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**Media contacts: Nadine Slimak, Mote public relations manager, [nadines@mote.org](mailto:nadines@mote.org) or 941-302-4997, or Hayley Rutger, Mote communications specialist, [hrutger@mote.org](mailto:hrutger@mote.org) or 941-374-0081**

## **Symposium to Address Sea Level Rise in Southwest Florida**

If Floridians are going to withstand the rise in sea level that is expected to accompany climate change, planning needs to start now, according to a new policy assessment by the Marine Policy Institute at Mote Marine Laboratory.

According to the report "Policy Tools for Local Adaptation to Sea Level Rise" by Barbara Lausche, Deputy Director of the Marine Policy Institute, scientists project that sea level may rise as much as 14 inches by 2080, and possibly by two feet or more by the end of this century because of greenhouse gas emissions and melting glaciers. While policies are being implemented that are designed to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions, Floridians aren't yet making plans to deal with the changes expected to occur and already under way because of past emissions. (Download the full report or a synopsis of the report at [www.mote.org/lsi](http://www.mote.org/lsi).)

To jumpstart community discussion about climate change and how the expected sea level rise will affect Florida, the Marine Policy Institute is convening a two-day symposium for lawmakers, community planners and residents on Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 12-13. The symposium will be streamed live online on Sarasota County's website at [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net) by Access Sarasota, Sarasota County's public access station. Streaming will begin at 8:30 a.m. and run throughout the presentations each day.

The symposium, "Land-Sea Interactions in Southwest Florida," will present an overview of the land-use issues that Southwest Florida is expected to face due to sea-level rise, and economic growth, along with a discussion of the policy tools that local governments can use to address these issues. Most of these policy tools are already in place and do not require major legislative changes before local governments can begin taking action.

"Sea level rise is expected to have significant impacts on places like Southwest Florida, but as a region, we're not yet planning for the impacts," said Dr. Frank Alcock, Director of the Marine Policy Institute at Mote and Associate Professor of Political Science at New College of Florida. "In order for Southwest Florida to be resilient in the face of sea level rise, we really do need to begin addressing the challenges associated with figuring out where to put utilities, houses and businesses. These are all decisions that are made on the local level, so it's very important for us to begin thinking and talking about these things now."

The symposium is sponsored by the Marine Policy Institute at Mote Marine Laboratory, New College of Florida, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, Sarasota

County, Schroeder-Manatee Ranch, the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, USF-Sarasota/Manatee Institute for Public Policy and Leadership, Collins Center for Public Policy, the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County and the City of Sarasota.

Symposium Speakers include:

- Sen. Mike Bennett, R-Bradenton
- Rep. Keith Fitzgerald, D-Sarasota
- Commissioner Jon Thaxton, Sarasota County
- Dr. James Murley, Director of the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University and Chair of Governor Crist's Climate and Energy Commission
- Dr. Sean Snaith, Director of the Institute for Economic Competitiveness within the College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida
- Mr. Rex Jensen, President/CEO, Schroeder-Manatee Ranch
- Ms. Pam Truitt, President, Truitt Consulting, Inc.
- Ms. Teri Hansen, President/CEO, Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice
- Ms. Janet Bowman, Associate Director of Government Relations, The Nature Conservancy
- Dr. Michael Orbach, Professor of Marine Affairs and Policy at Duke University and former Director of the Duke Marine Laboratory
- Mr. Steve Seibert, Senior Vice President and Director of Policy at the Collins Center for Public Policy and former Secretary for the Florida Department of Community Affairs

Symposium Details

What: Land-Sea Interactions in Southwest Florida: A Symposium

When: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 12 (followed by a cocktail reception from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.) and 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13. (Registration begins at 8 a.m. both days.)

Where: The Jean Purcell Hendry Conference Hall at the Ann and Alfred Goldstein Marine Mammal Research and Rehabilitation Center at Mote Marine Laboratory, 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, City Island, Sarasota

Registration: Pre-registration can be done online at [www.mote.org/lsi](http://www.mote.org/lsi) or at 941-487-4365. Registration can also be done at the conference

Cost: \$40 pre-registration (\$50 at the door) for both days; \$20 single-day registration (no cocktail reception) or \$30 single-day registration with cocktail reception.

Etc.: Download "Policy Tools for Local Adaptation to Sea Level Rise" and the full conference agenda at [www.mote.org/lsi](http://www.mote.org/lsi).