



# Structured Decision Making for the Resilience Ecosystem: How to Use These Materials

Many of the challenges and stumbling blocks in climate-related decision making are not new. The framework and tools of structured decision making (SDM) can help resilience practitioners avoid reinventing the wheel, decrease stress associated with making difficult adaptation decisions, and increase decision skill and quality.

There are many approaches to climate adaptation. What sets SDM apart is:

1. Many existing approaches focus on a subset of concerns (e.g. biodiversity); the SDM approach focuses on all relevant concerns
2. Many existing approaches target climate-focused decisions; SDM works for climate-focused decisions and for mainstreaming climate change into any decision.
3. Many approaches focus on developing and prioritizing lists of actions, whereas SDM focuses on clarifying and prioritizing goals and values, then using this insight to generate and select among actions. The focus is on achieving what matters and on choosing the actions we will take rather than simply prioritizing them.

The materials we present here are meant to give you a taste of SDM and its utility. This project, funded by the Climate Resilience Fund and Harmonic International/the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, grew out of a desire to bring the power of decision science and best practices into the climate change adaptation world to support more resilient, equitable decisions. We brought together climate adaptation and decision analysis practitioners to explore how SDM could help with key challenges, and how to present that to different audiences.

## Using these resources

If you're wondering where to start with these materials, here's what we suggest:

If you're interested in a **general introduction to structured decision making**, start with

- *Structured Decision Making: A Brief Overview*
- *The Structure of Structured Decision Making*

If you're interested in **how SDM can address common resilience decision challenges**, start with

- *What Challenges Can Structured Decision Making Help Me Overcome?*

If you're interested in examples of **how SDM works in climate-related decision making**, start with

- The two case histories: *Using Structured Decision Making to Incorporate Vulnerability and Significance into Cultural Resource Decisions*, and *Building a Shared Understanding of "the Problem" in west Lake Tahoe*.

If you're wondering **what a workshop or training might look like**, start with

- *Structured Decision Making for the Resilience Ecosystem: Workshop Materials*, including the *curriculum description*, *Powerpoint slides and instructor notes*, and *worksheets and tools*