

Some thoughts from:

INFORMING DECISIONS IN A CHANGING
CLIMATE

Panel on Strategies and Methods for Climate-
Related Decision Support

National Research Council 2009

Climate-related decisions are choices by individuals or organizations, the results of which can be expected to affect climate change or to be affected by climate change and its interactions with ecological, economic, and social systems.

Decision relevant information yields deeper understanding of a choice or if, incorporated in making a choice, it yields better expected results for decision makers and their constituencies than would be achieved if the choice were made without that knowledge or information.

Decision Support Products are the tangible deliverables (including data, maps, projections, images, tools, models, or documents) that contain information intended to be useful for decision making. The media or channels developed to deliver this information (brochures, web pages, etc.) may also be considered decision support products.

Decision Support Services are activities, consultations, or other forms of interaction that enable decision makers to make better use of decision-relevant information and decision support products, including formal and informal efforts to identify information needs, educate those involved in the decision process, and facilitate or evaluate decision support processes.

Decision Support Systems comprise the individuals, organizations, communication networks, and supporting institutional structures that provide and use decision support products and services. They include the people and organizations that develop the knowledge needed to produce those services.

Report Emphasizes Importance of Learning Over Time

Since climate change and its interactions with society are dynamic, the rules for making those decisions will need to continue to change over time.

Decision makers must not only change, but be prepared to continue changing. In a sense, decision makers will need to plan to be surprised.

The systems that support climate-related decisions must become adaptive systems, learning through a variety of means.

We face a process of technology diffusion

Visioning Exercise

- Where would this community like to be in 10 or 20 years in its ability to make effective climate-related decisions?
 - What type of decision support products, processes, and systems?
 - Who is providing them?
 - How are they incorporated into your planning and operations?
 - What are the expectations of your boards, elected officials, and constituencies?
 - How does these processes continue to learn and adapt over time to changing conditions and knowledge?