Sea Level Rise in South Florida: Causes, Consequences and Opportunities

Dr. Todd A. Crowl
Director, Institute of Water & the Environment
Director, Southeast Environmental Research Center
Co-Founder, Sea Level Solutions Center
Florida International University

FIU Southeast Environmental Research Center

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Florida International University

Tiffany G. Troxler, PhD, Director,
Sea Level Solutions Center,
Research Scientist, Southeast
Environmental Research Center

slsc.fiu.edu @FIU_SLSC slsc@fiu.edu

FIU Sea Level Solutions Center
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Develop new interdisciplinary solutions through partnerships and collaboration

The SLSC is a university-wide center for:

1) *conducting, facilitating, and synthesizing research and education to advance understanding of sea-level rise and its impacts on the well-being of both human and natural systems, and*
2) *converting this knowledge into actions for the benefit of society*

Knowledge → Action

Threat → Opportunity

Create interdisciplinary, solution-oriented science and training opportunities that are policy-relevant

Sea Level Solutions Center Interdisciplinary Studio

Taking a holistic, system-oriented approach - that integrates evaluation of future scenarios - to realize a new and resilient Miami while training the next generation of innovators.

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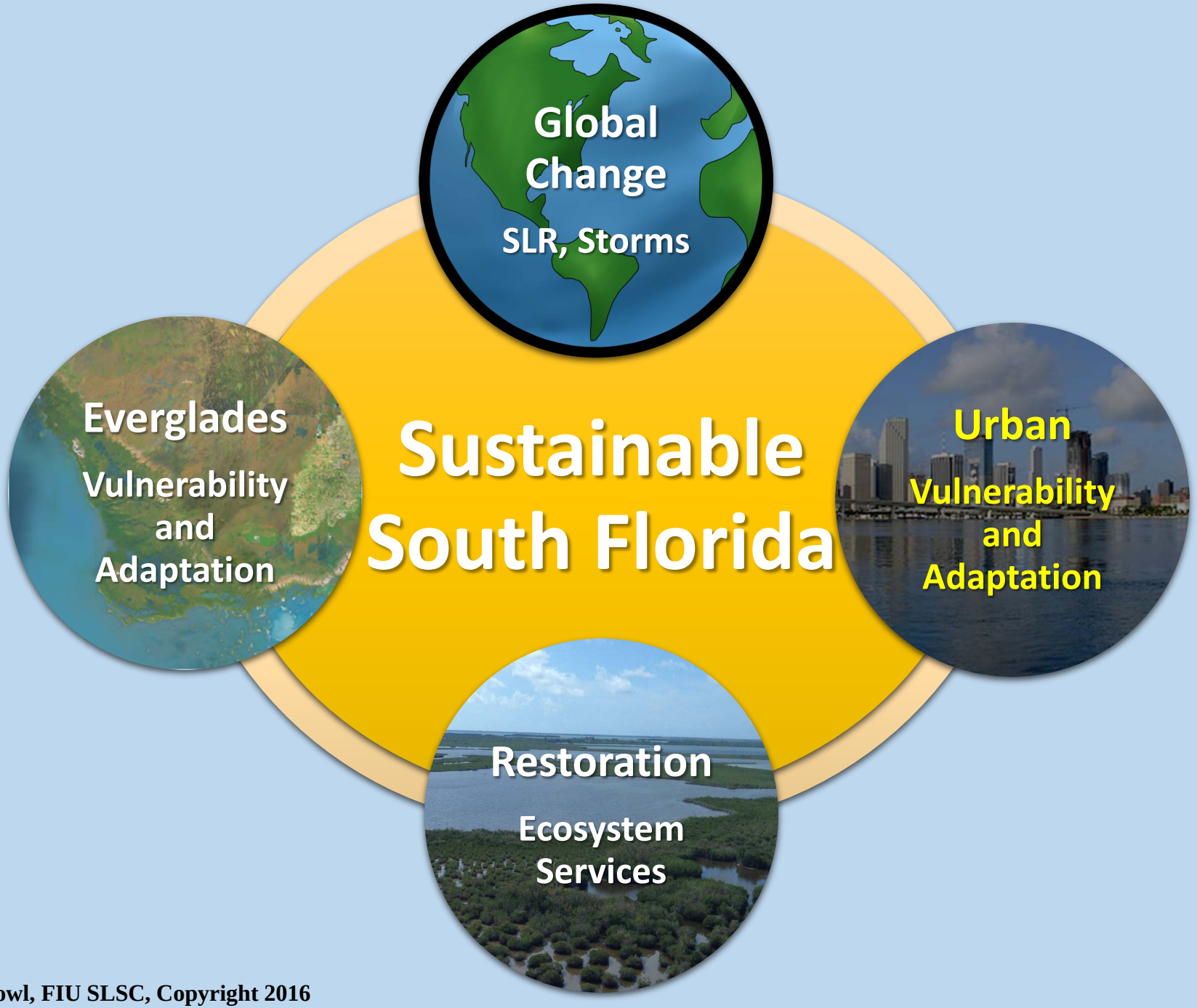
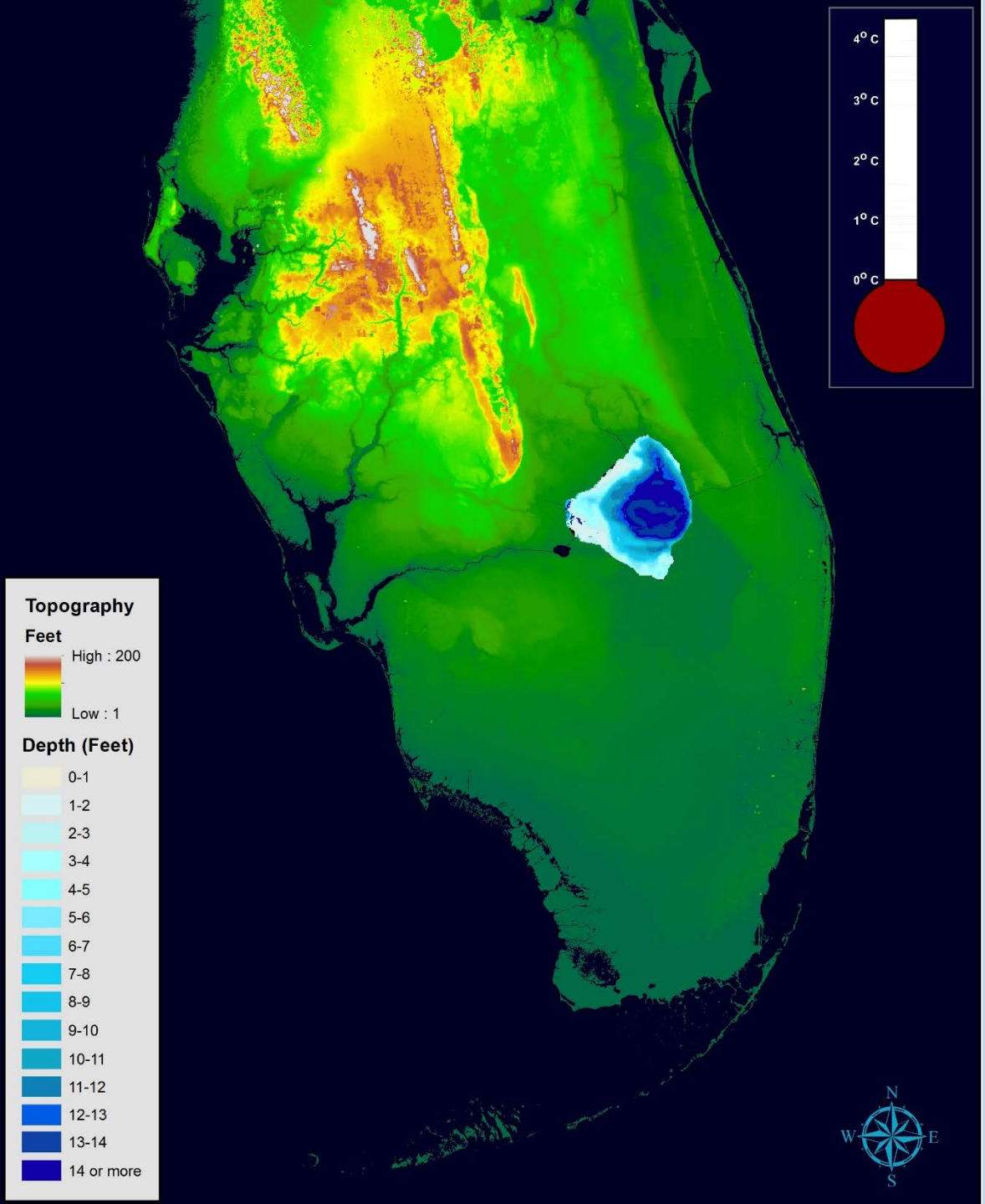


Flooding in Miami

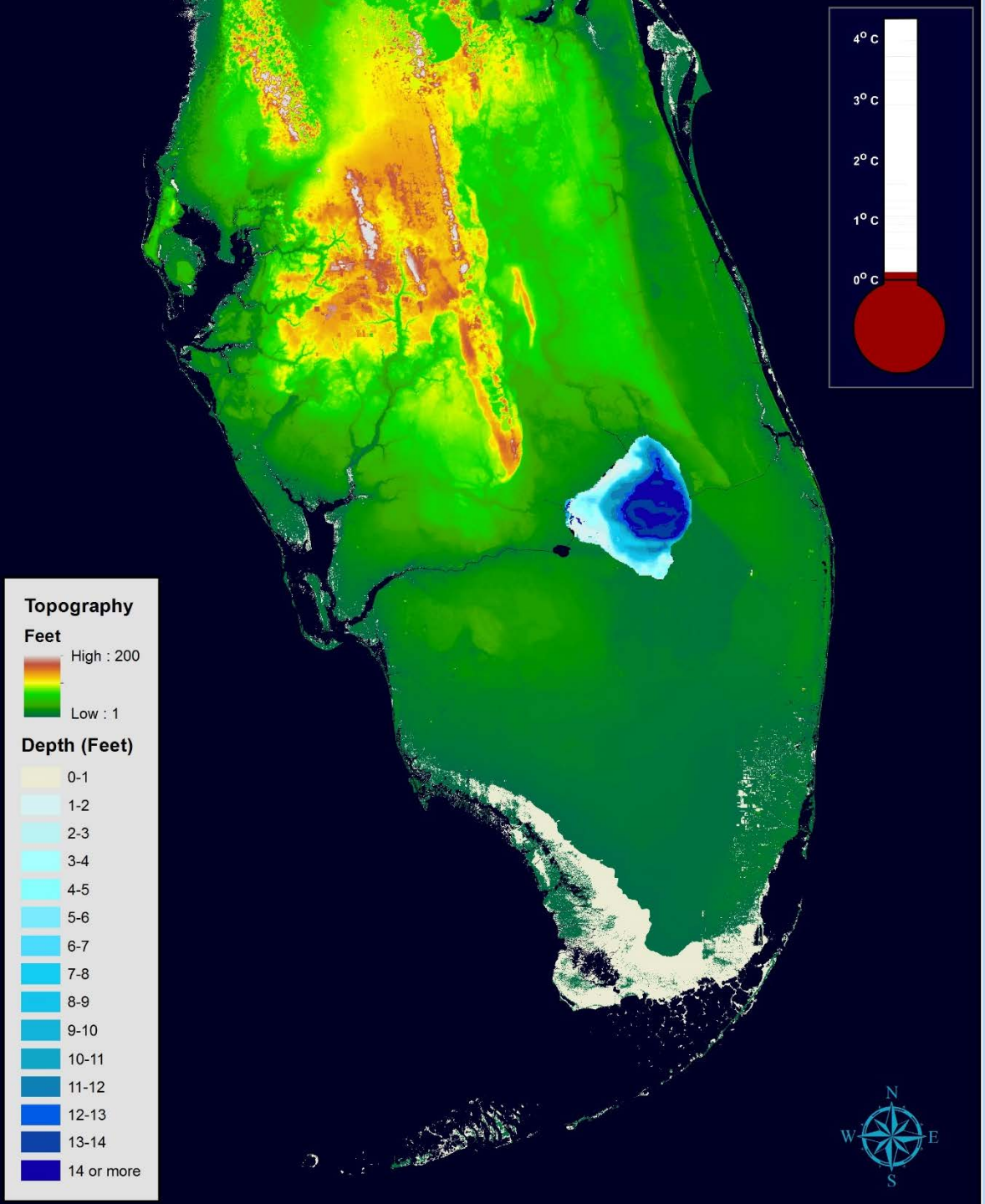
Alton Rd between 8th and 10th streets has been flooding every year for the past 7 years at least.

Southern Florida Topography



Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015

Southern Florida with 1 foot of Sea Level Rise



Map by Peter W. Harlem
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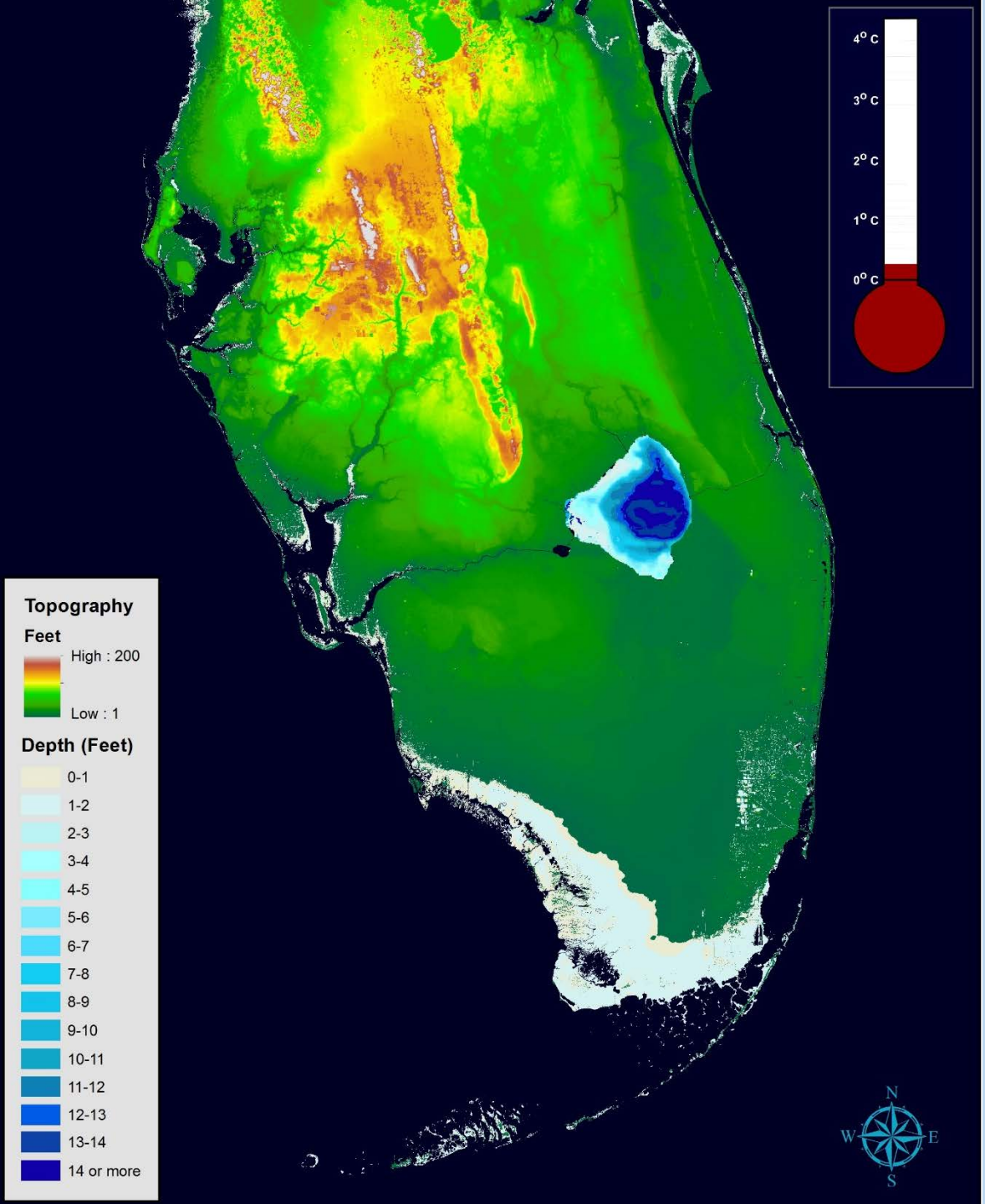
FIU, 2015

Southern Florida with 2 feet of Sea Level Rise



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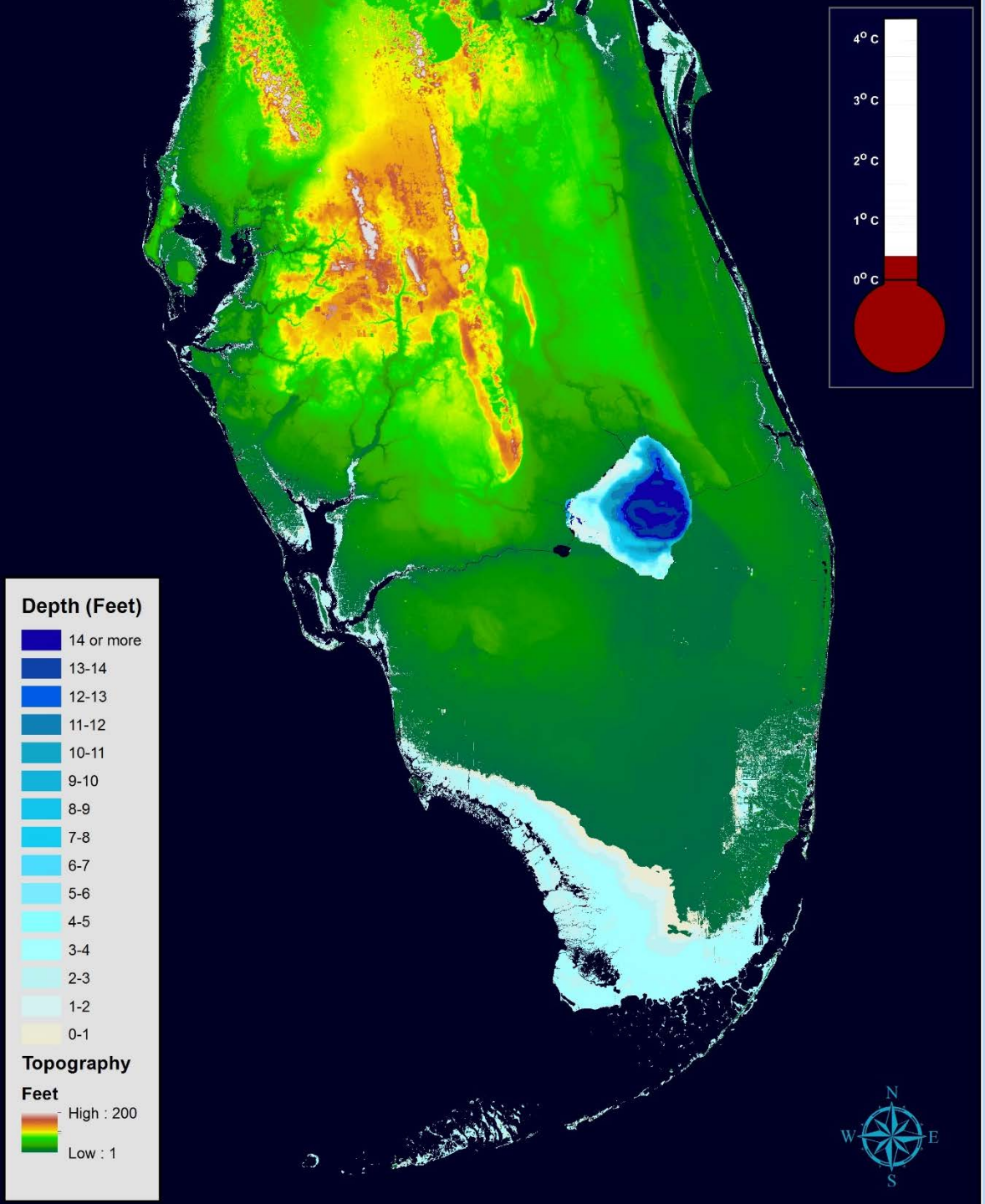
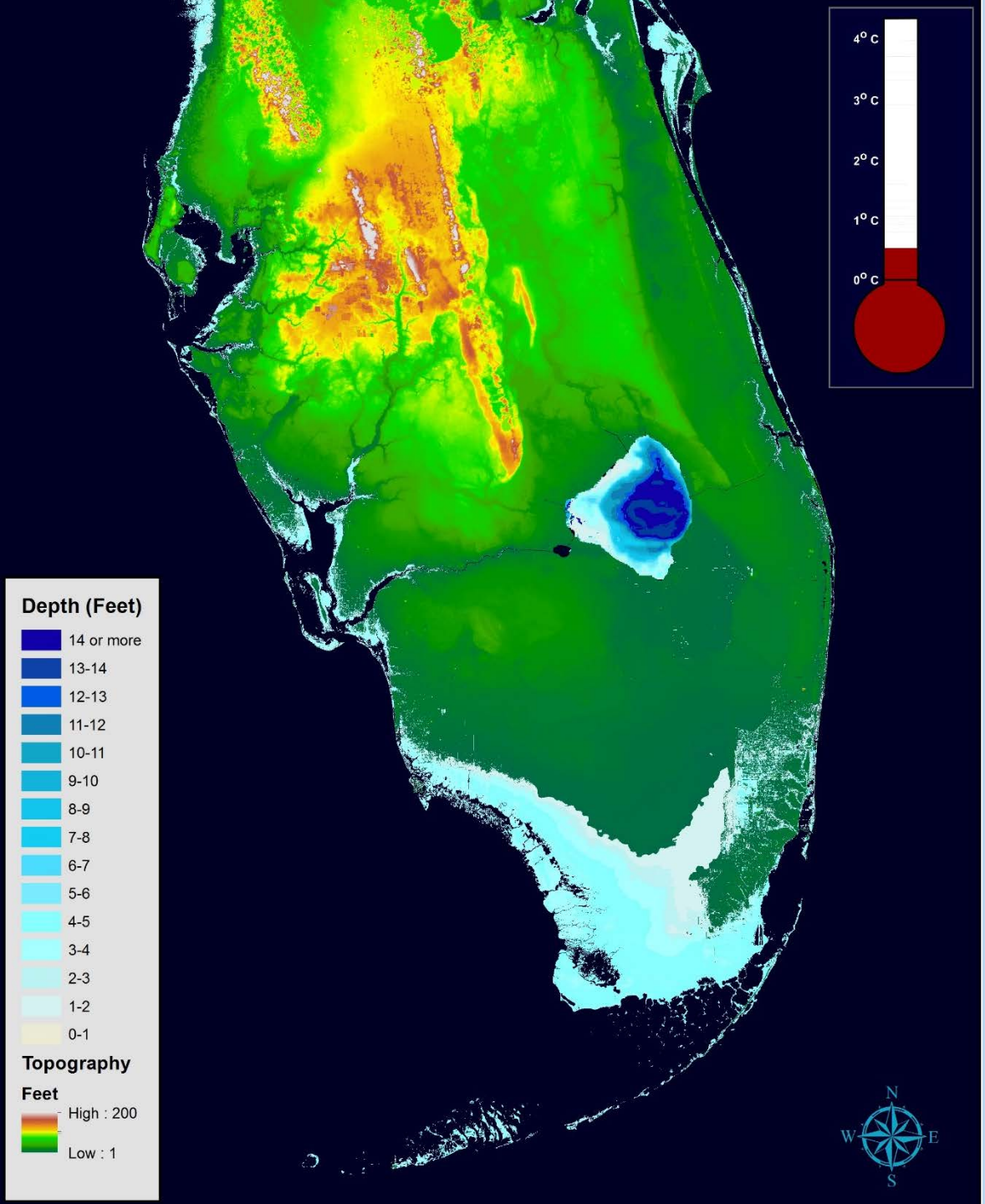
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015



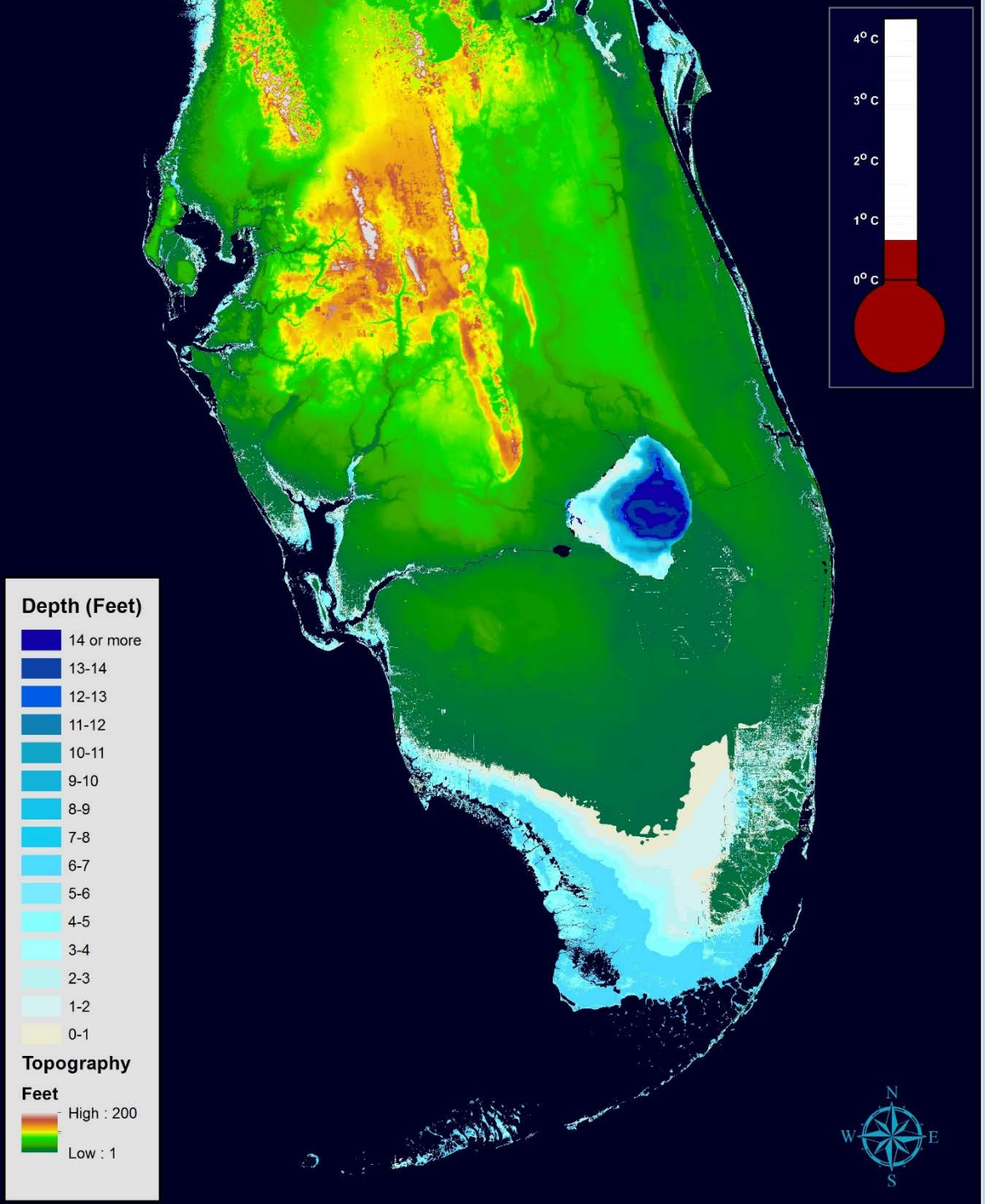
Southern Florida with 3 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015



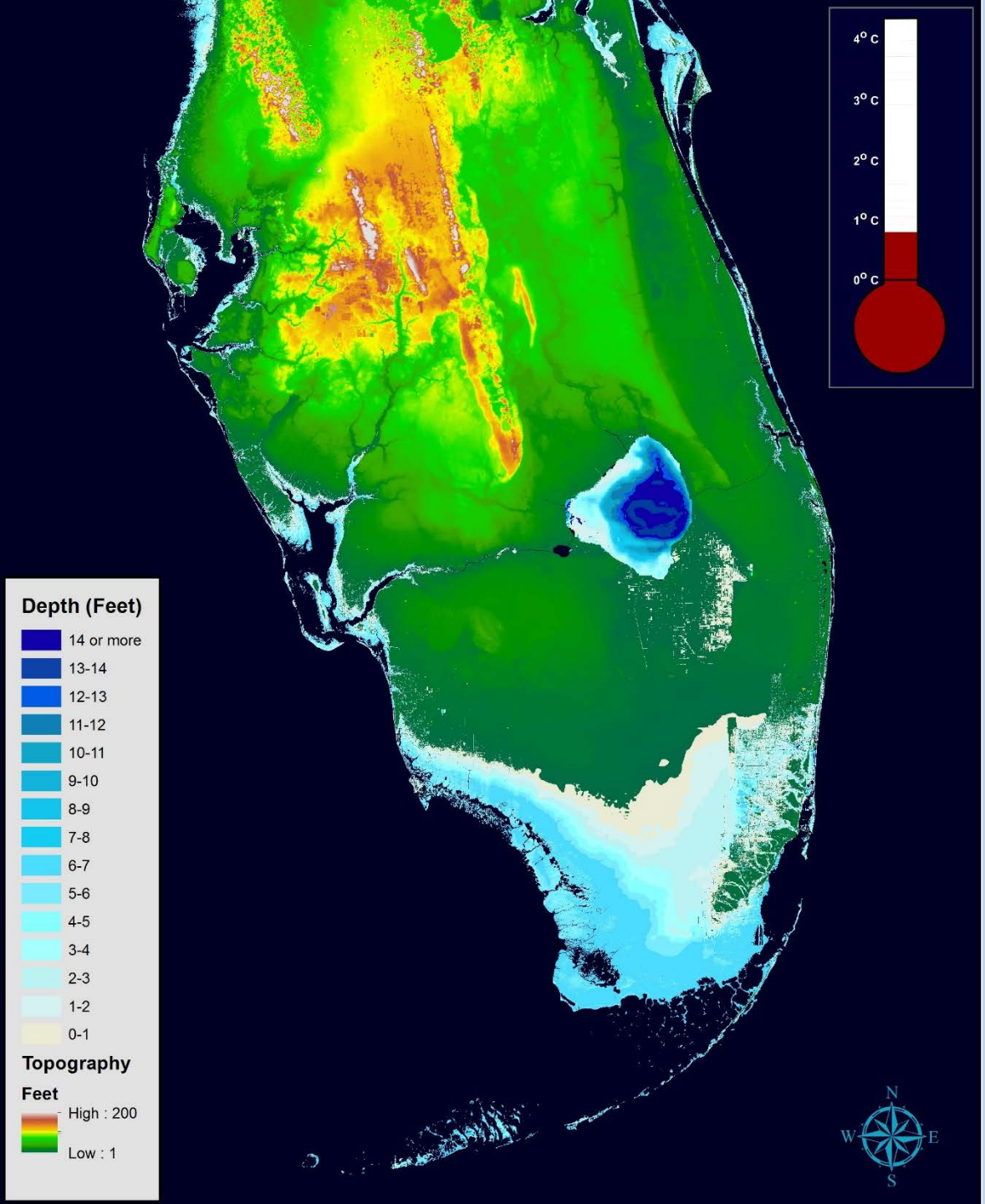
Southern Florida with 4 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015



Southern Florida with 5 feet of Sea Level Rise !

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015



Southern Florida with 6 feet of Sea Level Rise

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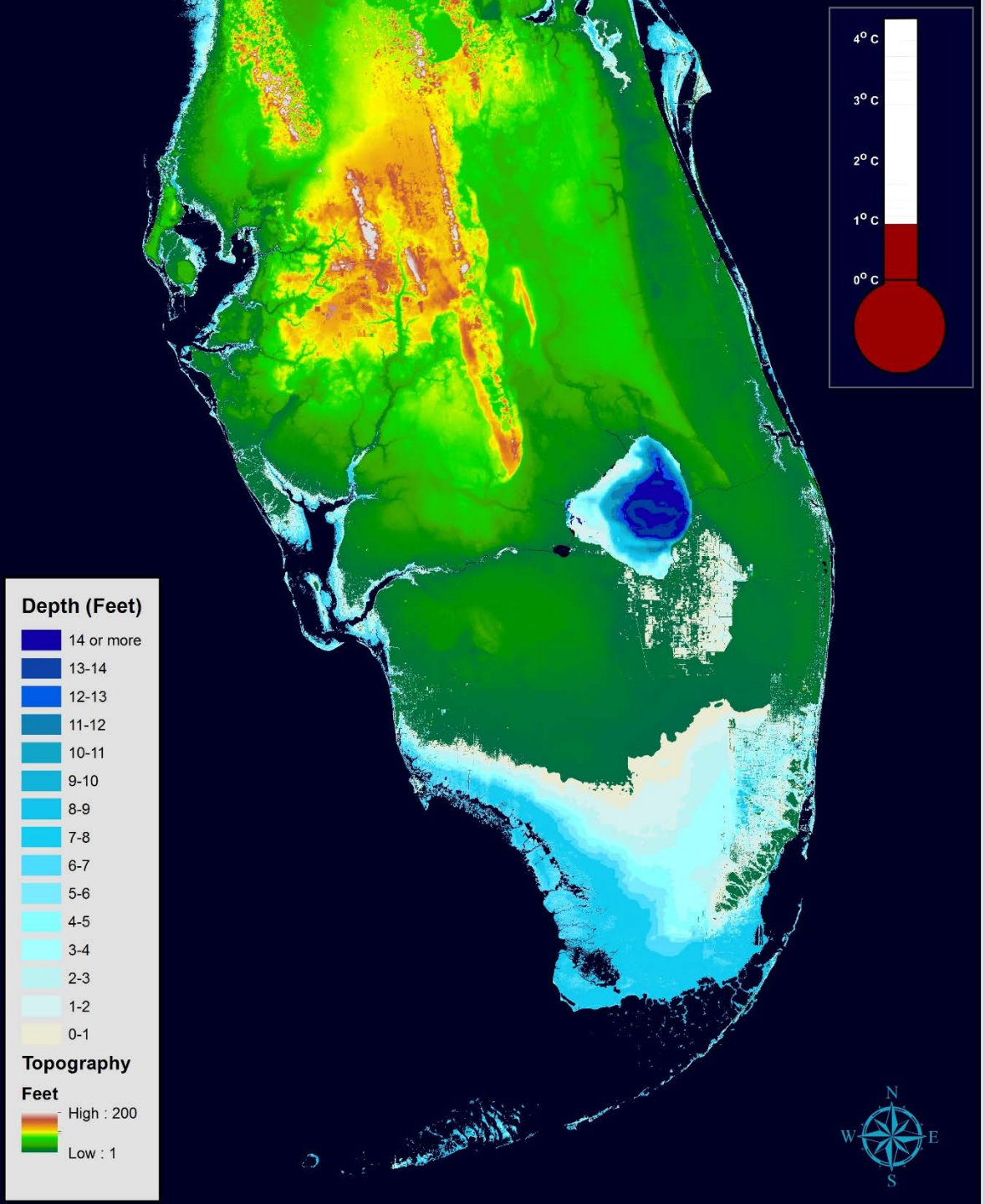
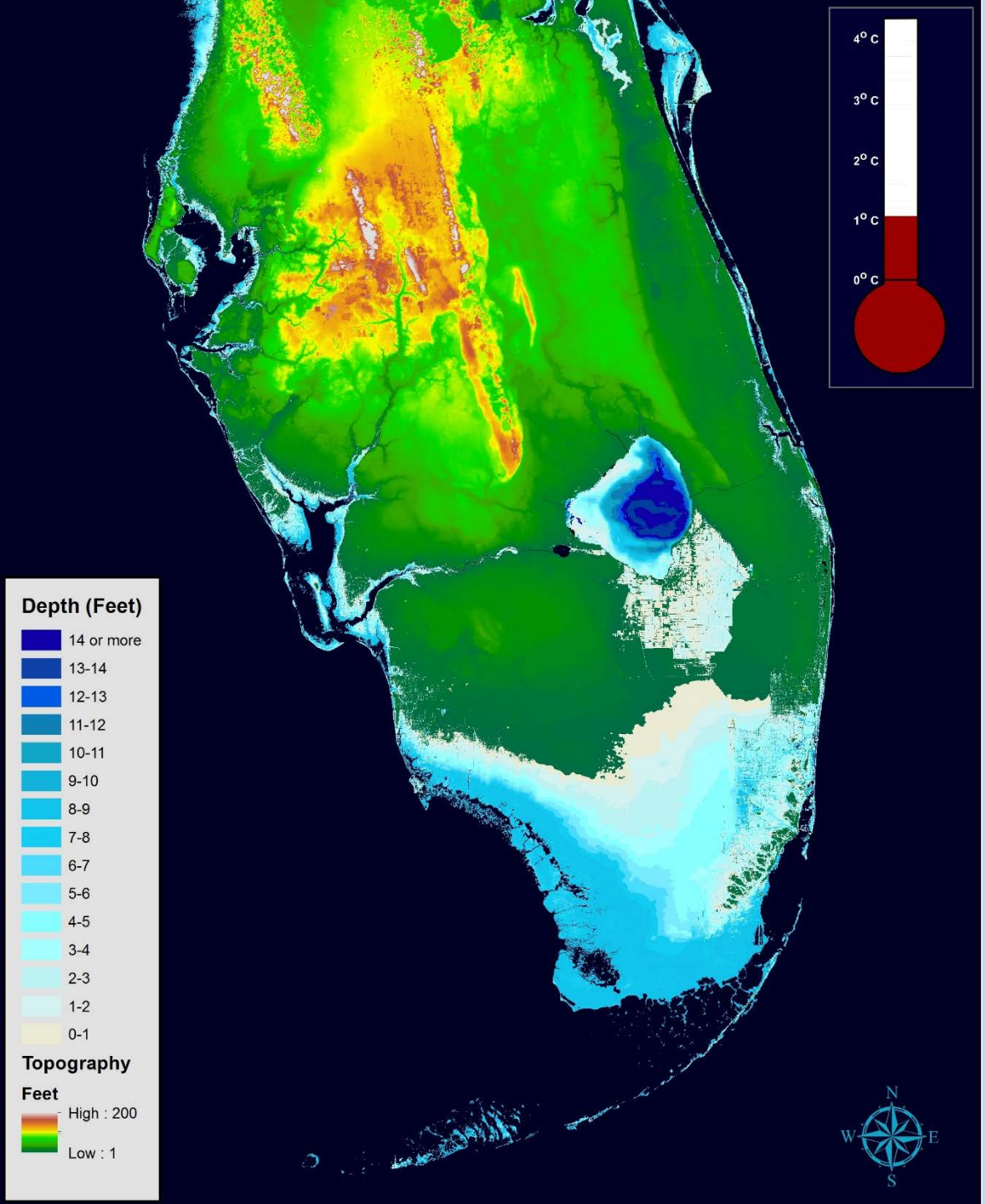
FIU, 2015



Southern Florida with 7 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015

Southern Florida with 8 feet of Sea Level Rise



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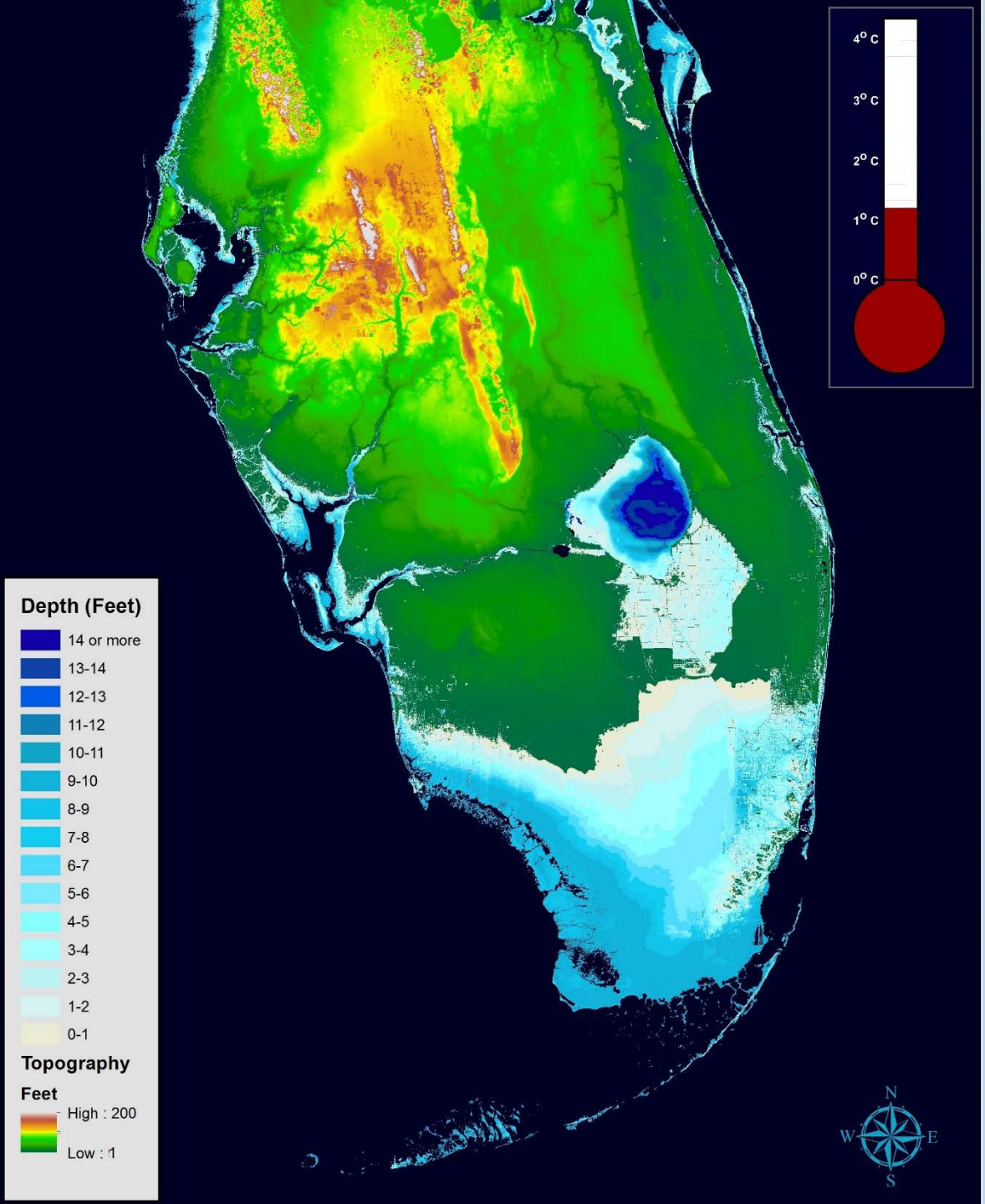
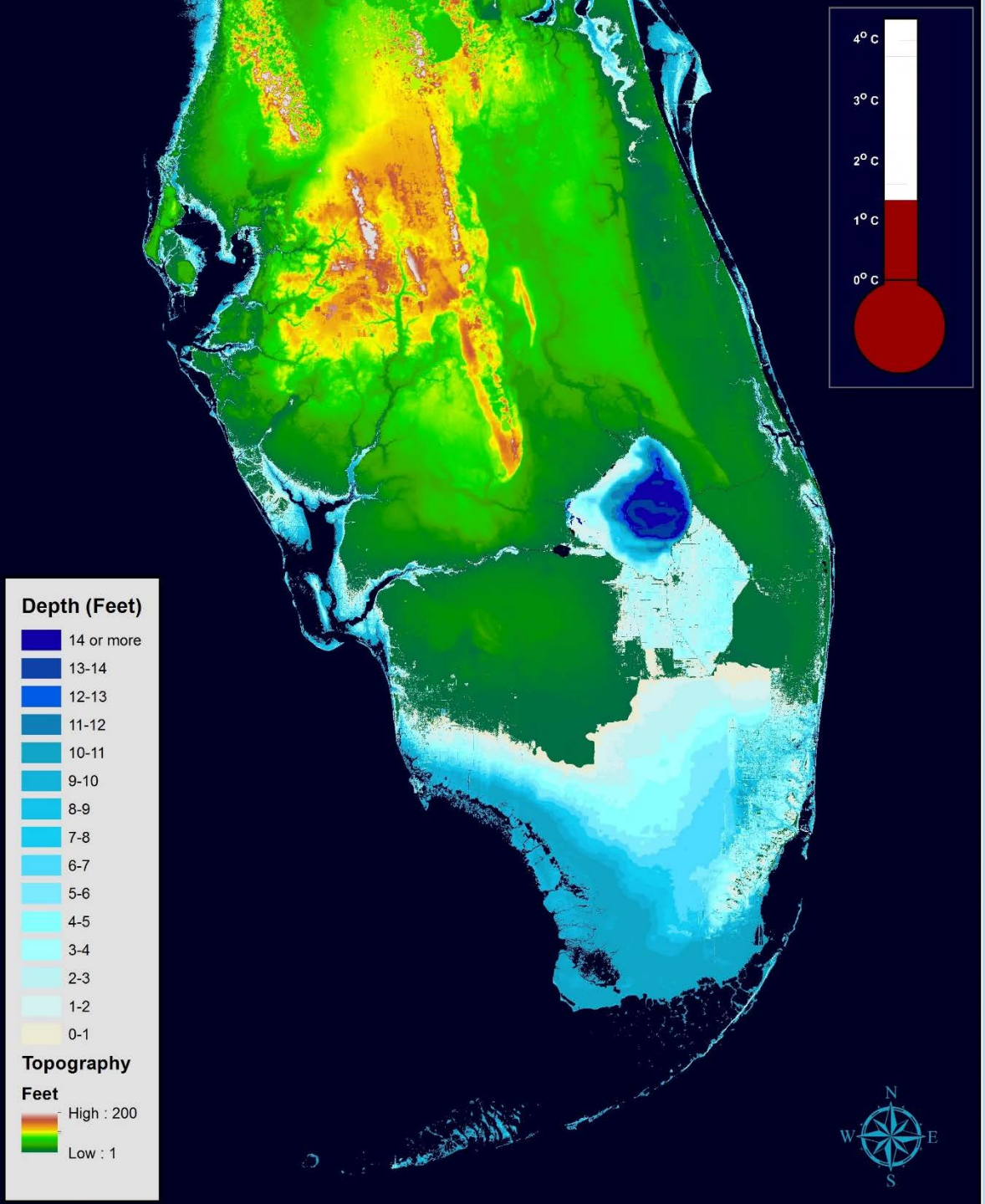


Southern Florida with 9 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015



Southern Florida with 10 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
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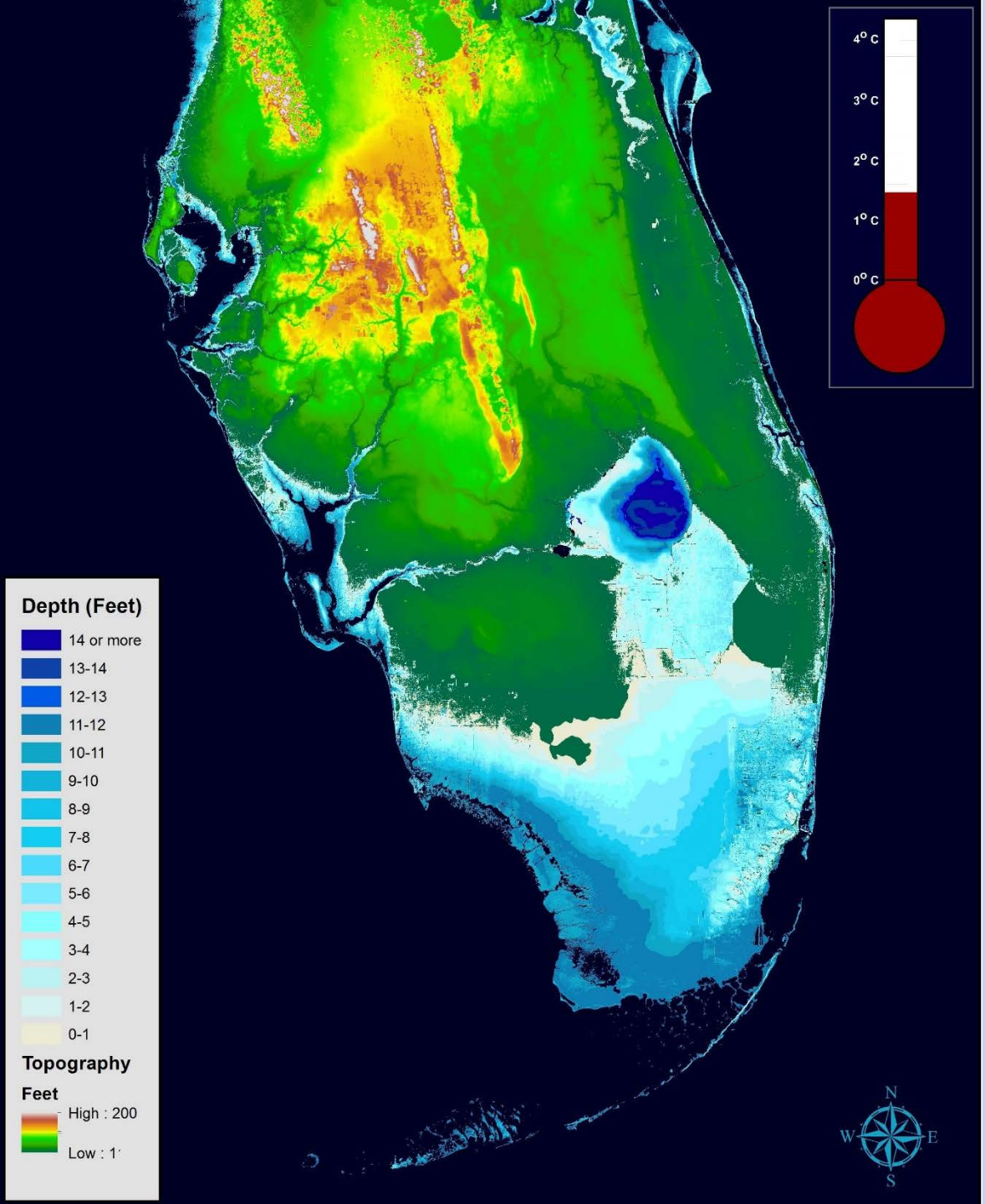
FIU, 2015



Southern Florida with 11 feet of Sea Level Rise

Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
FIU, 2015

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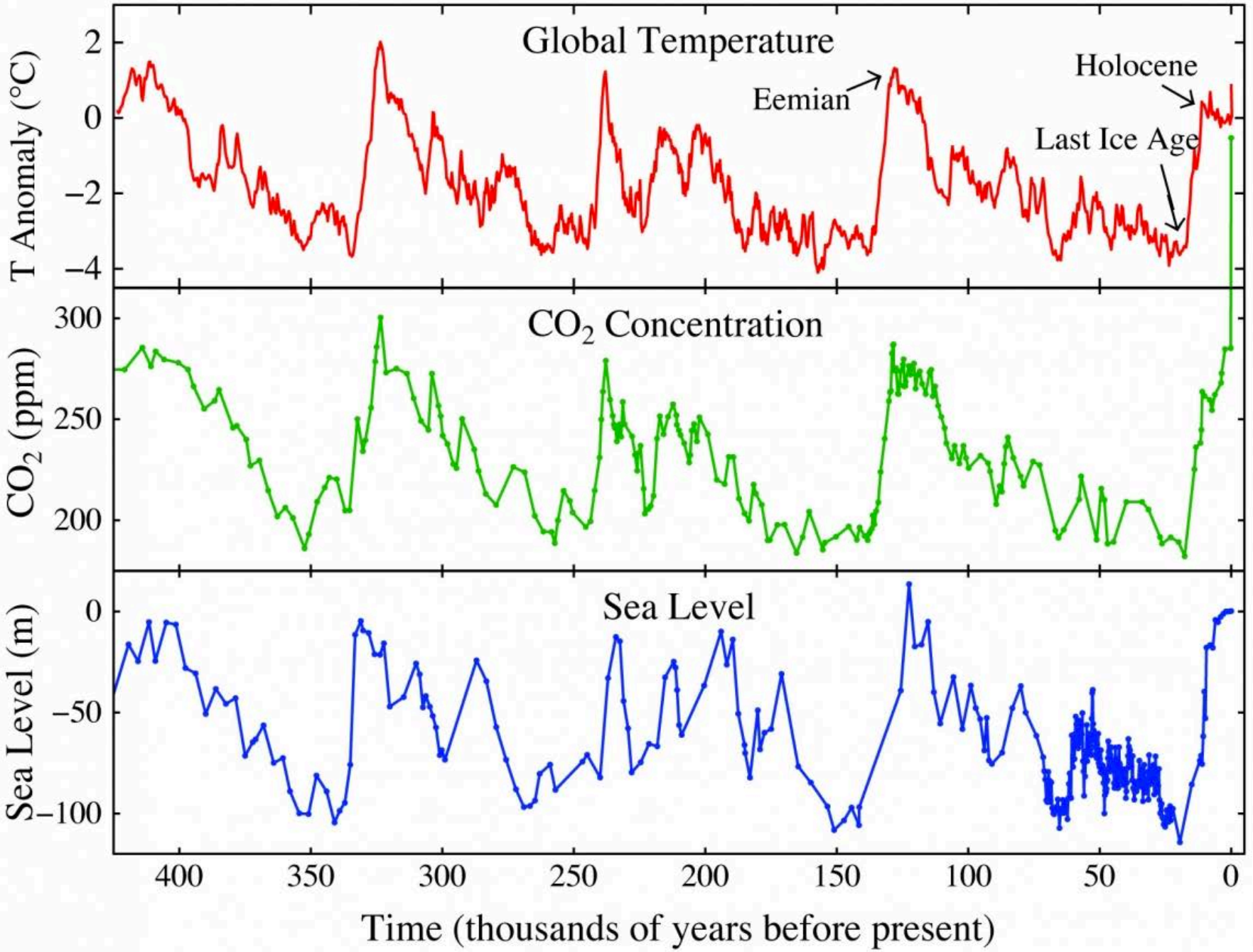
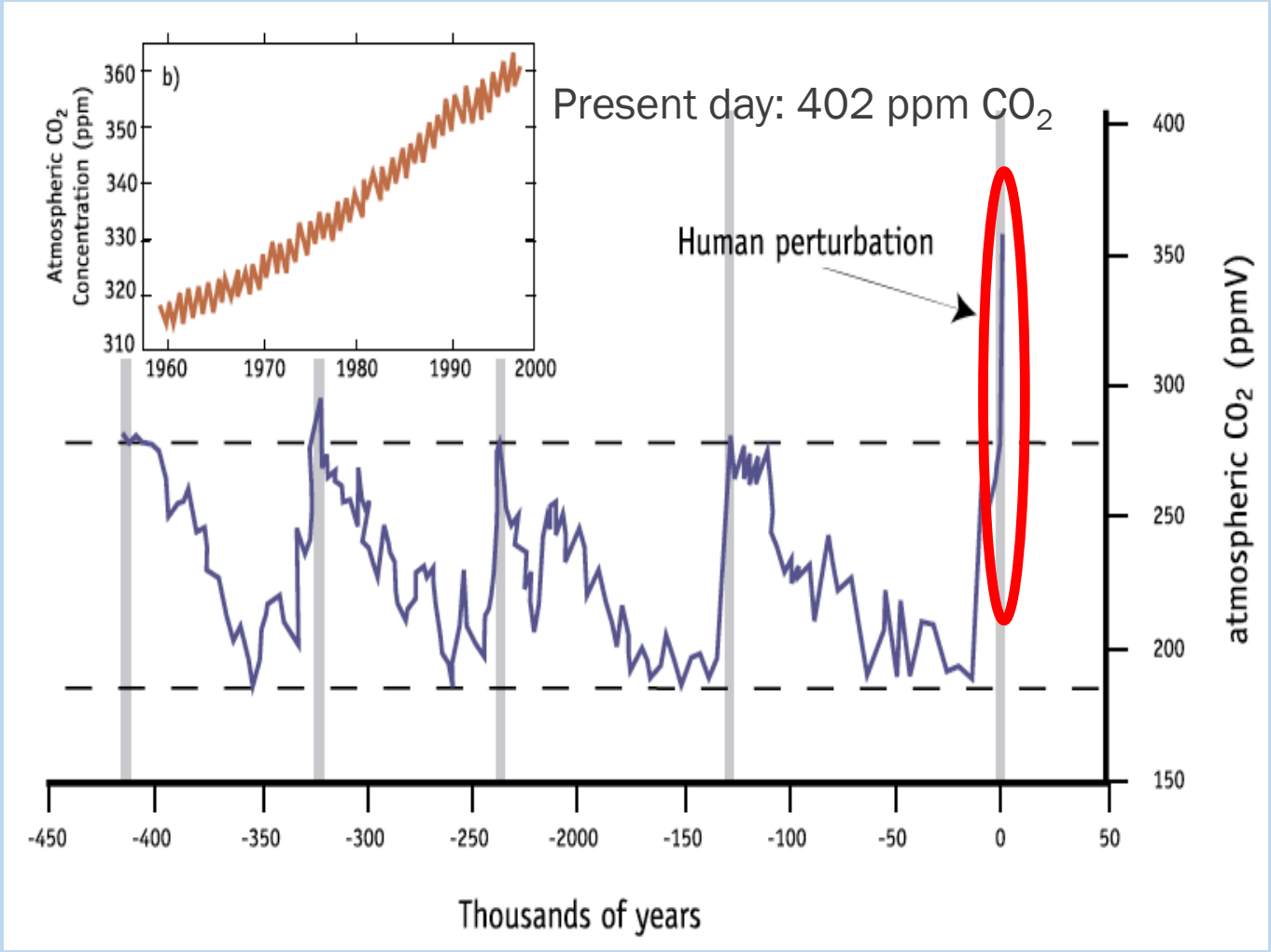
Understanding the Science and Data Behind the Maps:

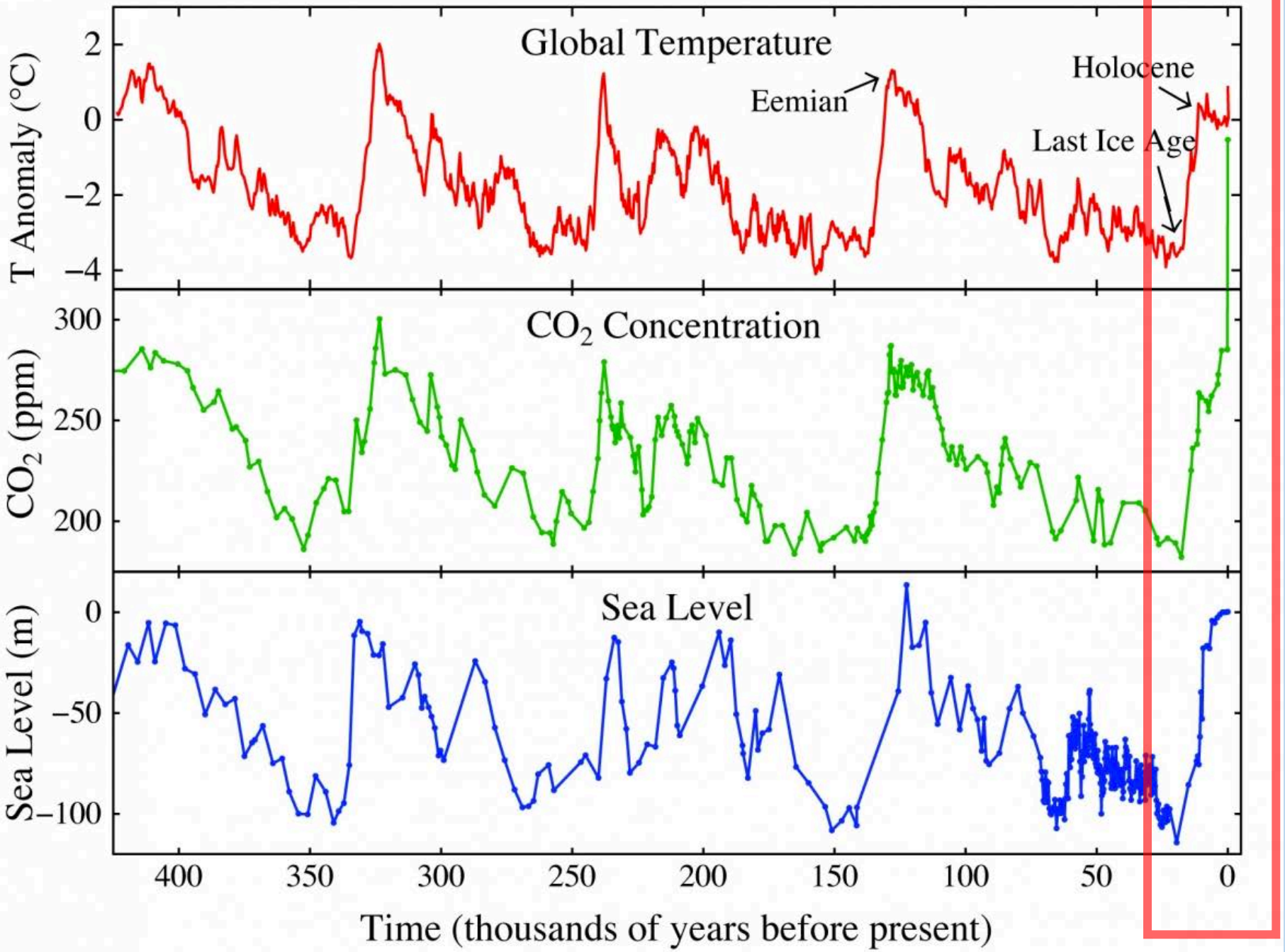
1) Historic patterns
2) Observations
Tide Gauges (1807-)
Satellites (1950-)
3) Models



courtesy Hansen and Sato; JohnEnglander.net

It’s not a natural cycle

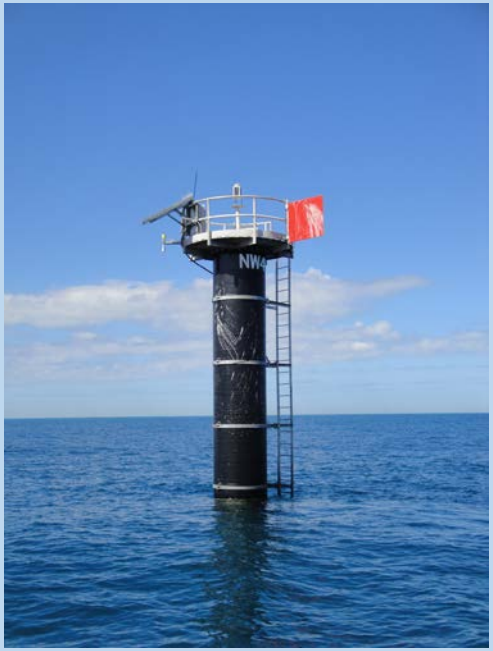


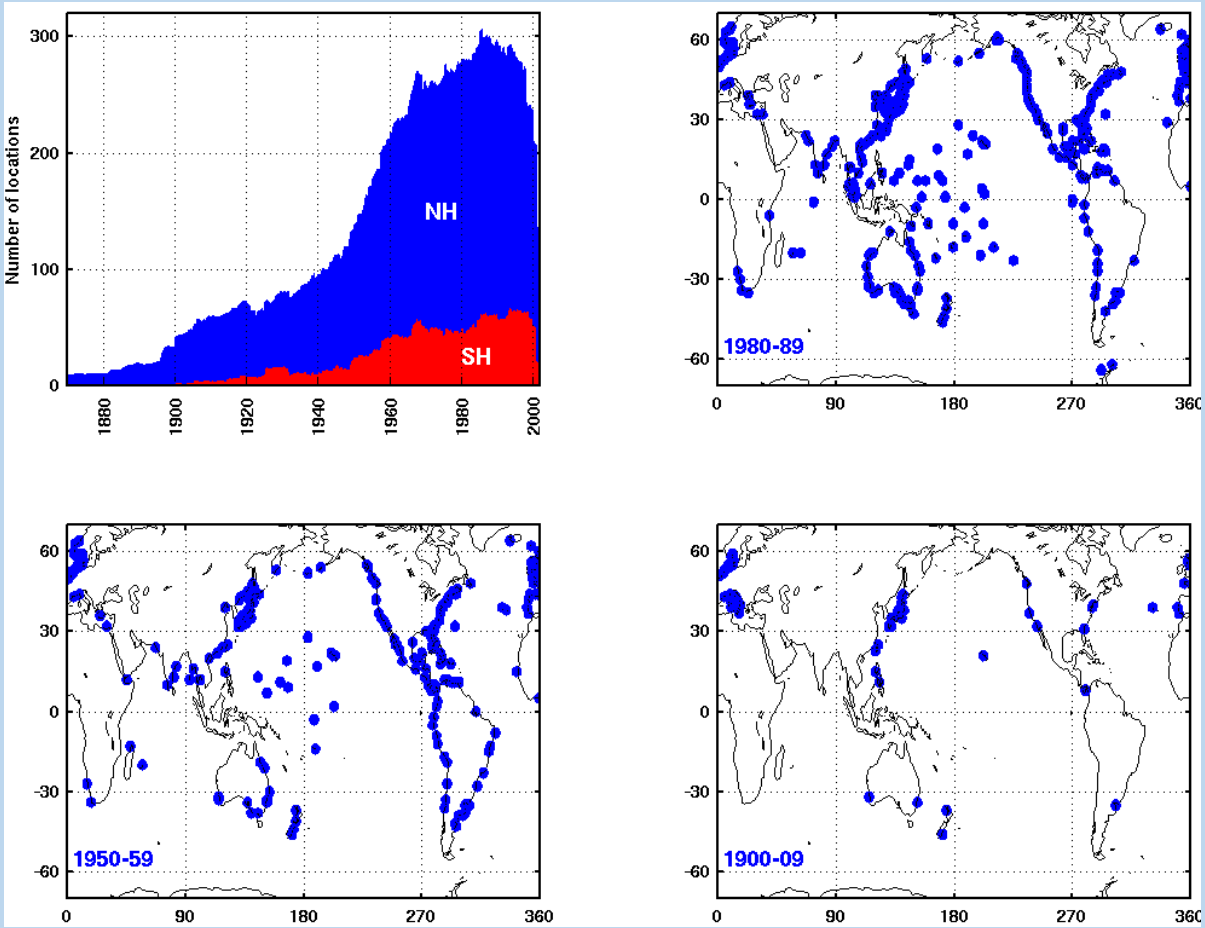


courtesy Hansen and Sato; JohnEnglander.net

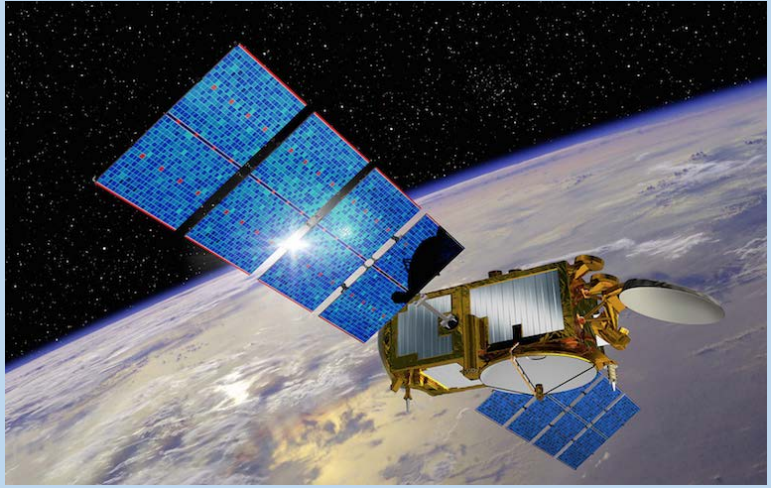
Tide Gauges

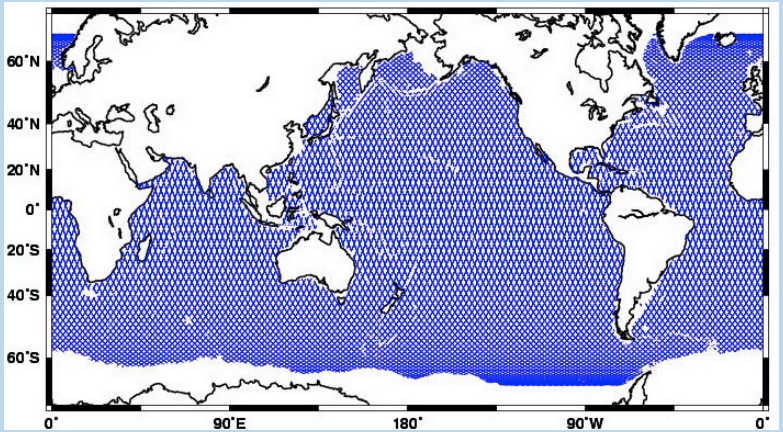
Tide gauge record – long record (1800s-), but poor spatial coverage.

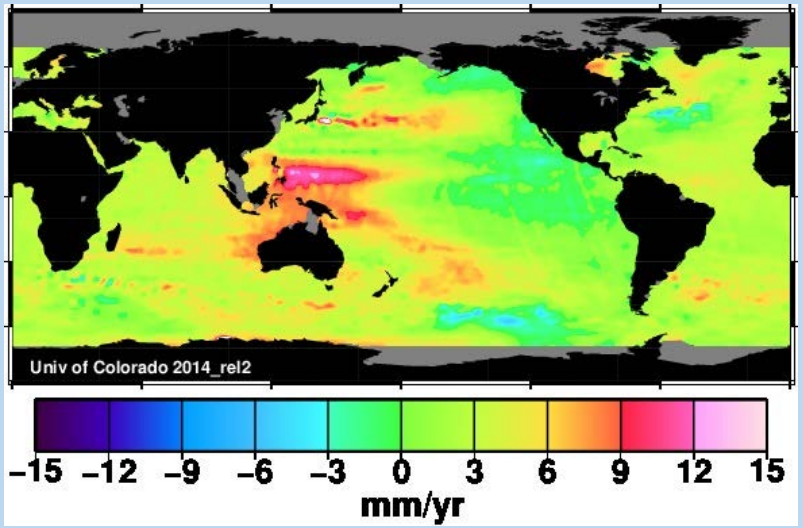


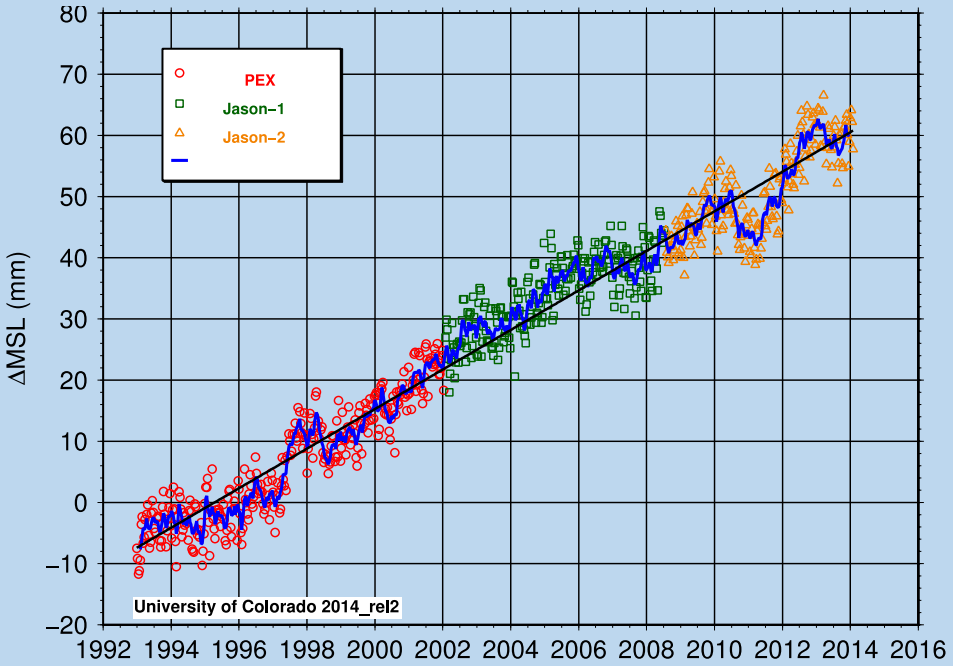


Satellite Altimetry



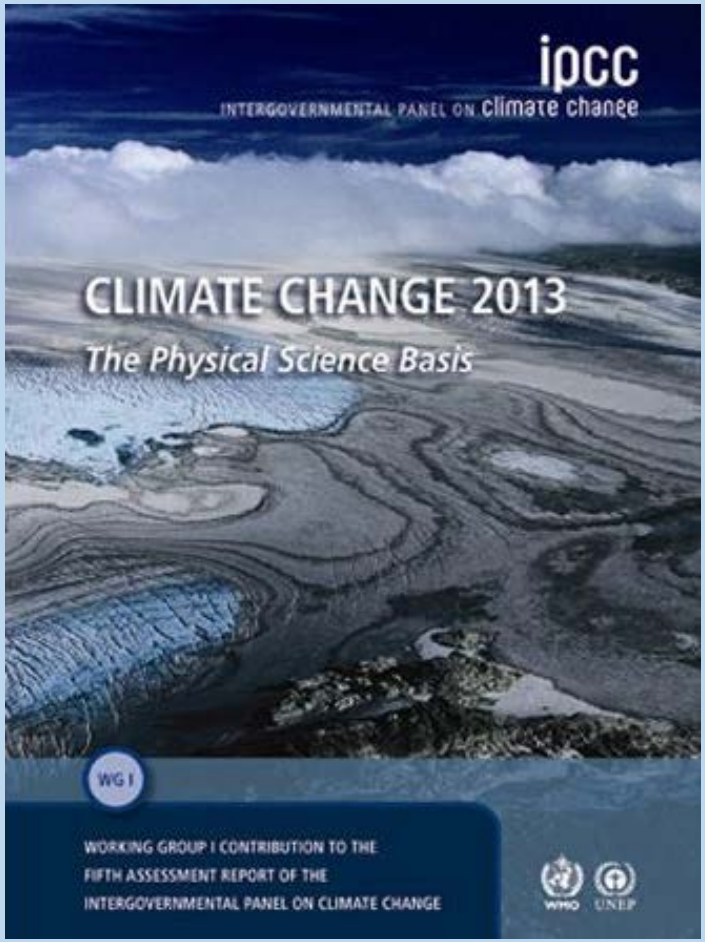


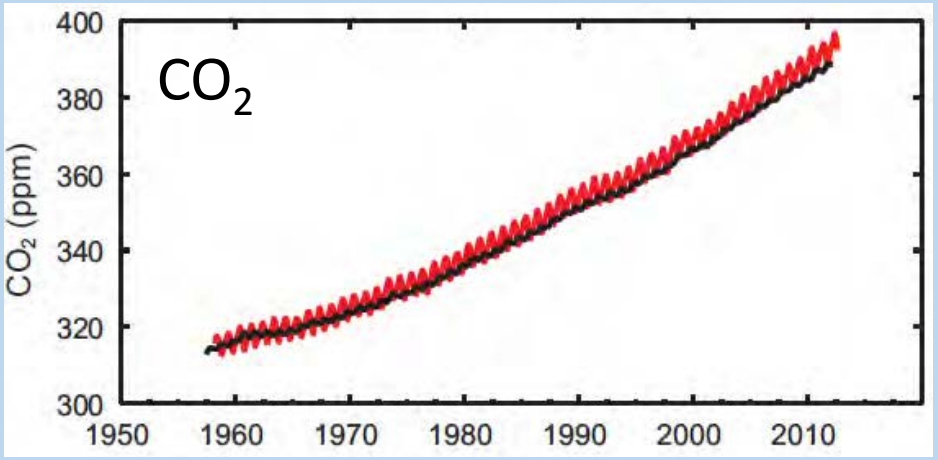


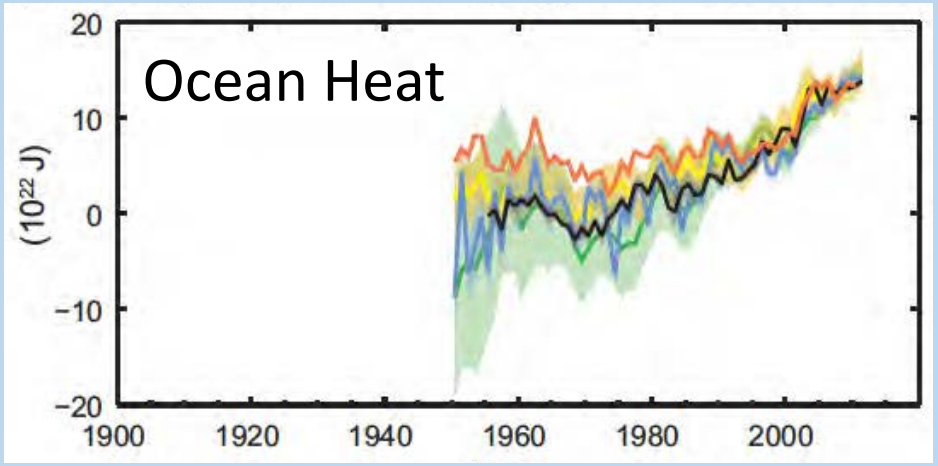


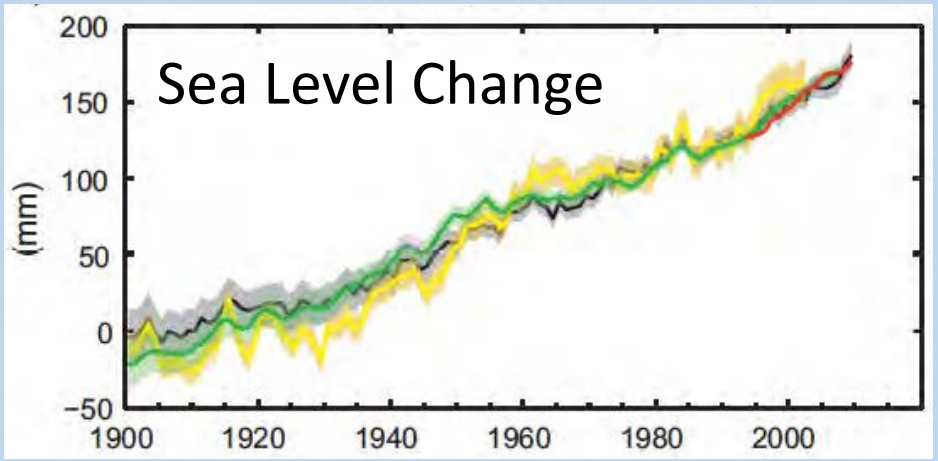
Satellite altimetry record – near-global coverage, but short record length (1993-)

Climate Change drives sea level rise









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Understanding the Science and Data Behind the Maps:

Models

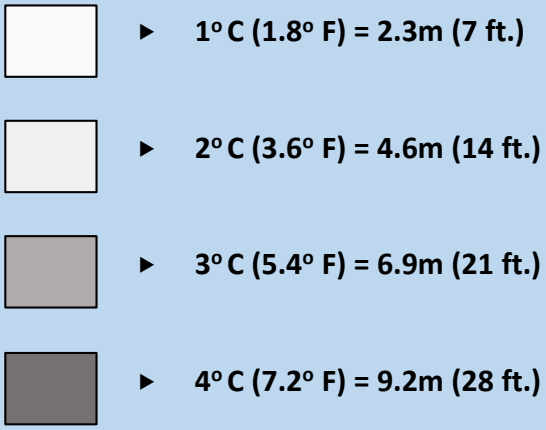
1. *Carbon dioxide increases temperature*
2. *Increased temperature increases ice melting*
   but also, thermal expansion
   and land subsidence due to agriculture, thawing, flooding

Temperature Anomaly vs. Sea Level Rise Commitment

Commitment levels are achieved when the ocean equilibrates to the combined effects of an expanding warming ocean, melting of land ice primarily at the poles, and other smaller drivers.

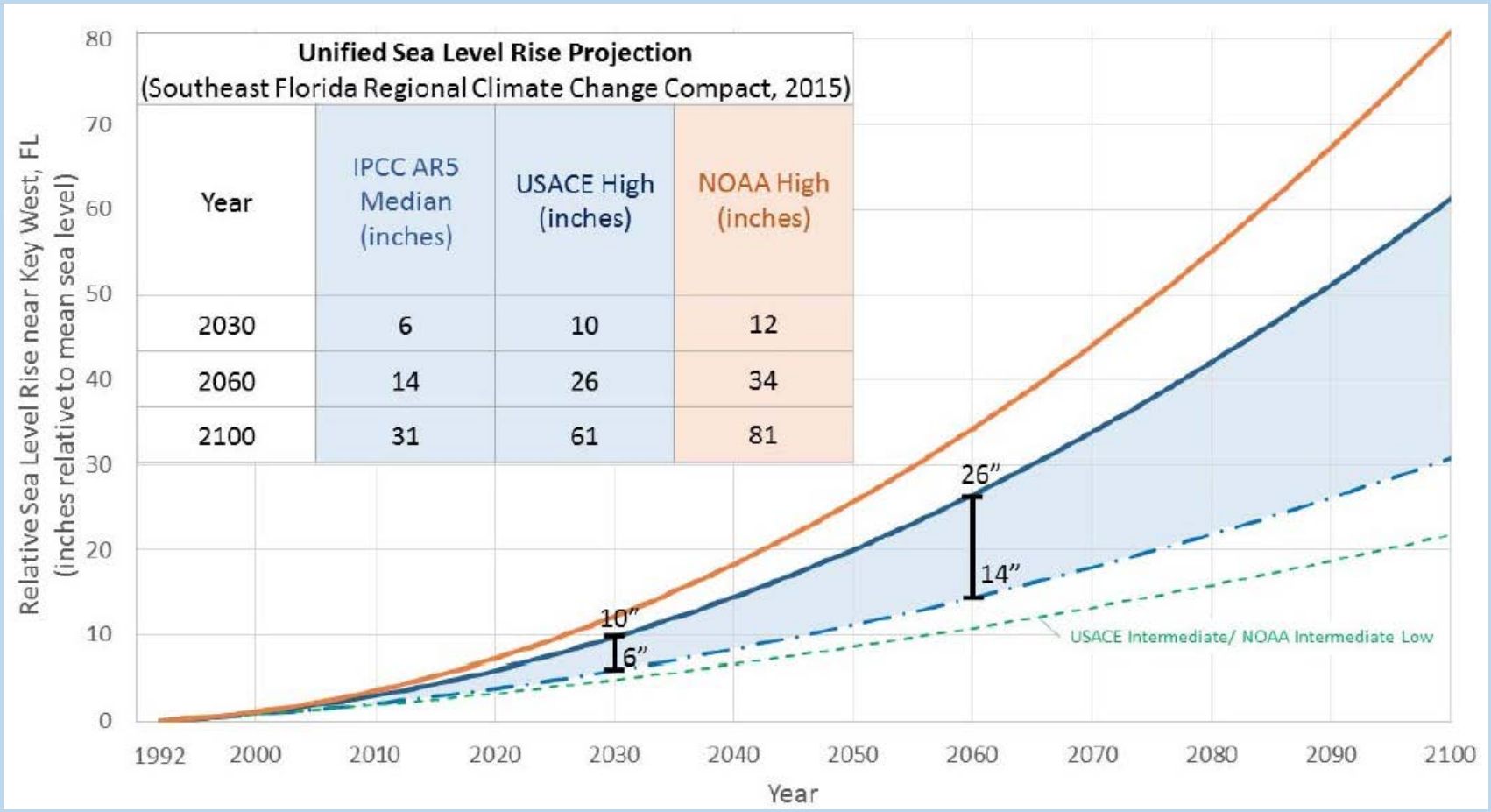
Levermann et al. in 2013 calculated that the commitment level relationship is:

1° C = 2.3 meters (7.5 feet) of committed SLR



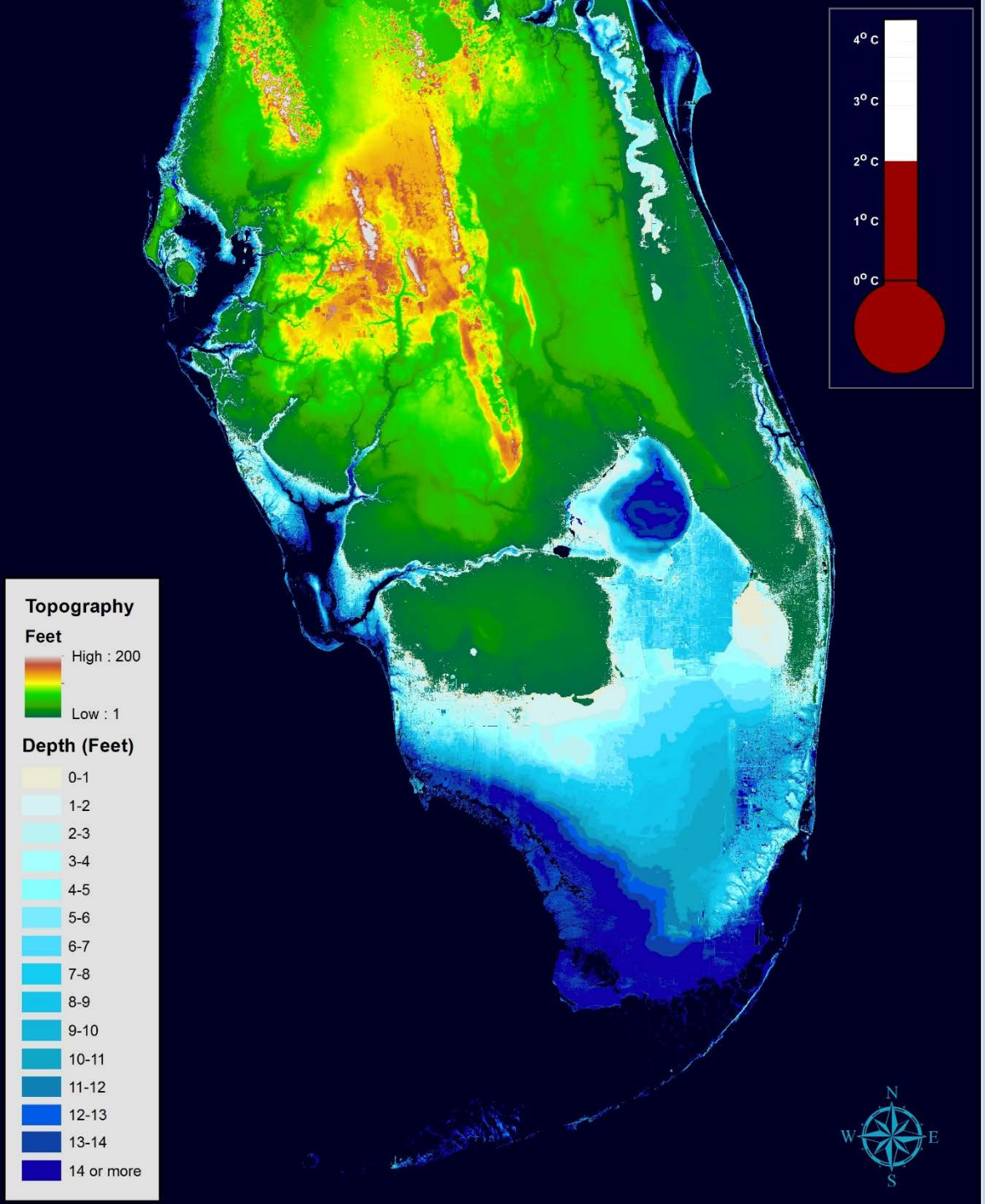
South Florida projections for SLR

Unified Southeast Florida Sea Level Rise Projection for Regional Planning Purposes



Compact 2015

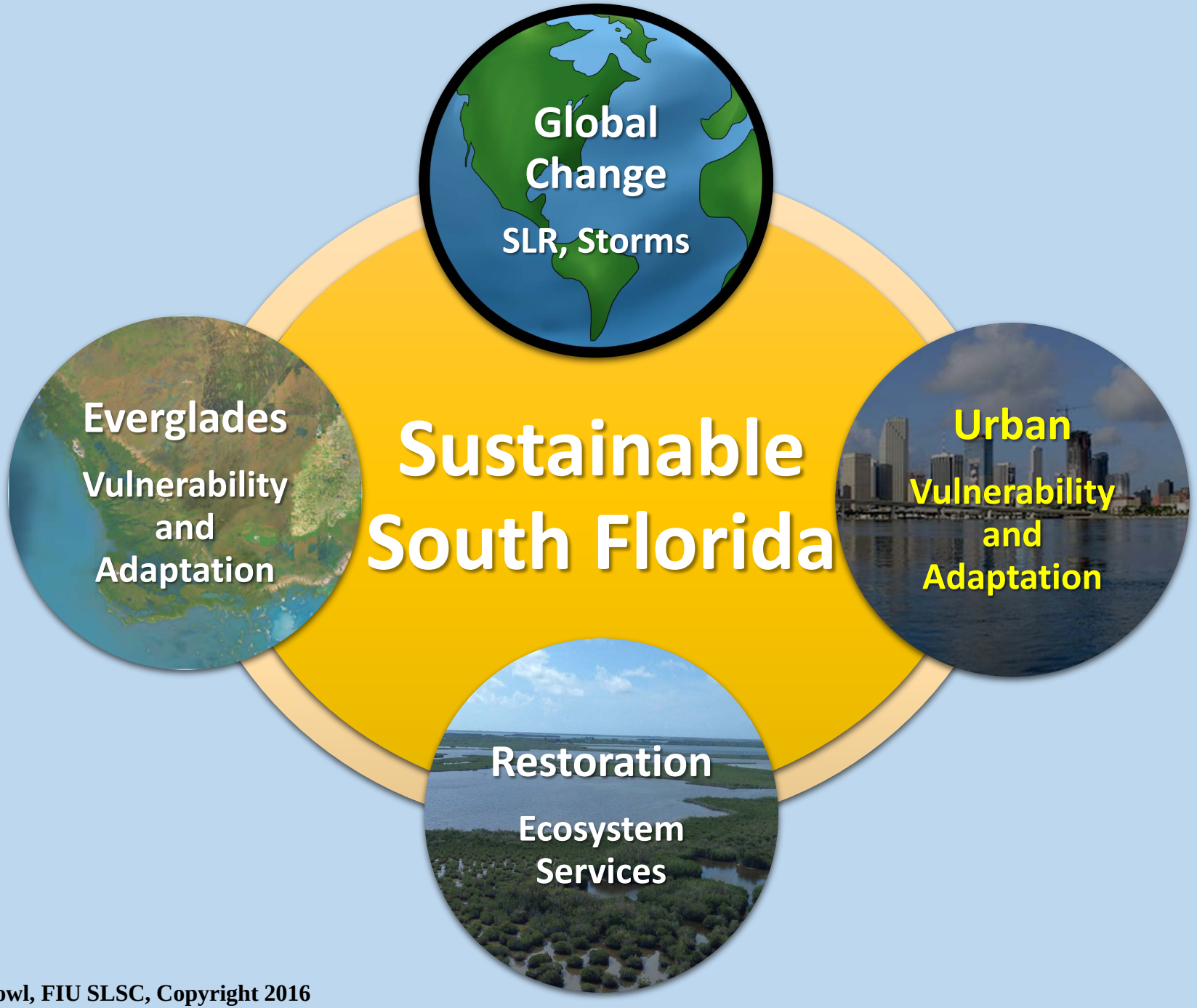
Southern Florida with 15 feet of Sea Level Rise

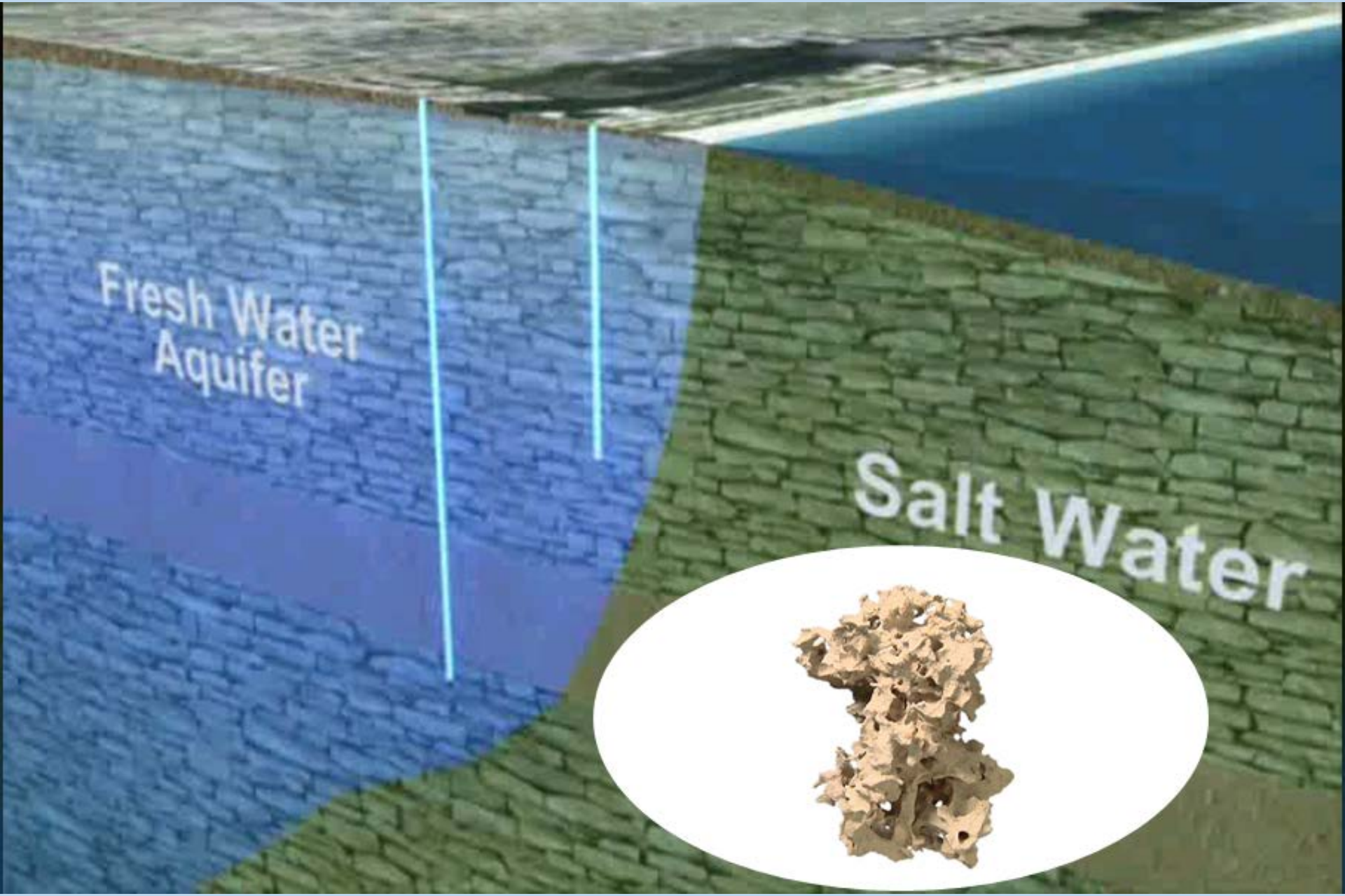


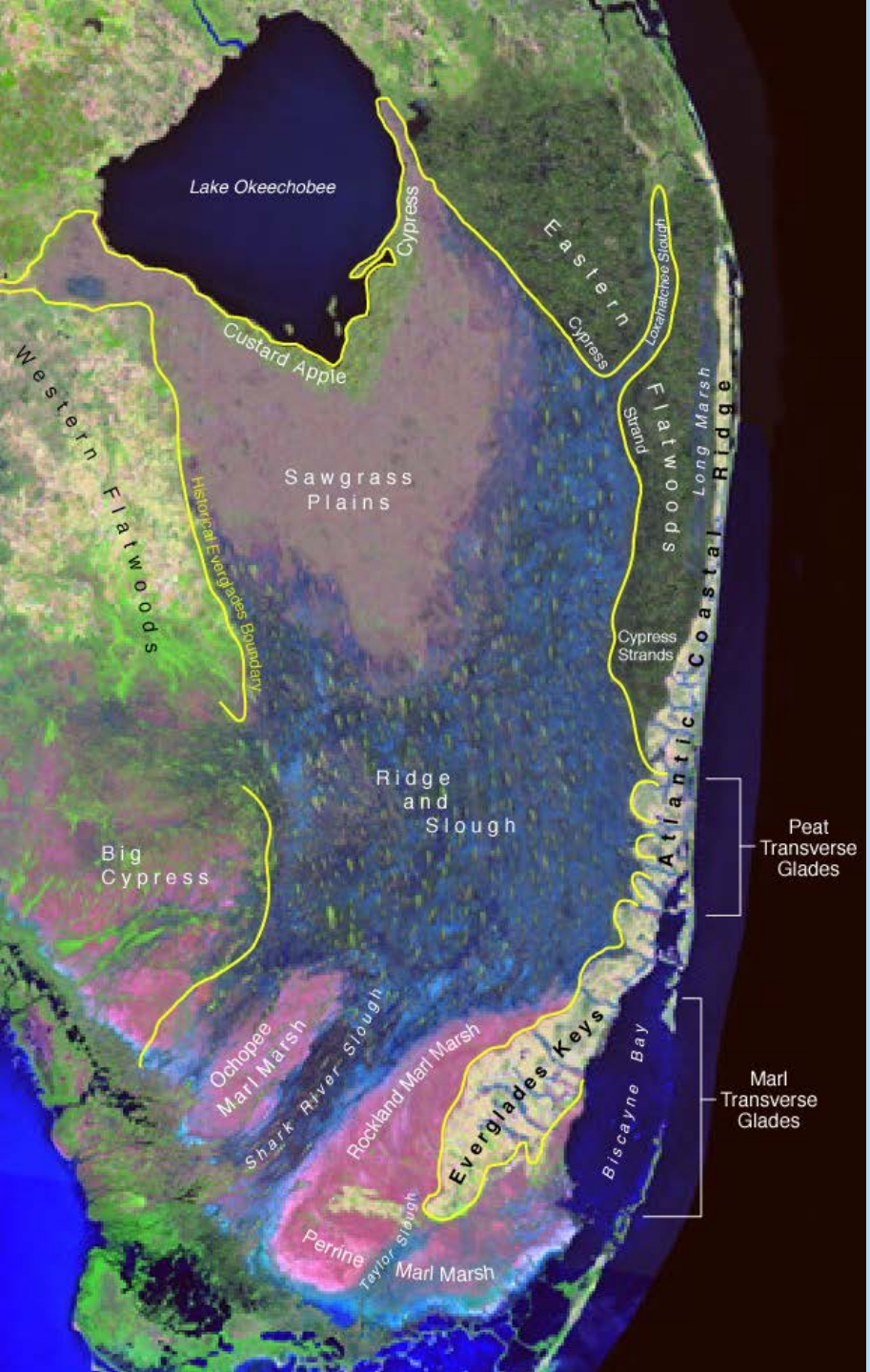
This is the estimated commitment level for a temperature rise of 2.0 degrees C.

This level will take a long time to realize because warming (expanding) the ocean and melting of polar ice to equilibration are much slower processes.

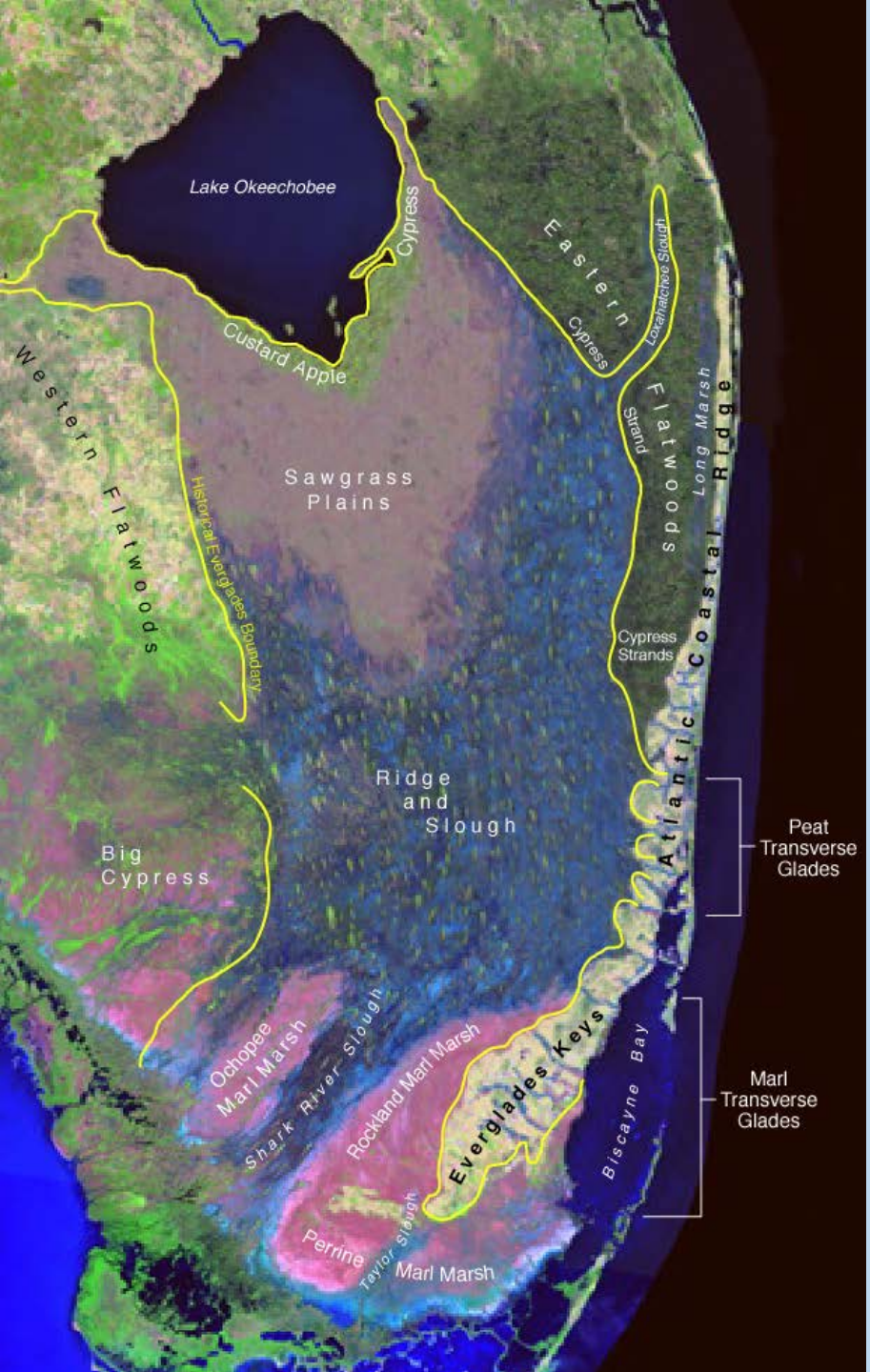
Map by Peter W. Harlem
GIS-RS Center and SLSC,
Florida International University
2015

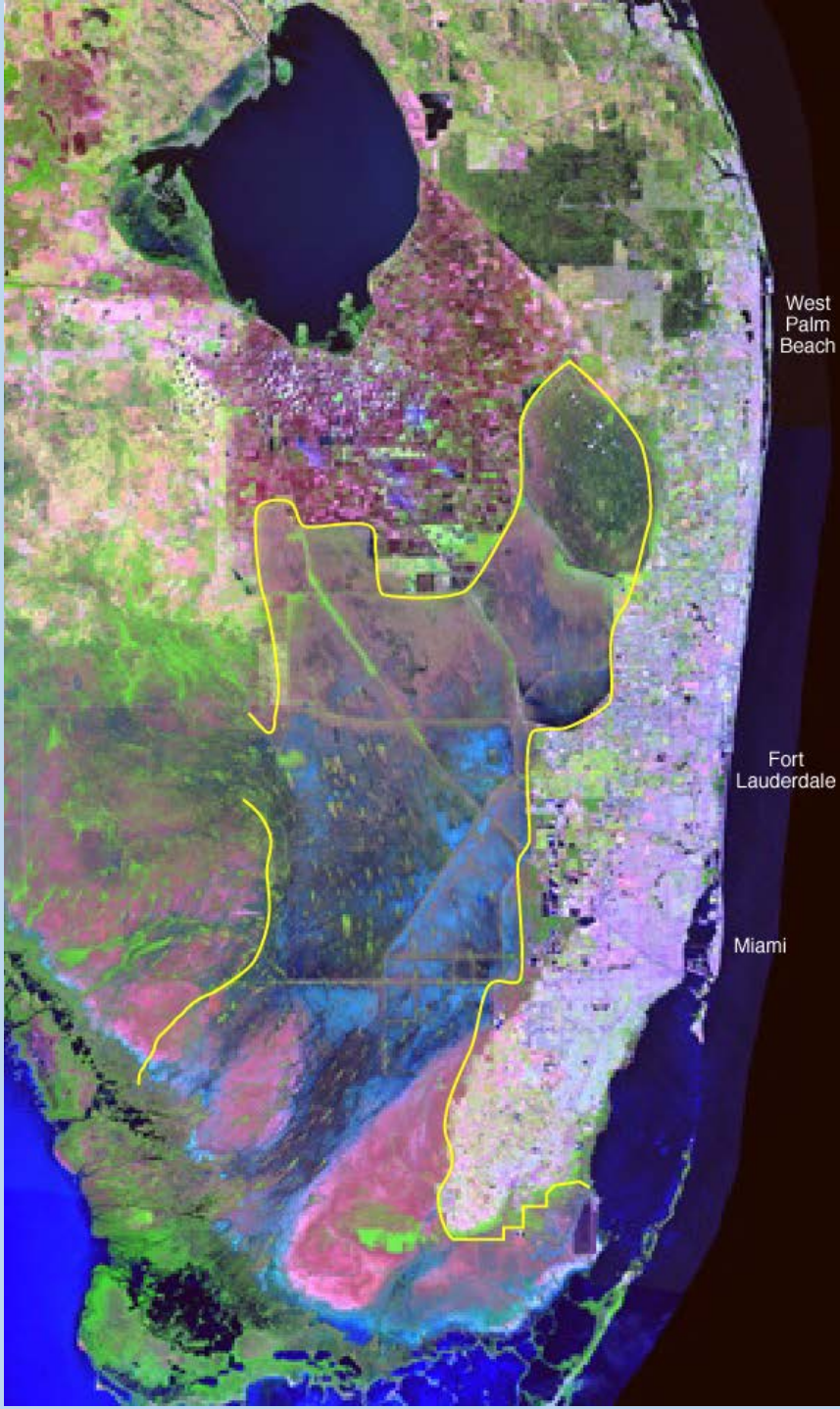






Todd Crowl, FIU SLSC, Copyright 2016





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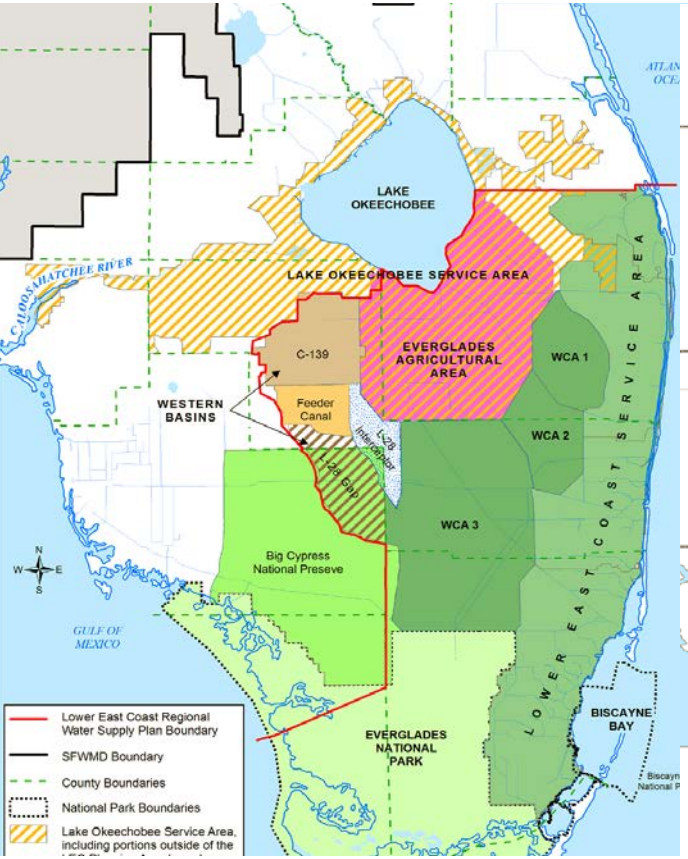
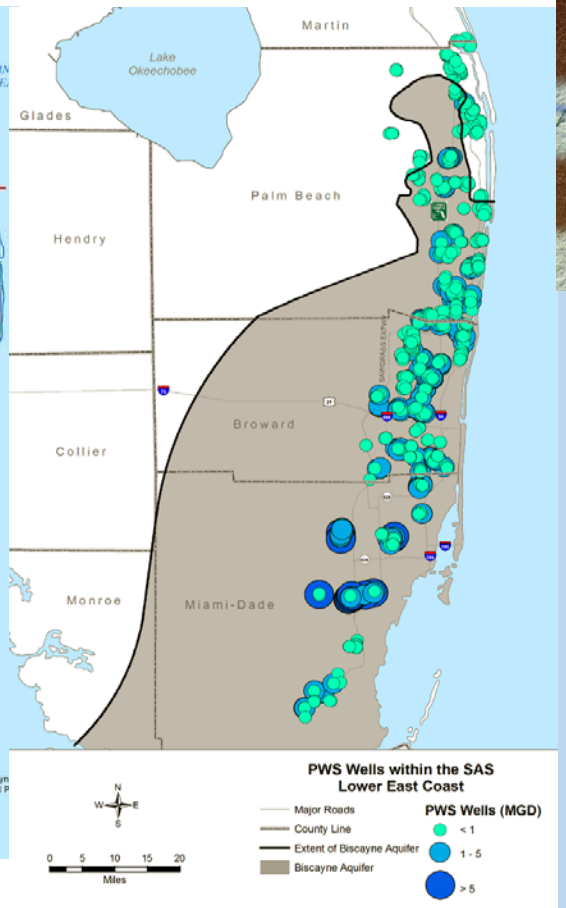
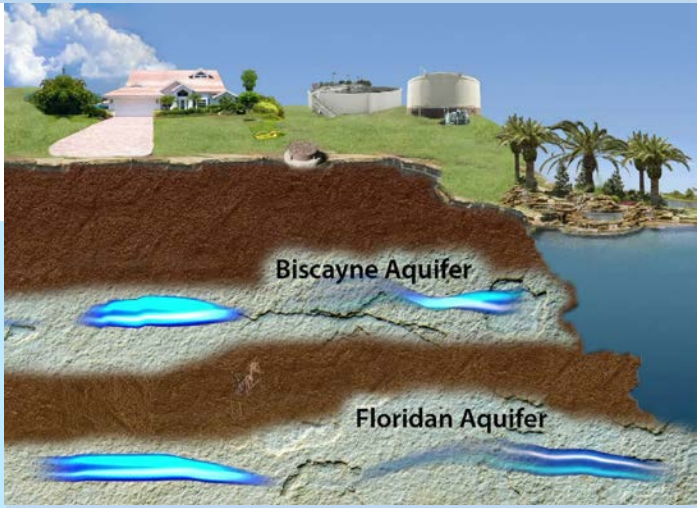
Implications for drinking water in south Florida

Water from Lake Okeechobee, the Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) and the C&SF Canals recharge the Biscayne Aquifer



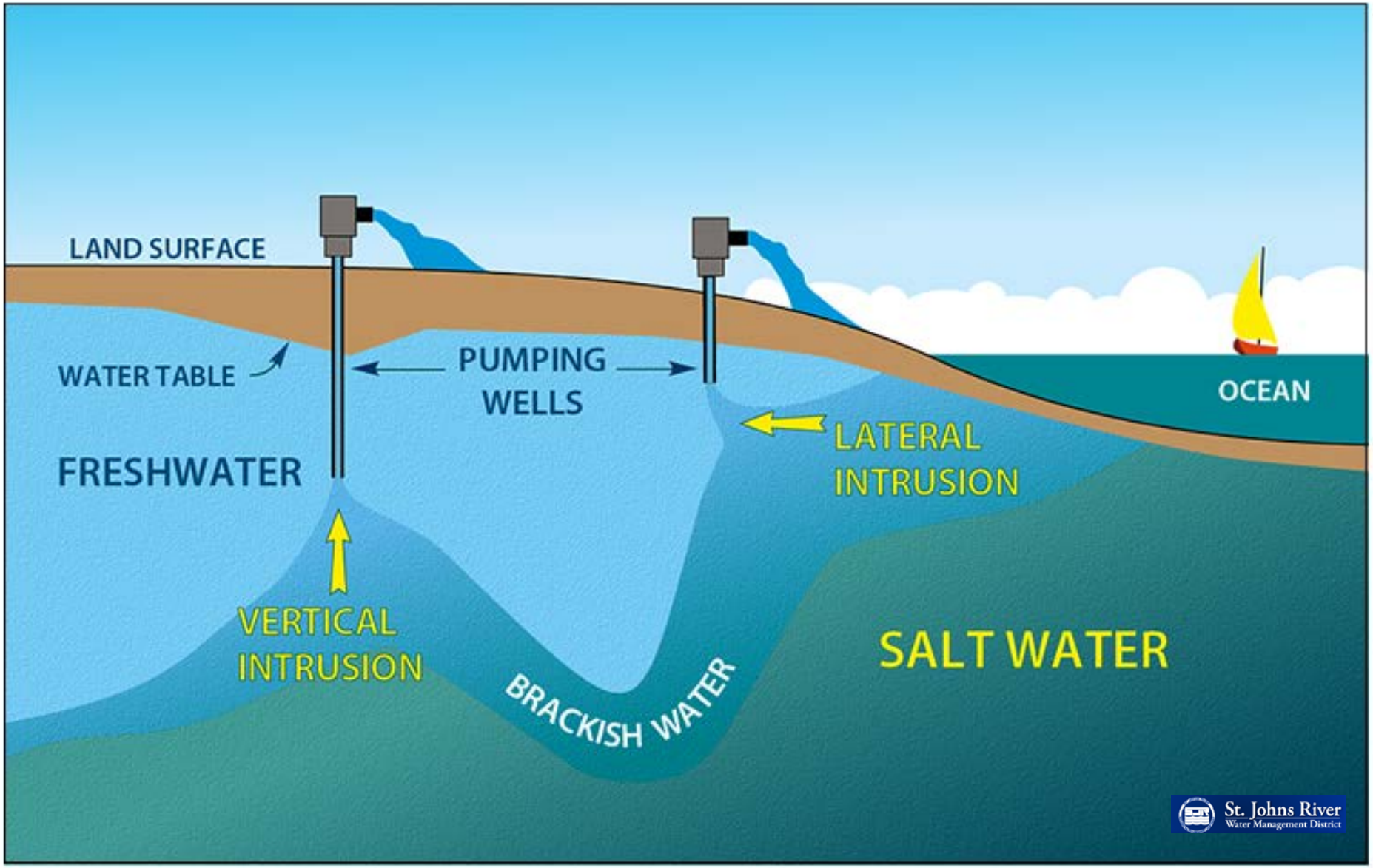
SFWMD

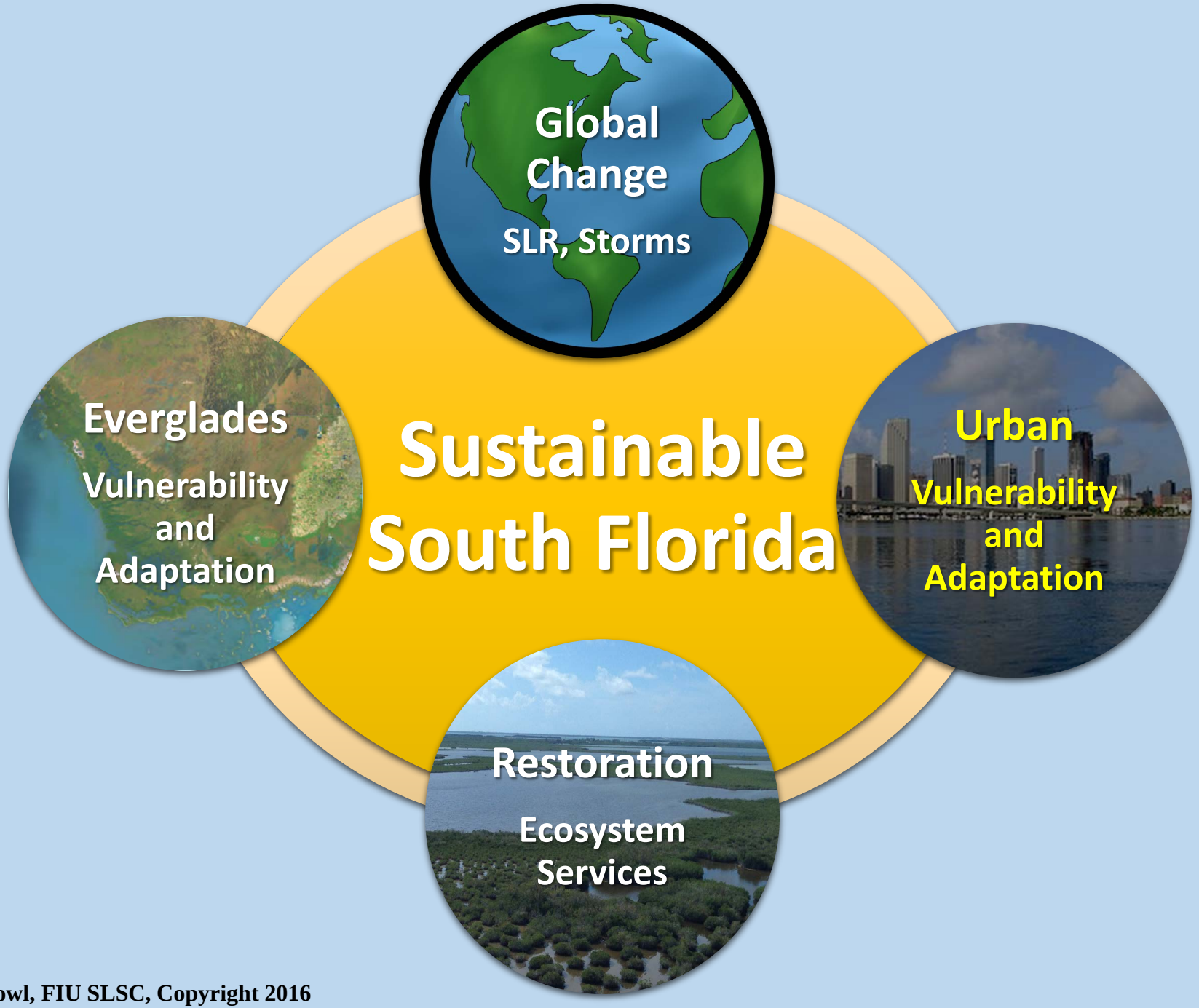




The Biscayne Aquifer supplies 90% of the south Florida's drinking water -- more than 8 billion gallons of water each day.

Saltwater intrusion from freshwater extraction





Two Levels of Response:

1. Mitigation - direct intervention such as reducing carbon emissions; Long-time frame

2. Adaptation - modifying infrastructure or behavior to adjust to rising temperatures and sea level, increased coastal flooding and perturbation of weather patterns; Immediate and short-time frame

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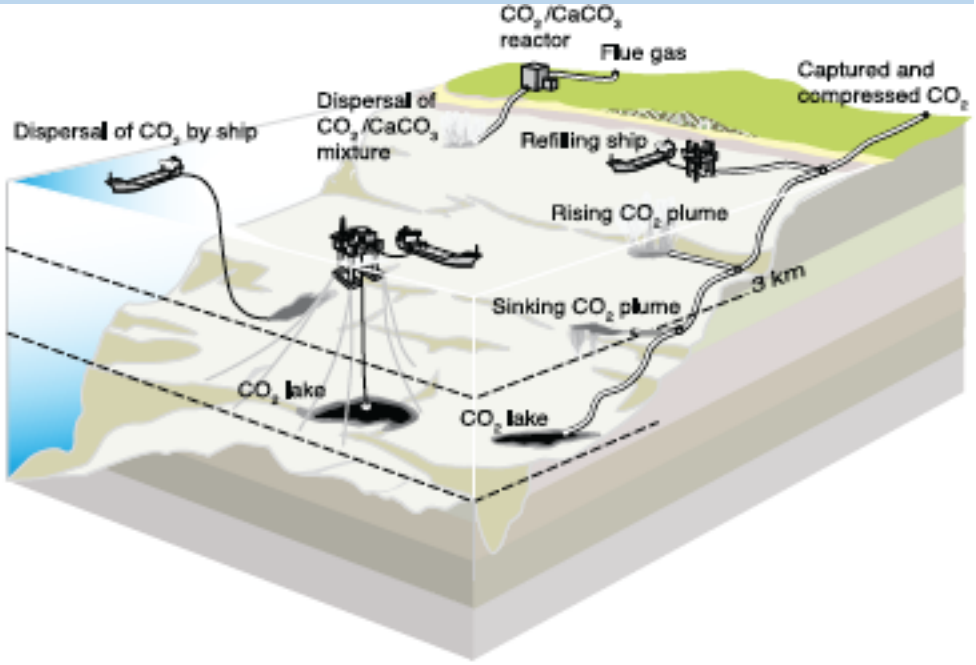
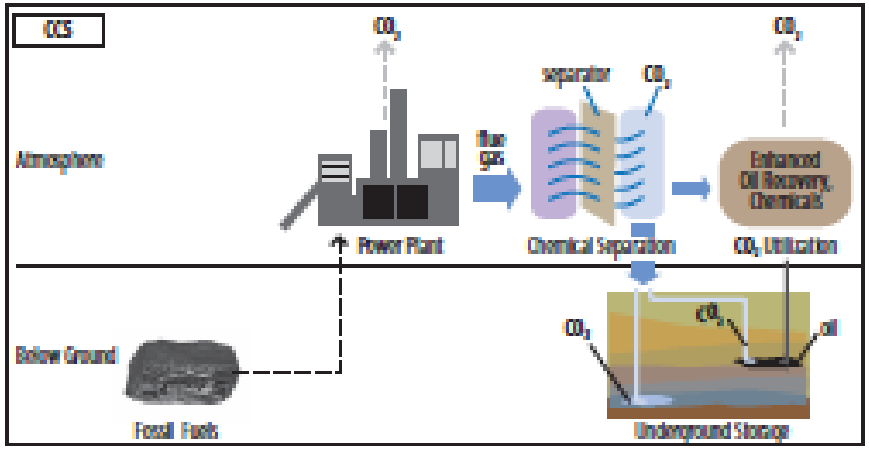
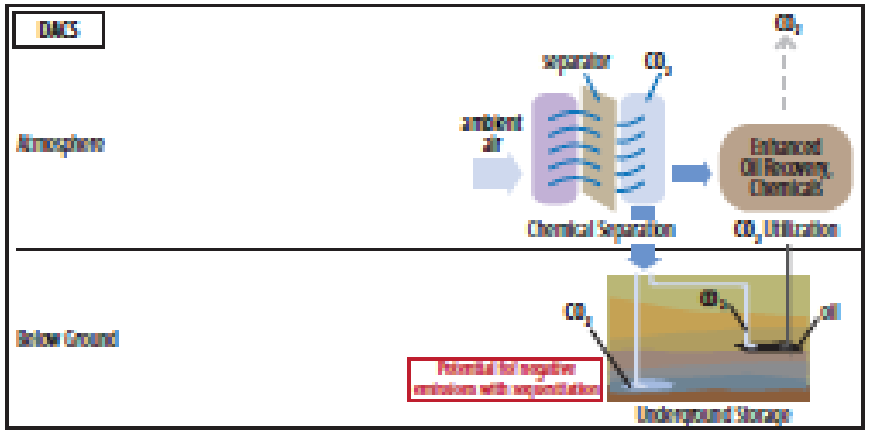
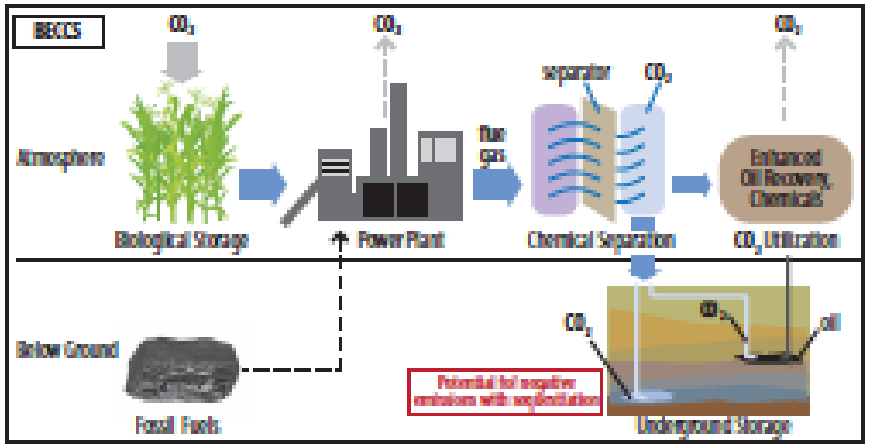








Coral Gables Proposed Sustainability Plan GOALS:

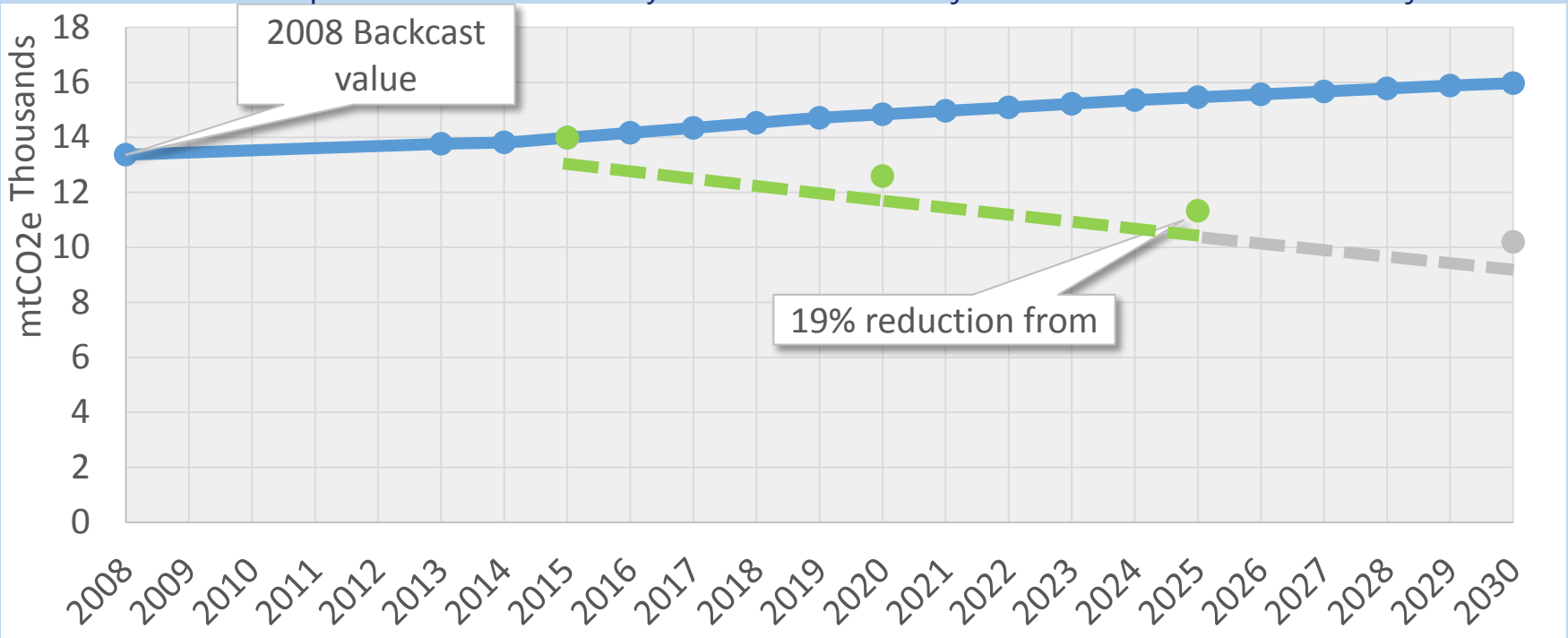
Goals by Focus Area

Focus Area	Action	Metric	Baseline	Completion
Energy	Reduce electricity use	20%	below 2013 levels	by 2025
Water	Reduce water consumption	20%	below 2013 levels	by 2025
Materials	Divert solid waste*	75%		by 2020
Fleet	Reduce fossil fuel use	20%	below 2013 levels	by 2025
Climate	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions	20%	below 2013 levels	by 2025
Others	Of total projects**, implement	100%		by 2025

**City operations and single family residential waste*
***as identified in the Coral Gables Sustainability Management Plan*

RESULTS: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

Local Government Operations GHG Inventory and Forecast w/ Projected Reductions from Plan Projects



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Eyes on the Rise

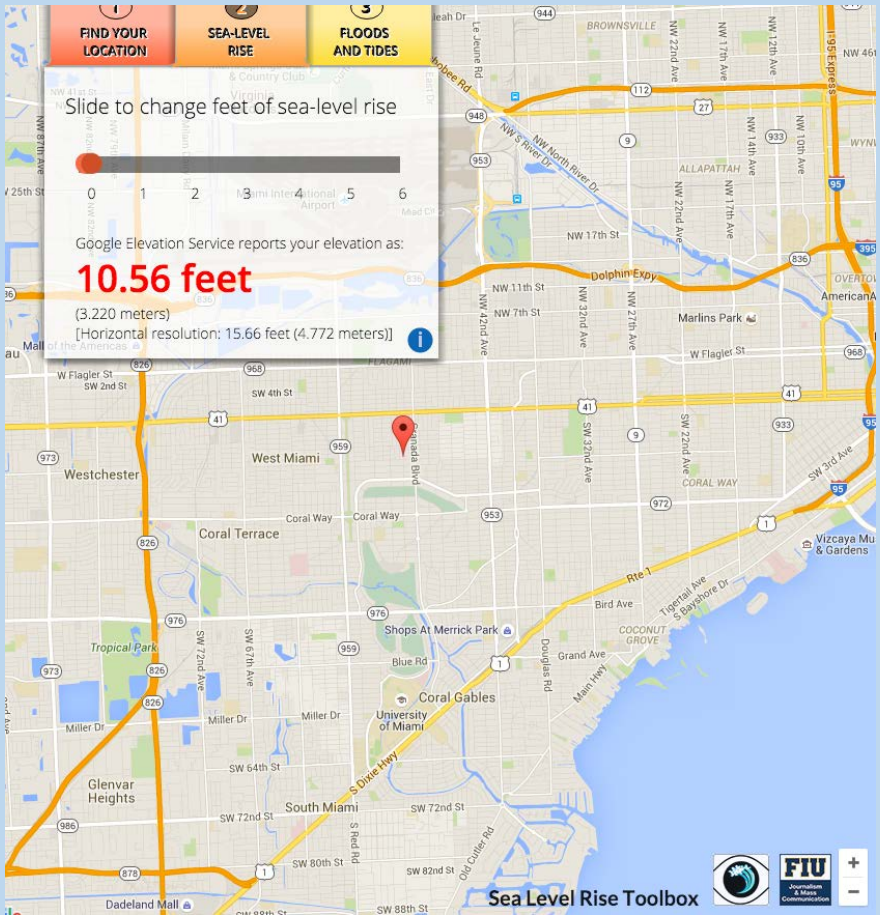
Sea Level Rise South Florida

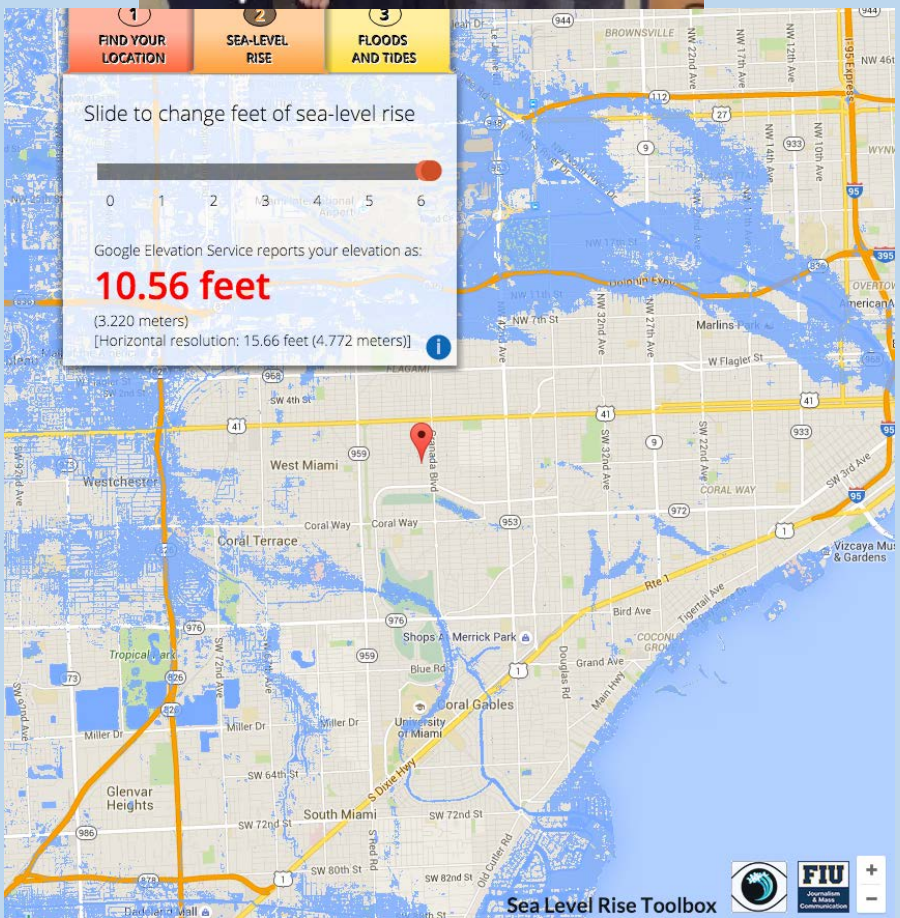
http://www.eyesontherise.org/

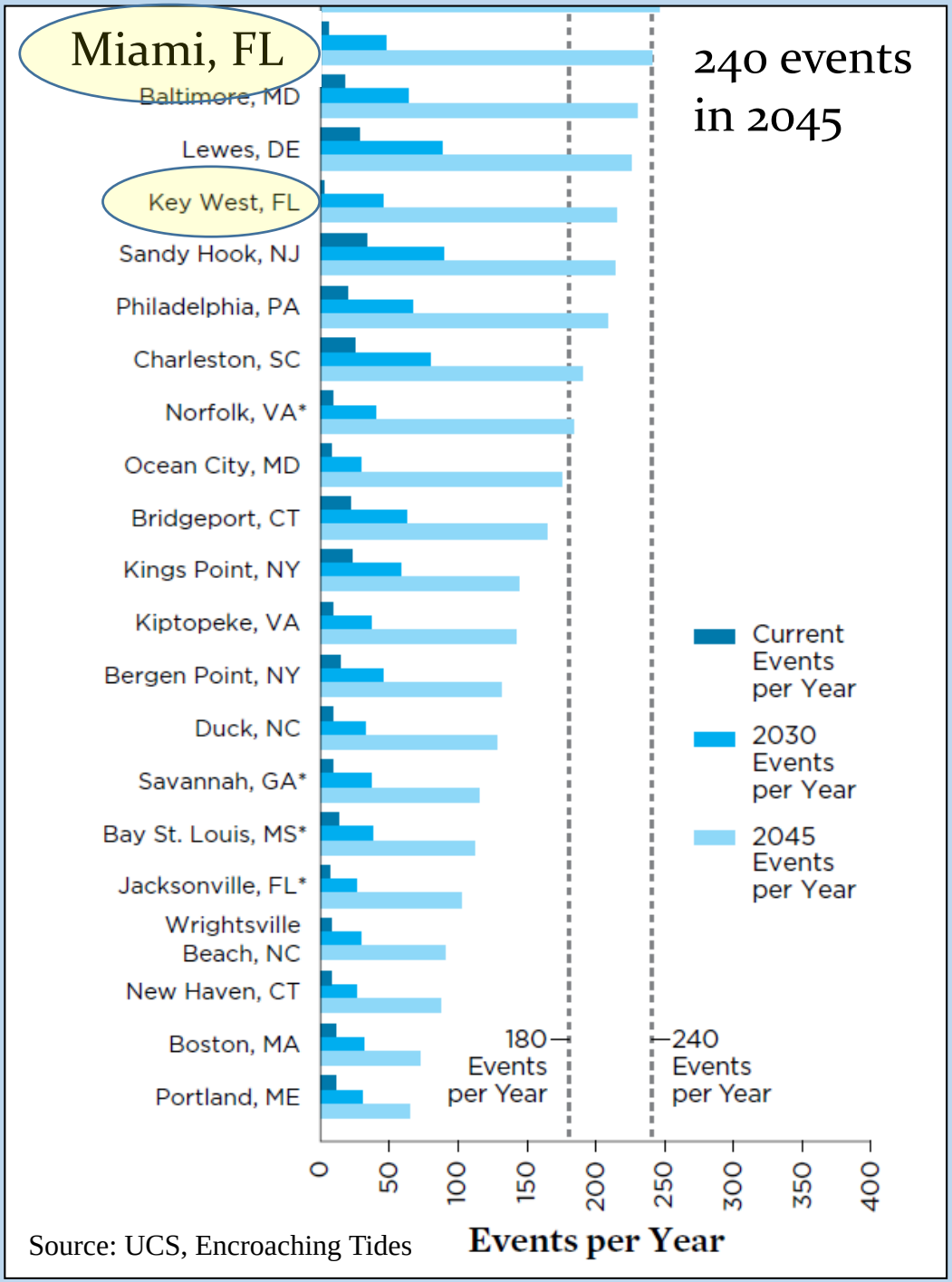
Juliet Pinto, Kate MacMillin, and Susan Jacobson

FIU Journalism & Mass Communication

Todd Crowl, FIU SLSC,







Source: UCS, Encroaching Tides

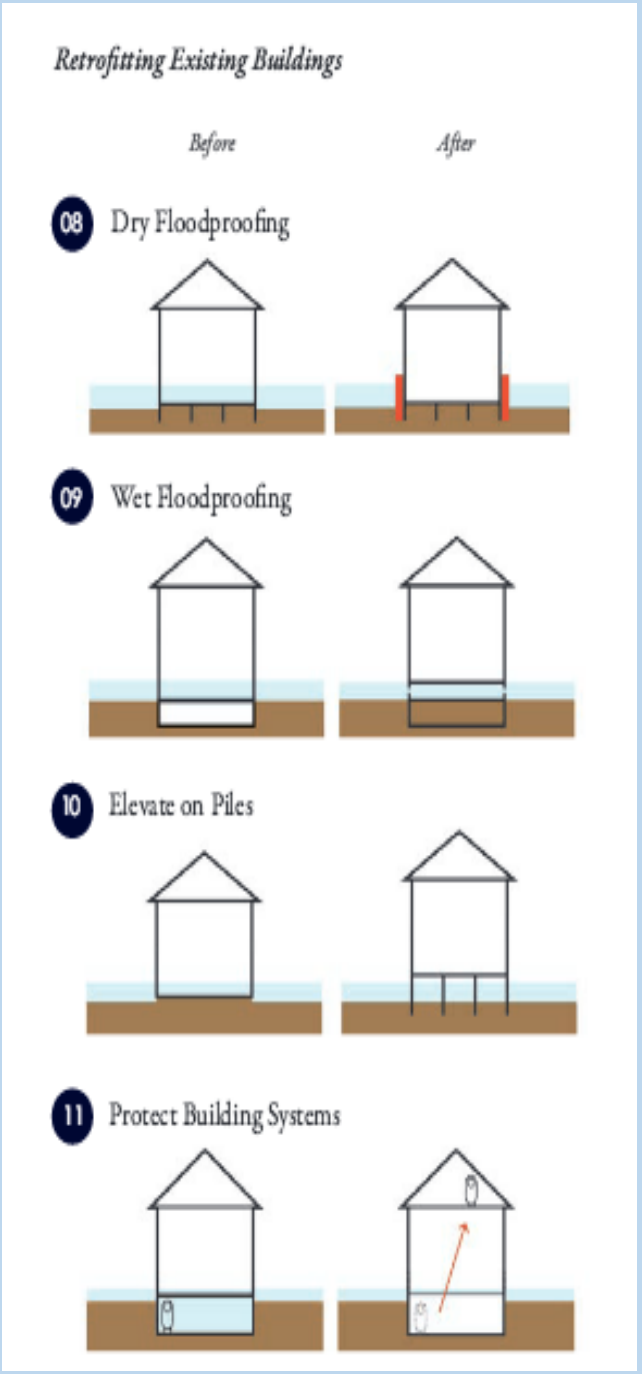
Tidal Flooding today, in 2030 and in 2045

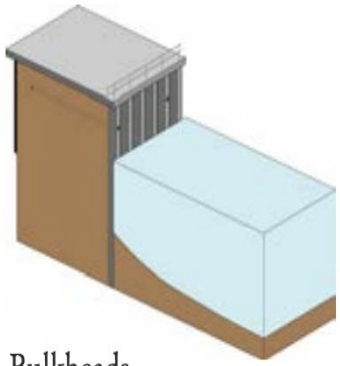
Southeast Florida will advance from

<10 events today

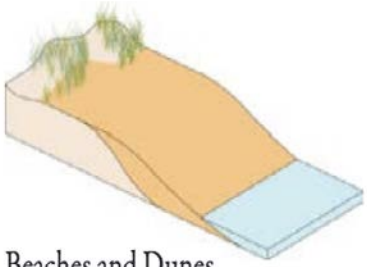
to

240 events in 2045

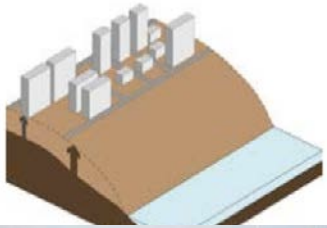




Bulkheads



Beaches and Dunes



MAKING ROOM FOR WATER IN THE CITY

PUBLIC SPACE

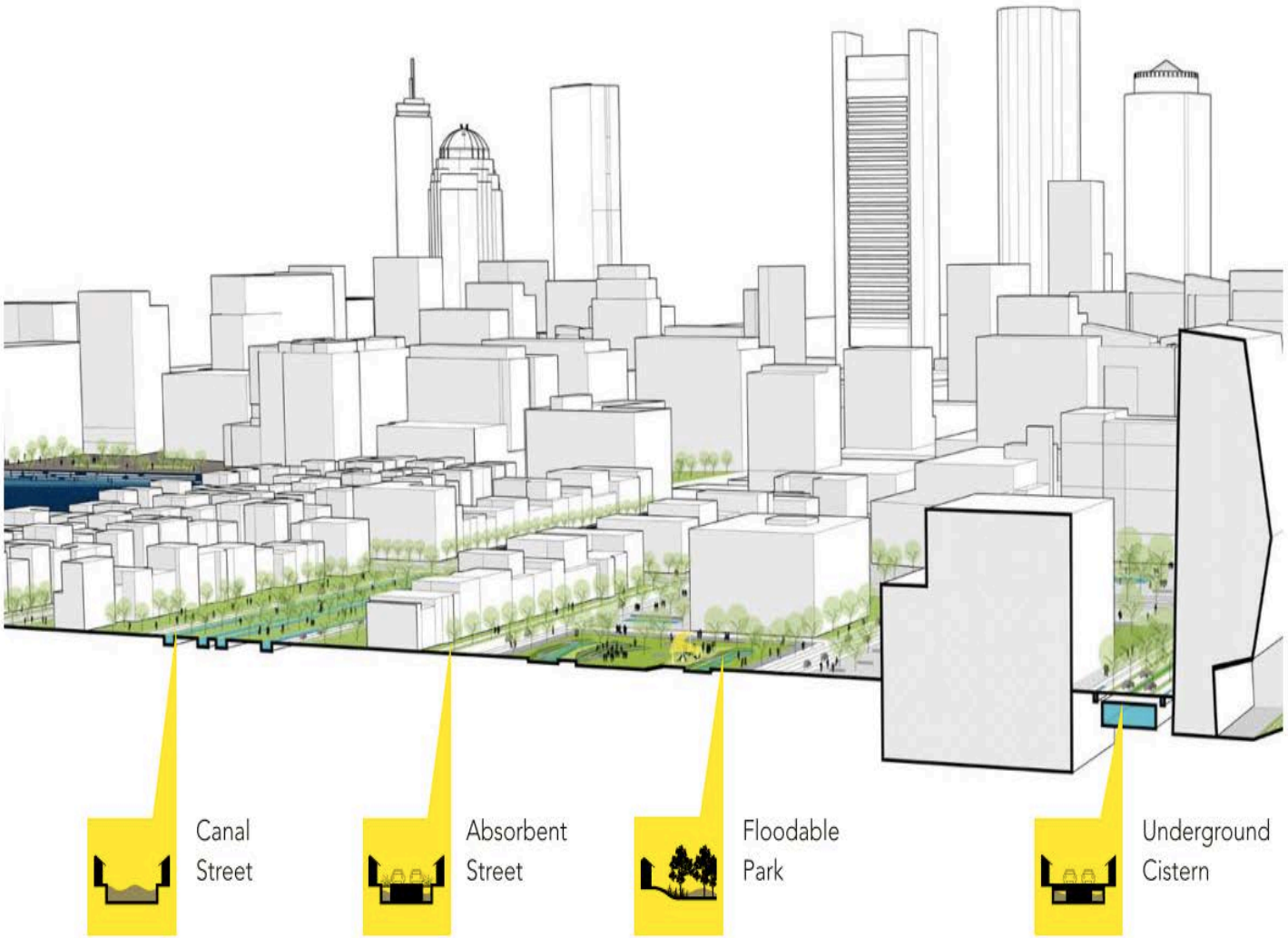


TABLE 6.1 SAMPLE OF CLIMATE HAZARDS AND ADAPTIVE RESPONSES ACROSS SECTORS

Projected Change in Climate Phenomena (Likelihood)	Drivers of Urban Exposure and Vulnerability	Consequences for Cities, if Unaddressed	Sectors Involved	Sample Adaptive Responses (not an exhaustive list)	Relative Investment Level / Cost
Warmer with fewer cold days and nights, more hot days and nights (virtually certain) Hot spells/heat waves—increased frequency (very likely)	Urban heat island effect. Lack of electricity and cooling systems, especially in many informal settlements.	Exacerbated air pollution Heat-induced illness and death	Transportation, housing, private sector building industry, public health	Green infrastructure, including improved vegetation and green building investments for natural cooling.	Medium to high with significant economic and sustainable development cobenefits
				Retrofit of existing bus fleet with white roofs to reduce solar heat gain and ventilation to ensure adequate air circulation. Undertaking public relations campaigns to encourage passengers to carry water with them to avoid heat stroke.	Low to medium
	Lack of diversified energy supply and substandard energy infrastructure.	Energy shocks and disruptions because of increased demand	Energy	Investment in clean energy and energy efficiency.	Low to high, depending on the specific energy investment; significant cobenefits for economic prosperity and "green growth."
Heavy precipitation events—increased frequency (very likely) Intensity of tropical cyclone activity increases (likely) Rising sea level (virtually certain) *(continued next page)*	Rapid urban growth leading to informal settlements on marginal land with no roads or drainage systems, or drains that are clogged with debris and silt.	Exacerbated flooding and landslides	Land use, housing, solid waste, public health, emergency management	Development and enforcement of a sound land use plan that a) is based on understanding of climate change vulnerabilities, b) effectively encourages dense, mixed-use development in resilient areas, and c) engages ecological planning approaches outside of city limits (for example, village-level watershed management on the outskirts of a city, protection of mangroves and wetlands on nearby coastline).	High, involving significant political and staff investment
		Contaminated waters and spread of disease in stagnant waters		Improved solid waste handling practices (for example, proximity to drinking water supply, corrosive-resistant containers) to prevent leakage and contamination.	Medium to high.
				Short-term clearance/disposal of solid waste from drains to prevent clogging.	Low
				Public health engagement and risk prevention around likely flood-related diseases.	Low
	Nonexistent or substandard transportation infrastructure.	Blockage of emergency routes because of road flooding, resulting in delayed emergency evacuations Losses in commercial activity	Transportation, emergency management, private sector	Investment in roads and other transportation choices for informal settlements.	Medium to high
				Green infrastructure.	Medium to high with significant economic and sustainable development cobenefits
				Relocation of storage yards for buses and train cars out of flood-prone areas to reduce the risk of damage or loss of this equipment.	High

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FIU Southeast Environmental Research Center

Current FIU Projects and Proposals:

1) Florida Coastal Everglades Program and SERC – Understanding Everglades ecology and hydrology for restoration

2) SERC research on water quality – coastal, canals, rivers and wetlands

3) Sustainable Built Environment and Informatics Program (SLSC/SBEI) - Development of 'big data' capabilities for 'Smart Cities'

4) SLSC-CAKE (Center for Advanced Knowledge Enablement)-US.DOT proposal – 'Smart Cities'; proposal to build next generation road and traffic system to minimize energy, carbon emisisons and adapt to sea level rise