

Vulnerability Assessments

(Handout 1)

A *vulnerability assessment* is a way to determine the vulnerability of a community to a given threat or set of threats. A *climate vulnerability assessment* systematically analyzes climate impacts faced by a community and a local community's capacity to respond to them. Climate impacts include wildfires, droughts, sea level rise, etc., which are all connected to climate variability and change.

In other words, a climate vulnerability assessment is a tool for not only assessing climate impacts, but also cataloging decisions to prioritize how to use limited resources in ways that can help lessen the worst effects of those impacts

Steps in the Assessment Process

Step 1:
Define the
Scope of
Assessment

Step 2:
Construct the
Assessment
Matrices

Step 3:
Undertake the
Assessment

Step 4:
Develop
Adaptation
Strategy

Step 5:
Create
Narrative
Report

Step 6:
Communicate
Results

Step 1: Define the Scope of Assessment

Identify the significant climate change-related variables, non-climate change-related variables, and understand how they may be expected to change over a given timeframe.

At CIRC, we are using the Northwest Climate Toolbox to help describe projected future scenarios for these variables.

