

ANNALS OF THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Issue: *Building the Knowledge Base for Climate Resiliency*

Foreword to *Building the Knowledge Base for Climate Resiliency: New York City Panel on Climate Change 2015 Report*

Dear Friends,

Climate change is an existential threat to New Yorkers and the world. Together, we are rising to the challenge by dramatically reducing our contributions to its causes, while protecting ourselves against its risks. New York City has committed to reducing our emissions 80%, from 2005, by 2050, making us the largest city in the world to commit to this ambitious and necessary goal, while simultaneously implementing an aggressive, comprehensive climate resiliency plan.

With this report, the New York City Panel on Climate Change (NPCC) provides critical climate and impact projections needed to inform decision-makers so as to make New Yorkers safer and to enhance the city's long-term resiliency. The buildings and infrastructure we construct and improve today will be with New Yorkers for generations. As we prepare our city for extreme weather and rising sea levels, we must use the best possible information and projections regarding the risks we face.

The NPCC is a consortium of local world-class scientists that began advising the city in 2008. Thanks to their tireless work, our understanding of the risks we face continues to improve. This year, for the first time, we have local sea level rise projections through 2100. We know that New York City's sea level is increasing at almost twice the global average. We also understand with greater certainty that local climate change will very likely result in warmer regional temperatures, and that heat waves are very likely to increase.

In 2014, we created the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the first-ever city office focused on climate resiliency. This office is leading the city's short- and long-term efforts to strengthen coastal defenses, upgrade buildings, protect infrastructure and critical services, and make homes, businesses, and neighborhoods safer and more vibrant. With the projections and analysis of climate change provided by the NPCC, we can continue to track our progress, monitor our risks, and ensure that we make New York City a safe and accessible place for all New Yorkers for years to come.



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doi: 10.1111/nyas.12654