

Tribal Adaptation Planning with Strategic Foresight Scenarios

Partnership Snapshot

- **What are strategic foresight scenarios?** Co-developed scenarios that combine indigenous knowledge with local climate trends for long-term planning.
- **Research Partners:** US Forest Service, College of Menominee Nation Center for First Americans Forestlands, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Red Lake Nation, and Oneida Nation of Wisconsin.
- **Numbers Engaged:** Three Tribes in the Great Lakes region.
- **Continuing Impact:** Tribes are using scenarios to initiate climate change adaptation planning and to seek funding for planning activities. A sustained partnership with the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan resulted in a Tribal Climate workshop focusing on extreme precipitation events.

Indigenous peoples in the Great Lakes region face many potential impacts to social, cultural, and economic resources from climate change. These include loss of access to culturally significant species as ecological conditions change and threats to marine and forest industries. For Tribes, it is critical that adaptation planning respect Tribal sovereignty and access to natural resources, while harnessing traditional ecological knowledge. The task of adaptation planning in this context is made difficult for Tribes by uncertainty about how climate change will impact the region at relevant scales.

To address these challenges, Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA) teamed with the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the College of Menominee Nation's Center for First Americas Forestland, providing a grant to explore the potential of strategic foresight scenarios to help Tribes adapt to climate change. Foresight scenarios are used to bring long-term perspective to policymaking and planning by outlining a set of possible future scenarios. These scenarios provide a starting point for adaption despite uncertainty around future conditions.

Drawing on GLISA's existing relationships with three Tribes in the region (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Red Lake Nation, and Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin), the team organized a Scenario Planning Workshop to bring together Tribal leaders and community members with climate specialists. Participants co-developed scenarios through a collaborative process, combining indigenous knowledge with localized climate impact profiles, customized by GLISA, that describe historical and future climate trends. In further meetings, Tribes used these scenarios to frame discussions about where additional capacity will be needed to adapt to future climate conditions.



The College of Menominee Nation defines sustainability as the interaction of six interrelated dimensions.

These partnerships have produced valuable outcomes. Translating global and regional models has made them meaningful at finer scales relevant for Tribes. Having access to scenarios in narrative form has enabled institutions and communities within each tribe, which rarely communicate with one another, to share knowledge and insights through storytelling. Tribes are already using these scenarios to initiate new climate change adaptation planning activities, and to seek funding for internal and regional adaptation efforts. Sustained engagement with the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan resulted in a Tribal Climate workshop in Bay Mills, MI, focusing on extreme precipitation events.