

NC Sea Grant and SC Sea Grant Consortium

We work to develop programs and outreach for stakeholders in the coastal Carolinas, to help them learn about hazards associated with weather and climate variability and increase their resiliency by making informed decisions.

One method for accomplishing this is by using facilitated participatory processes, in which the stakeholders are actively engaged in the learning process and discussion. Jessica Whitehead (NC Sea Grant), in collaboration with the Carolinas Integrated Sciences and Assessments and the Social and Environmental Research Institute, developed the VCAPS process (Vulnerability, Consequences, and Adaptation Planning Scenarios).

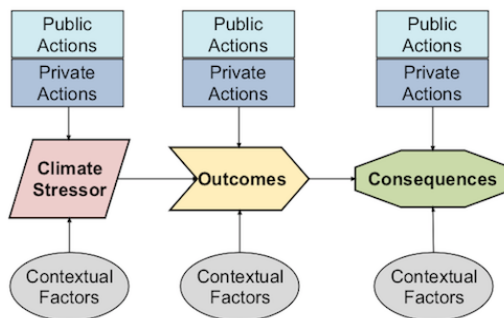
During VCAPS, community members:

- **Engage** in dialogue about future weather and climate threats.
- **Summarize** and integrate local knowledge and experience about how the community will be impacted.
- **Identify** gaps in data, knowledge, or understanding.
- **Think** strategically about how to prevent harm by taking action in both the short and long term

VCAPS helps local decision makers make sense of how weather and climate impacts to the environment translate into social, economic, health, and other consequences in their community.

It also helps them identify near-term and long-term strategies for adaptation and hazard management.

It brings a variety of people to the table, and initiates conversations among community members who do not often communicate.



During the facilitated discussion, the causal structure of hazards and vulnerability are diagramed in real-time for all participants to see. This allows them to identify potential public and private actions that could be taken at all steps along the causal chain.

The following are communities within the GSAA region that have used VCAPS:

Plymouth, NC

Sullivan's Island, McClellanville, and Beaufort, SC

St. Marys and Tybee Island, GA