storm Tide (Atlantic City, NJ)	6.1	7.2	8.1	11.4
2C: 10-year flood (10% AEP)	5.7	6.8	7.7	11.0
2B: Annual flood (99% AEP)	4.0	5.1	6.0	9.3
2A: Permanent Inundation (MHHW)	2.4	3.5	4.4	7.7



# NJCAA STAP Total Water Level Approach



**Table 8: Atlantic City Example Table of Selected Water Levels for Exposure Assessment**

Water Level Height Above NAVD88 at Tide Gauge	What Does This Height Represent?
4 ft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent inundation (MHHW) in 2050 (Central Estimate)</li> <li>• Current Annual Flood (no additional sea-level rise)</li> </ul>
7 ft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual flood in 2100 (Central Estimate)</li> <li>• 10-year flood in 2050 (Central Estimate)</li> <li>• Sandy Storm Tide in 2030 (Central Estimate)</li> <li>• Current 100-year flood (Central Estimate)</li> </ul>
12 ft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100-year flood in 2100 (1-in-20 Chance estimate of sea-level rise)</li> <li>• 1992 Nor'easter in 2100 (1-in-20 Chance estimate of sea-level rise)</li> </ul>

**So what do we do?**

# Do we modify our communities to accommodate occasional flooding?



# Do we modify our communities to accommodate occasional flooding?



**Remember: elevating houses is of limited value if you don't also protect critical infrastructure!**

# Do we harden?

## Proposed East Side Coastal Resiliency Project



# Do we harden?

## Proposed East Side Coastal Resiliency Project



*But remember: you also need to plan for those occasions when hard protection fails.*

# Do we expand protective natural infrastructure?



**New oyster beds in Jamaica Bay**

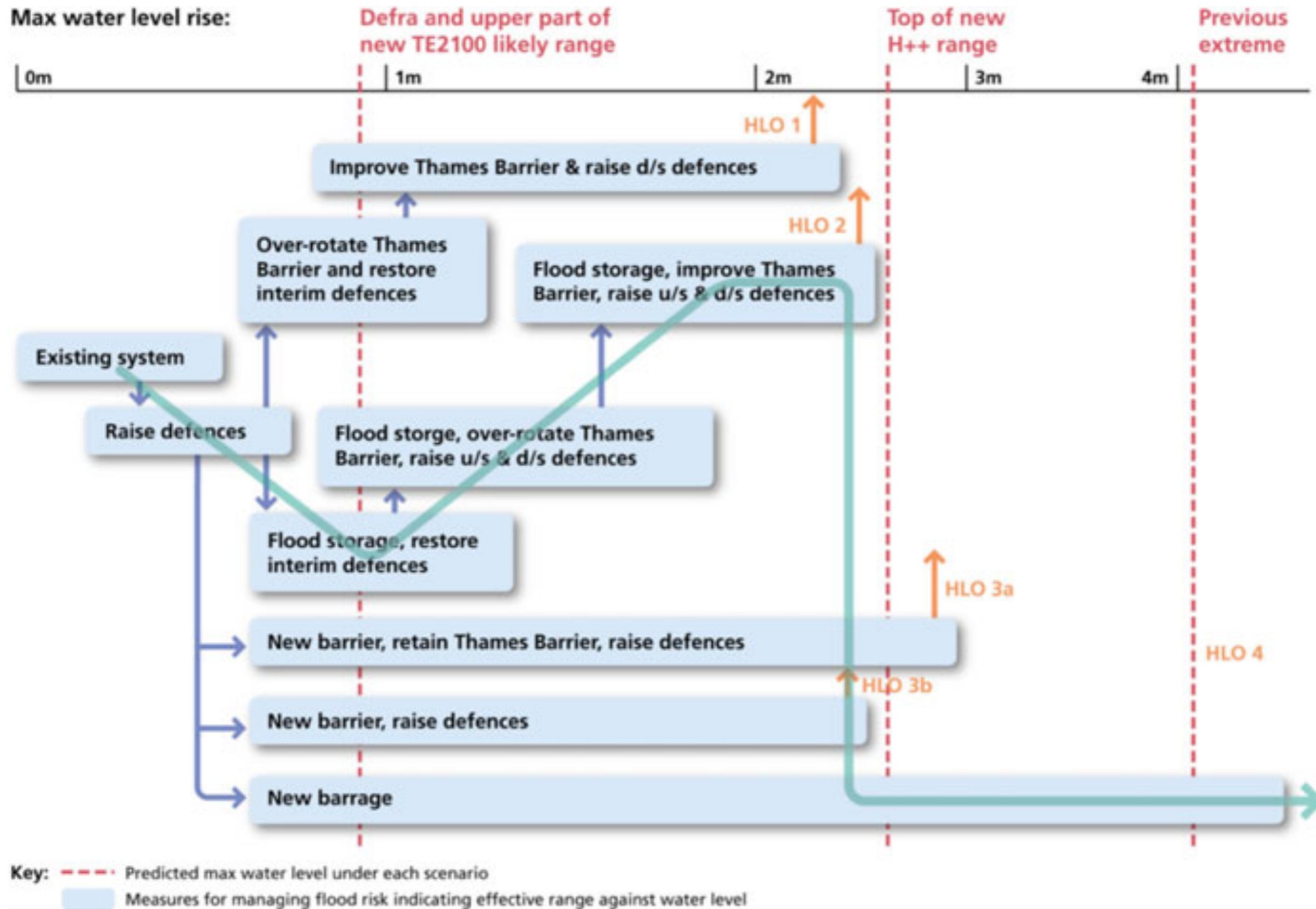
# Do we relocate to higher ground?



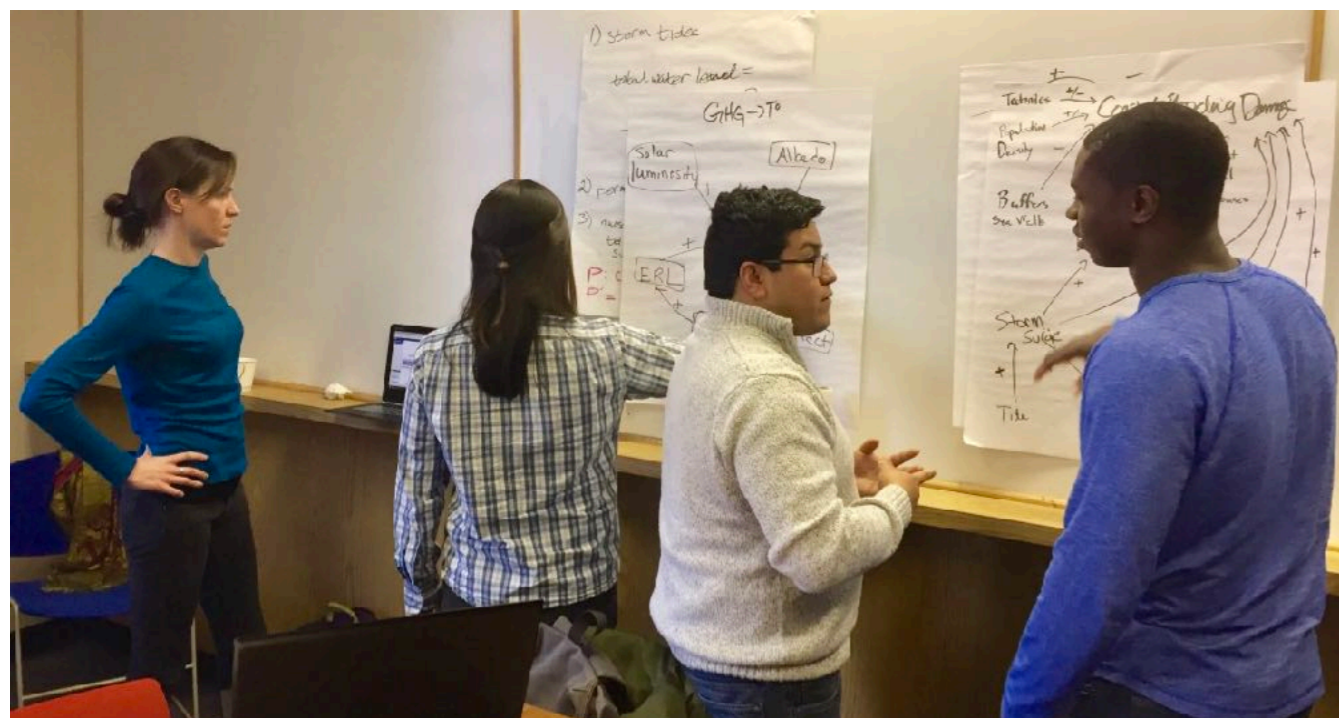
**Oakwood Beach, Staten Island**



# For decision execution, flexible adaptation pathways may be a key approach to plan for the ambiguous long-term.

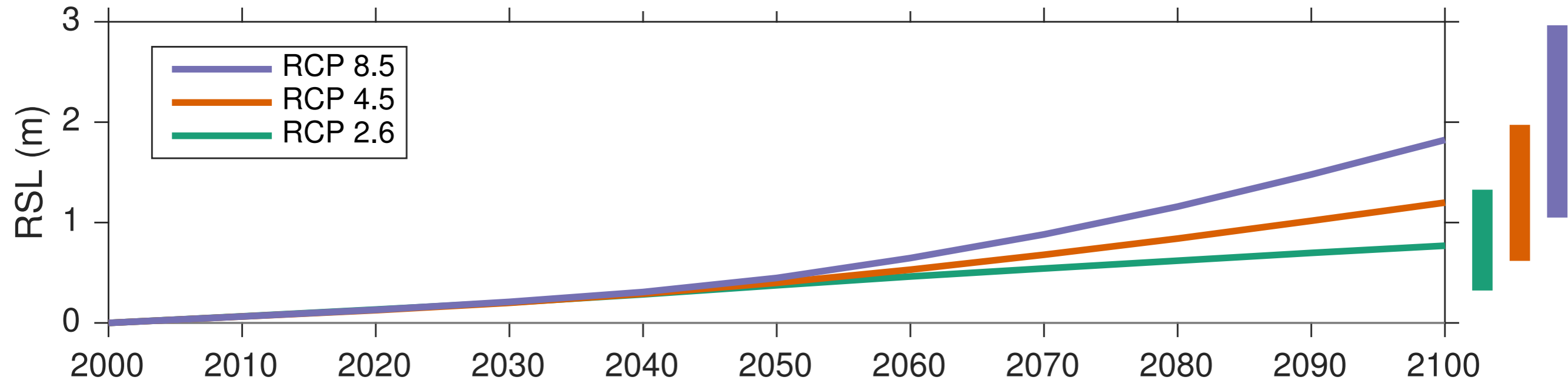


## Coastal Climate Risk & Resilience Initiative



# However we chose to adapt, the starting point is climate change mitigation.

Sea-level rise in coastal New Jersey, above year 2000 levels



*Likely sea-level rise of about 1-2 ft between 2000 and 2050.*

*Under high emissions, likely about 4.5-8 ft by 2100 if Antarctica is fairly unstable.*

*Under high emissions, likely about 2.5-4.5 ft by 2100 if Antarctica is fairly stable.*

*Under low emissions, likely about 1.5-3.5 ft by 2100.*

# Climate risk in New Jersey: A scientific update

**Robert Kopp**

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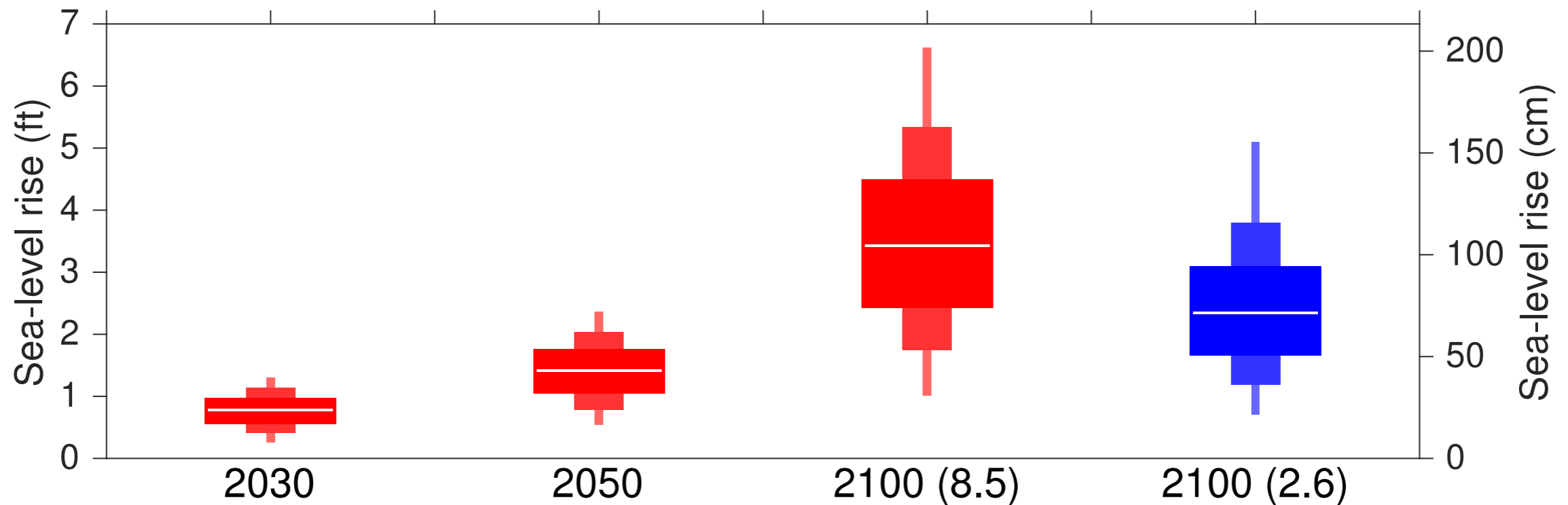
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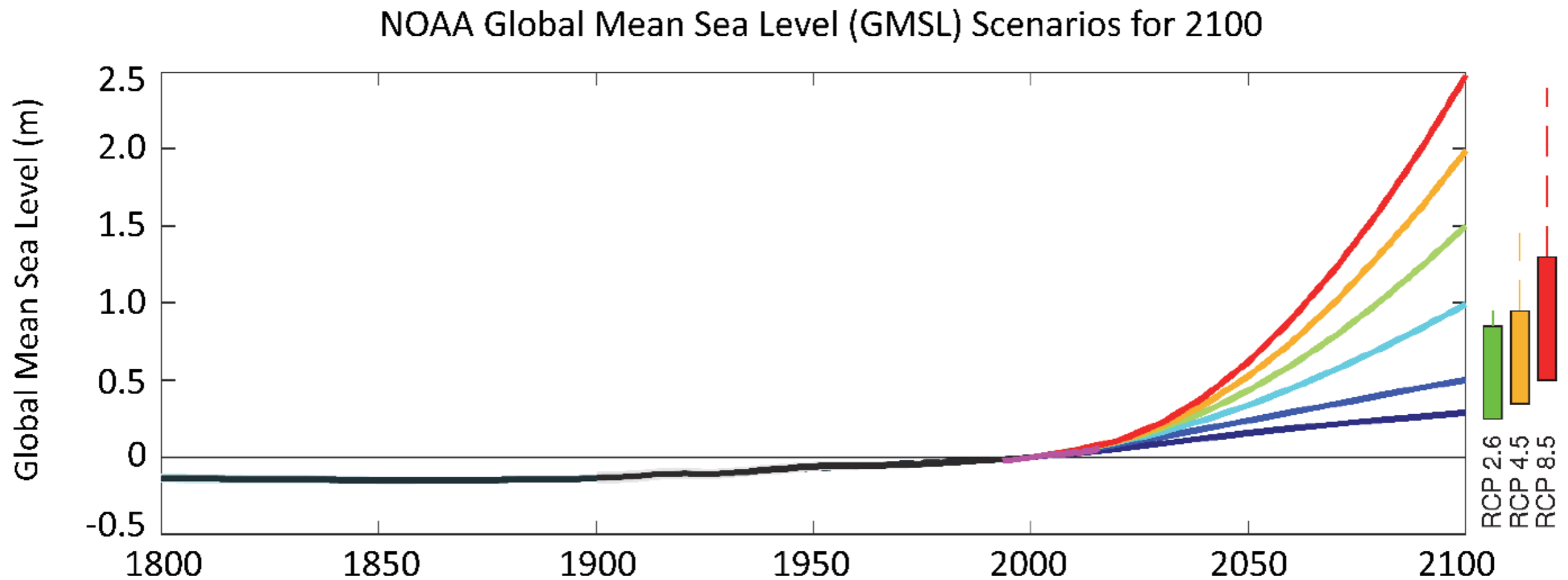
# Probabilistic versus scenario-based projections

The projection framework used by NJCAA is a *probabilistic* framework – it aims to estimate a single, comprehensive estimate of the likelihoods of different levels of sea-level rise (under different emissions scenarios) from a bottom-up accounting of different components.



# Probabilistic versus scenario-based projections

It contrasts with *scenario-based projections* (such as those used by USACE or the National Climate Assessment), which define a plausible range of sea-level rise and construct discrete pathways within that range. Scenarios are a tool for using sea-level rise projections that leverage the scientific literature assessing the likelihoods of different outcomes.



# Probabilistic versus scenario-based projections

The current best practice for probabilistic projections is to either use multiple probability distributions with different assumptions, or to give special consideration to high-end outcomes (e.g., as in California 2017 report and forthcoming New York City Panel on Climate Change).

(b) San Francisco, Golden Gate

<i>Feet above 1991-2009 mean</i>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>LIKELY RANGE</b>	<b>1-IN-20 CHANCE</b>	<b>1-IN-200 CHANCE</b>
<b>Year / Percentile</b>	<i>50% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>67% proba- bility SLR is between...</i>	<i>5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>	<i>0.5% probability SLR meets or exceeds...</i>
2030	0.4	0.3 – 0.5	0.6	0.8
2050	0.9	0.6 – 1.1	1.4	1.9
2100 (RCP 2.6)	1.6	1.0 – 2.4	3.2	5.7
2100 (RCP 4.5)	1.9	1.2 – 2.7	3.5	5.9
2100 (RCP 8.5)	2.5	1.6 – 3.4	4.4	6.9
2100 (H++)	10			
2150 (RCP 2.6)	2.4	1.3 – 3.8	5.5	11.0
2150 (RCP 4.5)	3.0	1.7 – 4.6	6.4	11.7
2150 (RCP 8.5)	4.1	2.8 – 5.8	7.7	13.0
2150 (H++)	22			