

ACCO Defense, National Security and Climate Change Workshop

March 30-31, 2011 | Washington, DC

Hosted by McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP

ROUNDTABLE NOTES

Track 4: Enterprise Governance and Structure

Session 2: Integrating Local and Federal Efforts Related to National Security, Resilience and Sustainability

Moderator: Melissa Stults, Tad McCall

Themes:

- **Targeted Focus**
 - There is no single, unified or uniform process that reconciles and coordinates the integration of local and federal efforts for responding to climate change and the manifestations of climate change.
 - Climate change impacts vary with location, but there will be similar impacts that affect multiple locations, and these similarities provide the opportunity to identify 2-4 key climate change adaptation challenges that cities and regions in similar conditions could face.
 - These similarities provide a basis for developing uniform processes for stakeholders to follow to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
 - Stakeholder education is essential to building effective local and regional climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to develop measures that are practical, meaningful, and cost effective.
 - Advances in, and the availability of, web based mapping can facilitate development of effective climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **Communications Gap**
 - What is clear to one individual or organization when it comes to issues of sustainability is not necessarily clear to another.
 - Geographic specifics create a more significant complexity in that understanding
 - Imperative to establish an education campaign that reaches out to every level of the government regarding national security, resilience and sustainability issues at local/regional levels
- **Mitigation, Adaptation, or Both?**
 - Most of the work concerning climate change so far has been through mitigation, leaving an imbalance of focus. There is some informed thinking for an increased emphasis on adaptation, given that the climate effects are too pervasive and the accelerating growth of long-lasting greenhouse gasses make long-lasting and significant climate change inevitable.
 - Assessment of vulnerability has to be accounted for and must be relevant to the specific community – thus, adaptation strategies must be integrated within a region in which communities share similar impacts.

Takeaways:

- It's important to realize and have awareness of who is doing what and to collaborate early so that efforts are coordinated and more effective.

- There are so many aspects and impacts of climate change that choices have to be made to focus on limited numbers of priorities and to thoroughly implement those priorities.
- Continuing education on climate change is required if we are to achieve the state of consensus needed to support achieve best possible outcomes.
- Non-governmental organizations, like ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) will need to play an important role in educating and coordinating appropriate frameworks to respond to the challenges of climate change.
- Climate change will have impacts across our nation, but the specific impacts will occur in specific localities with similar impacts across regions. These impacts may not correspond to currently defined governmental jurisdiction, therefore solutions will have to be developed collaboratively from all levels of government and by multiple stakeholders in order to be effectively developed, coordinated, deployed, and evaluated.
- There is a deficiency in the ability to understand, define, and articulate the climate response needs in most localities, which reduces the likelihood of marshalling adequate resources, identifying and involving appropriate stakeholders, and entering the public / private partnerships that will be needed to meet the local challenges posed by climate change.
- The organizational challenges posed by climate change in the United States are reflected across the world, and many regions are less equipped than the U.S. to deal with them.
- Important response qualities:
 - Strong local leadership is imperative.
 - When it comes to education on the issues, especially within a community, leadership must be as well-informed as possible.
 - Long-range vision for success
 - Establish a strong understanding of the risks
 - Engage the parts of the community that are most likely to affect change and have a vested stake in that change so that there is even stronger motivation for success
 - Identify communities that are facing the same issues, even if they are in different cities or countries, and use the comparison information to track trends and changes

Next Steps / Prospective Action Items:

- The University of Waterloo will be publishing recommended priority actions to adapt to climate change and the report should be distributed to ACCO participants of this conference.
- ACCO and ICLEI can serve as “fusion” centers that bring interested stakeholders together across the local, state, regional, federal, and international levels to share knowledge and build cooperative frameworks for mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Web- based mapping is an important tool, particularly for climate change adaptation, and should continue to be included in ACCO.