

New Climate Report Details Harms to the Southeast US

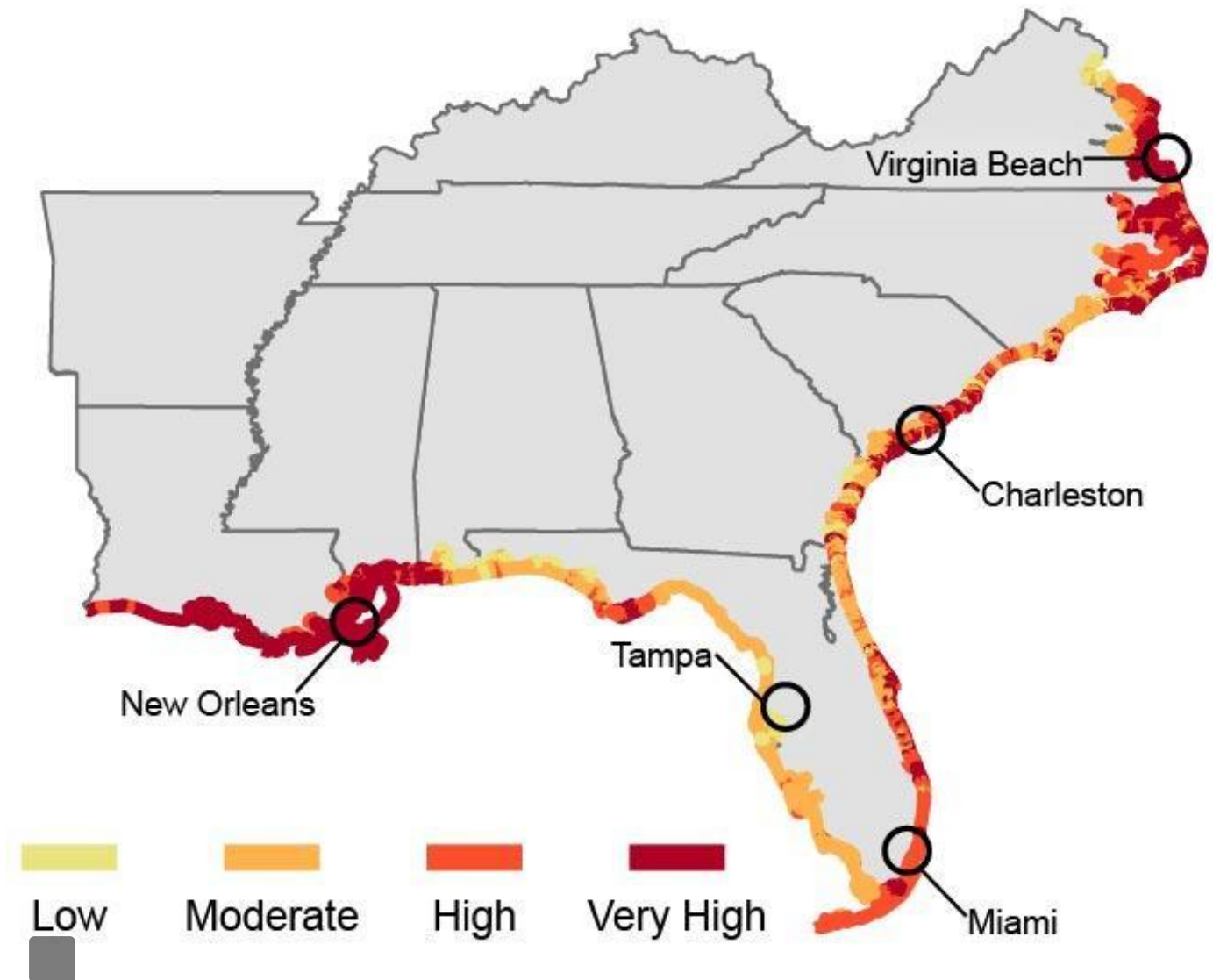
By [JEREMY LOEB](#) • MAY 11, 2014

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Vulnerability to Sea Level Rise



From the report: The map shows the relative risk that physical changes will occur as sea level rises. The Coastal Vulnerability Index used here is calculated

NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

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This week saw the release of yet another in a long string of increasingly dire reports on climate change. The federal government's third National Climate Assessment is perhaps most notable for documenting the impact climate change is having in the U.S. RIGHT NOW as opposed to in the future. More severe weather, extreme drought, and torrential rainfall like that seen along the Gulf Coast last week are becoming measurably more common. And yet the debate over climate change rages on. Leonard Berry is a lead author of the latest report and focused on the southeast region. He's the director of the Florida Center for Environmental Studies and has been studying sea level rise for some 40 years.

Leonard Berry: "There is a direct and proven relationship between the increase in the amount of carbon in the atmosphere, which we can show is a result of all of our activities, and the changes in temperature and other climate factors that we're experiencing."

Berry says it's unfortunate that climate change has become a political issue.

Berry: "It's very unfortunate. And most countries in the world recognize and deal with it don't treat it as a political issue. In Britain, in France, in Germany, it is not an issue that is split across politics. And it's unfortunate in some parts of this country it is."

Berry says steps by the EPA to regulate coal plants and higher emission standards for vehicles are helping. But he says the nation must move towards cleaner forms of energy like solar, wind, and even nuclear power to avoid the worst of climate change's impact. You can hear our full interview by clicking the audio above.

Here's a link to the Southeast regional portion of the [National Climate Assessment](#).

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