

# New study examines perspectives from South Florida practitioners

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A study led by researchers at the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, assessed the perspectives of 76 diverse South Florida climate adaptation professionals. The study titled, "Practitioner perspectives on climate mobilities in South Florida" was published in the December issue of the journal *Oxford Open Climate Change*, and explores the expectations and concerns of practitioners from the private sector, community-based organizations, and

government agencies about the region's ability to adapt in the face of increasing sea level rise and diverse consequences for where people live and move, also known as climate mobility.

Conducted through extensive interviews, the research underscores the growing significance of climate mobility as a crucial adaptive response in the face of increased climate challenges. While previous studies have primarily focused on resident perspectives on mobility, this study delves into the views of professionals, offering insights that could potentially shape future strategies and outcomes.

"This study is a deep dive aiming to understand the perspectives of leading experts on where we are right now in our climate responses in South Florida," said Katharine Mach, lead author of the study and a professor and chair of the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at the Rosenstiel School. "These types of conversations are crucial to our prospects for unleashing innovations and successes in regional climate adaptations and preparedness."

Key findings reveal a consensus among professionals about the inevitability of various forms of climate mobilities in South Florida. Anticipated movements of people and infrastructure assets away from hazardous areas were highlighted, indicating an urgent need for comprehensive adaptation planning.

However, while recognizing the necessity of climate mobility strategies, the interviewed practitioners expressed concerns regarding the current impact of such movements. They highlighted issues of distributional inequities, socio-cultural disruptions, and financial disparities arising from ongoing migrations and gentrification in which climate plays some role.

The findings illuminated a critical gap between individual preparedness

among practitioners and the overall readiness of the region to support and manage the expected climate-driven relocations. This discrepancy raises concerns about collective-action failures and the urgency for a more ambitious, long-term transition plan.

Climate mobilities, while presenting benefits, also pose significant challenges. They serve as a path for adaptation planning and policies, prompting crucial questions about incorporation into policy planning and the need for fundamental innovations.

According to the researchers, the study serves as an intervention itself, providing insights that might otherwise remain unexplored, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with climate mobilities. The findings aim to inform and guide policymakers, stakeholders, and practitioners toward more proactive and inclusive approaches to [climate](#) adaptation.

**More information:** Katharine J Mach et al, Practitioner perspectives on climate mobilities in South Florida, *Oxford Open Climate Change* (2023). [DOI: 10.1093/oxfclm/kgad015](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfclm/kgad015)

Provided by University of Miami

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