



Division of Public Affairs
777 Glades Road, ADM 101
Boca Raton, FL 33431
561.297.3020 phone

MEDIA CONTACT: Gisele Galoustian
561-297-2676, ggaloust@fau.edu

FAU to Host Third Sea-Level Rise Summit; Connecting Futures from Alaska to Florida

BOCA RATON, Fla. (March 31, 2016) — Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies will host its third Sea-Level Rise Summit from Tuesday, May 3 through Thursday, May 5 at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66, 2301 SE 17th St., in Fort Lauderdale. The purpose of the summit is to share the ongoing responses and adaptation planning of agencies, businesses, institutions and civic society to sea-level rise and compare Florida’s situation and response with another vulnerable location – the Arctic.

Like the Arctic, South Florida is one of the world’s most vulnerable areas to climate change, especially sea-level rise. In Florida, potential adaptation to sea-level rise is complicated by the porous limestone geology of the region, permitting salt water intrusion into important aquifers. The low level terrain in many areas makes even a relatively small sea-level rise problematic.

“This summit is not your typical academic conference,” said Colin Polsky, Ph.D., director of the Florida Center for Environmental Studies at FAU. “Beyond the unusual twin geographic focus, this event also will break new ground with its focus on private sector input and interactive sessions, rather than an exclusive featuring of panelists, which will allow us to tap into the collective wisdom of the participants. The event will be exceptionally solutions-oriented, with the product of a living document titled ‘Adaptation Pathways 1.0.’”

FAU’s Sea-Level Rise Summit will open with a pre-summit examination of the science, commencing with a presentation by NASA Jet Propulsion Lab. The following two days will include facilitated panel sessions and interactive visioning activities covering topics such as the economic implications of sea-level rise, impacts on infrastructure, health and livelihoods, national security, and international responses.

FAU’s summit is supported in part by the Canadian, British and Dutch Consulates in Miami; the Chambers of Commerce of Greater Fort Lauderdale and Miami Beach; the U.S. Geological Survey;

World Resources Institute; Union of Concerned Scientists; Florida Climate Institute; and FAU. The summit is open to the general public, agencies, decision makers, businesses, planners, researchers, risk management offices, and other interested parties.

Advance registration costs \$250 until Monday, April 4 and \$300 thereafter. Registration includes materials, conference app, all sessions and panels, the evening opening reception in the Pier Top Ballroom on Tuesday, May 3, as well as the main reception, two breakfasts, two lunches and all breaks.

For more information or to register visit www.ces.fau.edu/arctic-florida or contact Mary Beth Hartman at 954-236-1203 or mhartman@fau.edu.

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Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.