

# “A Dialogue on Coastal Cities and Coastal Community Resilience”: results of engagement

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On February 22nd, 2024, the DCC-CR convened a town hall meeting titled “A Dialogue on Coastal Cities and Coastal Community Resilience,” in the framework of the Ocean Sciences Meeting 2024 in New Orleans, Louisiana. This town hall meeting aimed to bring together expertise from the scientific community supporting the Ocean Decade and merge it with the experiences of coastal communities and practitioners. The discussions and exchanges among the expert speakers focused on various topics, from the need to effectively translate scientific findings into actionable science, to new perspectives and strategies to involve communities into the knowledge production process through citizen science initiatives, communication strategies and new partnerships.

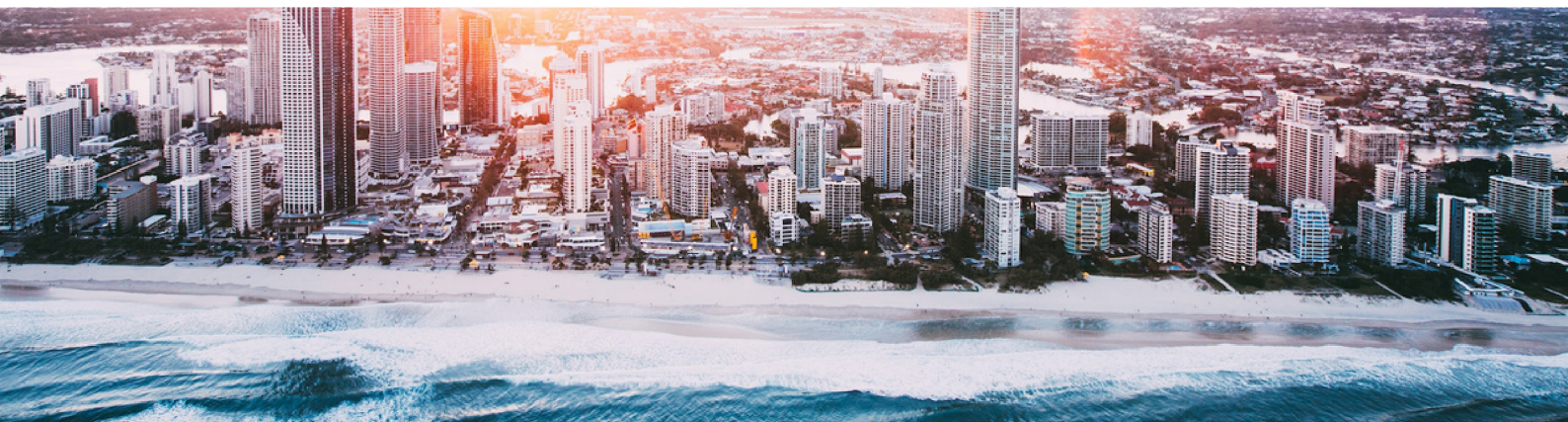
During the exchanges among the speakers in preparation for the town hall, key recommendations for the scientific community emerged. These recommendations aim to provide guidance, particularly for the upcoming 'Cities with the Ocean' initiative, developed within the UN Ocean

Decade framework, which seeks to establish a network of coastal cities and promote dialogue with Ocean Decade Actions, fostering the development of shared solutions and strategies for coastal adaptation. To assess the validity of these recommendations and the effectiveness of proposed actions and strategies, we actively involved the audience attending the town hall, in large part representing the scientific community, through Slido to gather real-time inputs and feedback.

## Speakers:

- Zach J Monroe – Office of Resilience and Sustainability, City of New Orleans
- David Behar – Practitioner Exchange for Effective Response to Sea Level Rise (PEERS) / San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Vanessa Sarah Salvo – UN Ocean Decade Ocean Cities Network / Institut de Ciències del Mar - Spanish National Research Council
- Villy Kourafalou – UN Ocean Decade CoastPredict Programme / University of Miami
- Nadia Pinardi – Director of the UN Ocean Decade Collaborative Centre for Coastal Resilience / University of Bologna





**Our Recommendations**

Rec. 1 – Ensure **open, free and co-produced information/tools** at the local scale that allow substantive and equitable interactions

Rec. 2 – Collaborate with **municipal government bodies** to create and jointly design adaptive monitoring programs for **urban citizen science**

Rec. 3 – **Develop Digital Twin methodologies** for early warning systems and adaptation planning for coastal cities

Rec. 4– Develop **communication strategies** that consider science and stakeholder perspectives, to convey the problems and the solutions, mobilize citizens, and boost support

Rec. 5 – Establish a **worldwide platform of coastal cities, ports and ocean researchers** engaged in international cooperation, forming a co-creation hub for advancing science translation and resilience plans on the coast

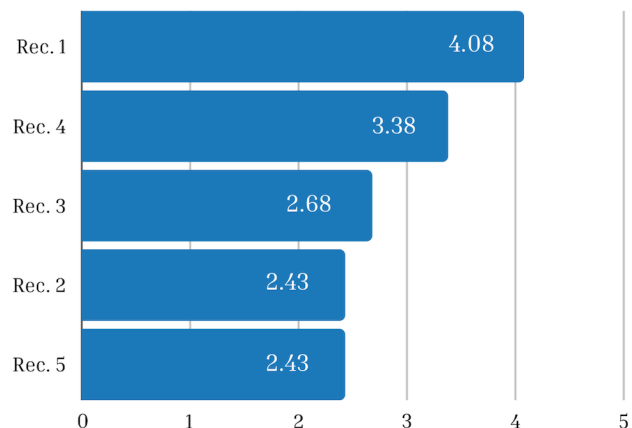
**Engagement Questions**

We devised a set of five questions, with four of them administered to the audience attending the event. The initial question asked respondents to rank the five recommendations outlined during the panel discussion in order of urgency, assigning the number one to the most urgent and the number five to the least urgent recommendation. The second question aimed to uncover additional themes, issues, or topics that respondents felt were overlooked in the recommendations. For the third question, the focus was on inclusivity in resilience efforts, requesting respondents to select two options they believed were best suited to achieve this objective. Lastly, the fourth question solicited opinions on the two most effective options, among the four provided, for

measuring the effectiveness of resilience initiatives. Below is a summary of the responses received for each question:

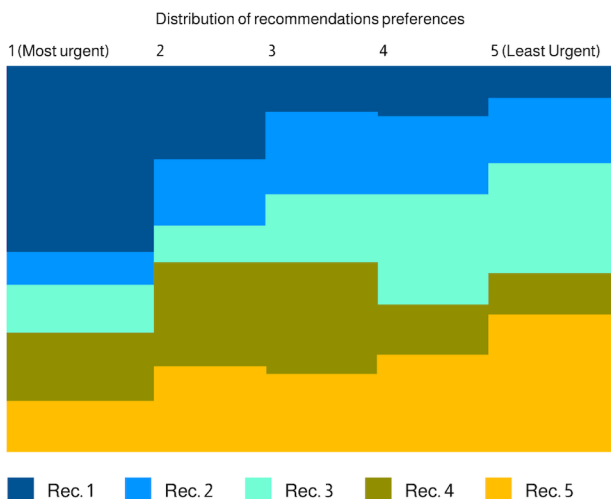
**Q1: What do you perceive as more urgent among the recommendations presented now? Order from the most (1) to least (5) urgent**

Respondents: 79 (same as n. of responses)  
Results:



The results were calculated through the ranking poll mode on Slido, whereby each response receives a set amount of points, according to the number of options listed: the higher someone ranks an option, the more points it receives. In this case, the option ranked first receives 5 points, the second gets 4 points, the third gets 3, the fourth receives 2 and the fifth gets 1 point. Once voting is over, the points for each option are summed up and divided by the number of people who participated in the ranking poll. This gives an average, ranked score for each option.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



The figure above represents the distribution of responders' preferences for each recommendation across the five levels of priority, giving some more insights into how the perception of most to least urgent varies considering the degrees of responses.

### Q2: What strategy/topic/issue is still missing from our recommendations? (Max three words)

Respondents: 34  
Responses: 58  
Results:



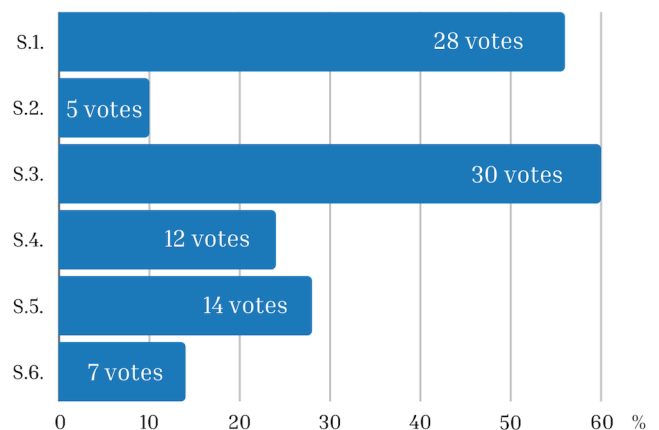
Image generated by Slido

In the second question, respondents were asked to describe, using a maximum of three words, what aspect was not captured by the recommendations, in terms of topic, practices, issues. Each respondent could submit multiple entries, which is why in this case we highlighted the number of respondents as well as the number of responses. The selected poll was set to collate the answers into a word cloud and identify the most

common themes across the multiple responses. Nature-based solutions (5 entries) and indigenous knowledge (4) were the most relevant ones, followed by community-led resiliency (3) and transdisciplinarity (2).

### Q3: How can we ensure that resilience planning in coastal cities is inclusive and equitable for all communities? (Choose 2 options)

Respondents: 50 (same as n. of responses)  
Results:



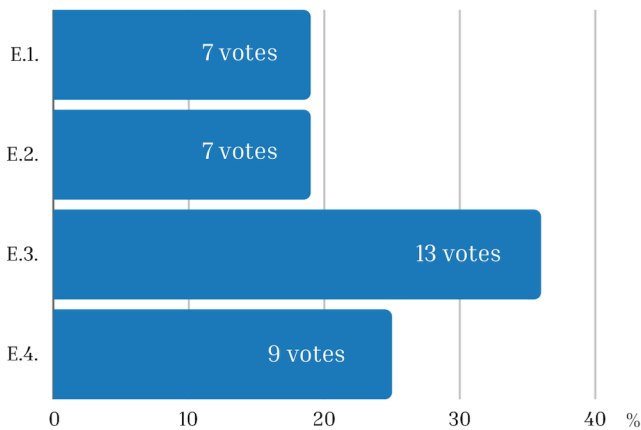
For question 3, we wanted to find out what would be considered as the most relevant practices to ensure inclusivity when developing resilience and adaptation planning in coastal cities. The respondents could choose the two most relevant options among six, which were listed as below:

- S.1. Engage communities, prioritizing historically marginalized groups
- S.2. Provide accessible multilingual resources
- S.3. Establish community-led decision-making bodies
- S.4. Foster partnerships addressing diverse needs
- S.5. Invest in education for communities
- S.6. Support vulnerable communities financially.

The results were calculated in percentages over the total.

### Q4: How can we track the effectiveness of resilience initiatives in coastal Cities over time? (Choose 2)

Respondents: 36 (same as n. of responses)  
Results:



In the last question, we wanted to identify what the respondents consider as the most significant strategy to evaluate future resilience projects and initiatives. As for the previous question, the audience was asked to express two preferences for the options they considered most appropriate. The options people could choose from were:

- E.1. Implement regular monitoring
- E.2. Evaluate with resilience Key Performance Indicators for the interventions' success
- E.3. Conduct periodic community surveys on the perceived impact of resilience measures
- E.4. Utilize remote sensing and socio-economic trend analysis to track changes in ecosystems and infrastructure.

A clear preference was given to engage local communities to evaluate the results of resilience activities, followed by the observation of trends to identify modifications in the ecosystems and infrastructure. Also in this case, results were calculated in percentage over the total.

**Conclusions**

There is an overarching preference evident in the responses provided by survey participants. The active involvement of local communities in decision-making processes, evaluation, and implementation emerges as the most pressing and urgent priority in urban coastal resilience efforts. Particularly notable in the final two questions is the prominence of solutions and strategies centred around community-led initiatives, surpassing other proposed options. Furthermore, in identifying gaps within the suggested recommendations, themes such as community-led resilience and indigenous knowledge underscore the importance of involving those directly affected by coastal resilience strategies in the decision-making process.

This approach aligns with the recommendation perceived as most urgent in Question 1, which advocates for the development of more accessible and co-developed tools for implementing resilience plans.

This emphasis is particularly relevant in the context of fostering synergy between coastal urban communities and ocean research. A new platform, like to the one being established in the framework of the Ocean Decade, should integrate evaluation strategies and methods that prioritize affected communities, enabling them to voice their needs and fostering transparent, engaging channels of communication with knowledge providers.

*The data utilized for this analysis has been retrieved by Slido in the post-event report.*

