

# 3.

# HISTORY OF Sustainability and Climate Efforts To Date



**Seven Mile Bridge, Marathon**

PHOTO SOURCE: [www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov)

## A. Early Efforts

In 2007, Monroe County began pursuing sustainability and climate change mitigation initiatives. The County's initial pursuit began with the Board of County Commissioners ("BOCC") endorsing the U.S. Mayors Agreement on Climate Change (Resolution 235-2007)<sup>5</sup> to reduce pollution associated with global warming. This endorsement also provided the County with membership in the ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability network and participation in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign.

**Monroe County, FL**

PHOTO SOURCE: GreenKeys! Project Team



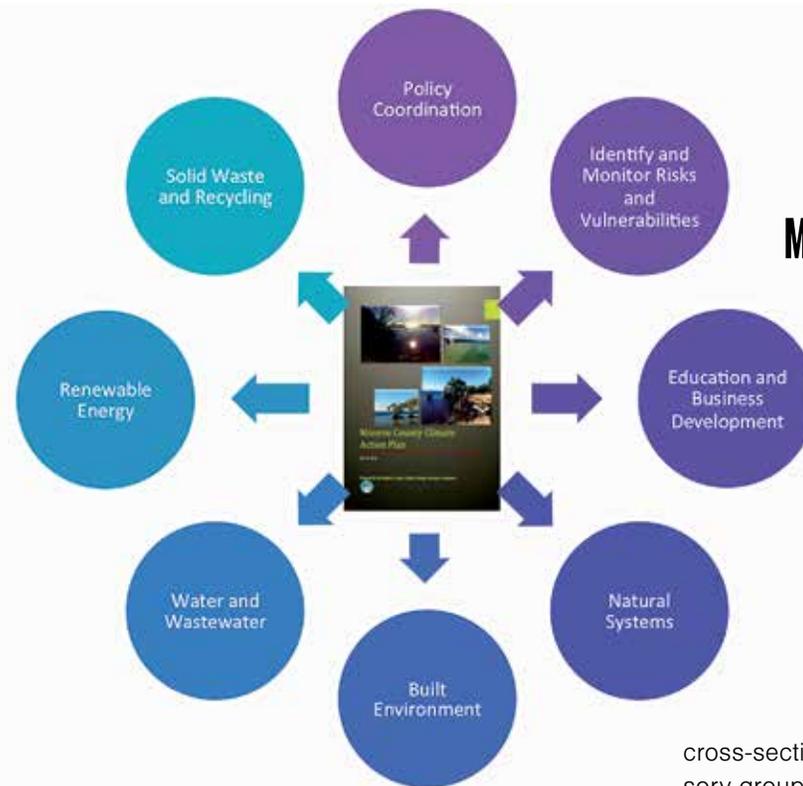
In 2008, by Resolution 177-2008, the County's BOCC established the Green Building Code Task Force to recommend sustainable and "green" standards for new building codes. The following year, the task force was renamed the Green Initiative Task Force ("GITF") (Resolution 121-2009). The GITF created the Sustainable Vision Statement which became the basis for energy efficiency components of the County's Comprehensive Plan Update transmitted in 2015 and many other policies. Also in 2009, the Monroe County Employee Green Team was created to develop a Climate Action Plan for the County's government operations.

As the consequences of climate change began to affect more communities across the country, the County also proactively increased efforts to develop its own sustainability and climate change planning initiative, with 2010 becoming a milestone year for the County. First, the County officially joined the Compact (Resolution 022-2010), which includes Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe Counties. An initial mission of the Compact was to develop the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Action Plan (“RCAP”). The County has continually dedicated necessary expertise and staff resources in furtherance of the Compact’s mission.

In addition to working with the Compact to develop the four-county RCAP, Monroe County separately adopted the Green Team’s GHG Targets for the County’s government operations (Resolution 067-2010)<sup>6</sup>. The targets were anticipated to reduce GHG emissions to 20% by 2020 as measured from a 2005 baseline inventory. The County also adopted the Florida Green Building Coalition’s Commercial Building Standard (Resolution 147-2010)<sup>7</sup>, applicable to all County buildings in addition to the Florida Building Code as the standard to be used for construction of all public buildings.

## B. The Climate Change Advisory Committee and Climate Action Plan

In 2011, the County’s BOCC established the Monroe County Climate Change Advisory Committee (“CCAC”). The CCAC was an expansion of the GITF in an effort to include representatives and perspectives from an external broader



## MCAP with Focus Areas

cross-section of the County. As an external advisory group, the CCAC has been responsible for providing community input on County-related climate initiatives, recommending climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies to the BOCC and developing the County’s MCAP. Following two (2) years of work, the CCAC, working collaboratively with County staff, finalized the MCAP. The MCAP includes a total of 72 action items (or recommendations) spanning eight (8) focus areas.

The MCAP’s conceptual goals are to ensure the County moves towards resiliency and reduces emissions by exploring alternative policies and practices. It creates a platform for public outreach and public policy development to effectively communicate the steps from risk to resiliency with the general public, voters, elected officials and decision makers



**Monroe County, FL**  
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## TOP 6 MCAP RECOMMENDATIONS

**Action P-2.1:** Revise Monroe County's Comprehensive Plan to address strategic planning related to climate change mitigation and adaptation needs.

**Action P-1.1:** Develop an implementation strategy for the Monroe County Community Climate Action Plan.

**Action P-2.3:** Create policies for future development to incorporate sea level rise inundation vulnerabilities for the life expectancy of the infrastructure.

**Action M-2.2:** Use improved inundation mapping to identify the sections of roadways, critical structures and natural areas that will be affected by sea level rise projections.

**Action P-1.3:** Provide advocacy and leadership for adoption of climate change policies and legislation with local, state, and federal entities.

**Action P-2.4:** Incorporate "Adaptation Action Area" designation into local comprehensive plans and regional planning documents to identify those areas deemed most vulnerable to sea level rise and other climate change impacts.





### Monroe County, FL

PHOTO SOURCE: GreenKeys!

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in Monroe County. The overall objective is to integrate climate adaptation and mitigation into existing systems and to develop a plan that can be implemented through existing local organizations. It provides the common integrated framework for a stronger and more resilient Monroe County community today, and into the sustainable future.

More than simply setting conceptual goals, however, the MCAP calls for specific actions to reduce

GHG emissions while anticipating and adapting to local impacts of a changing climate. The recommendations presented in the MCAP attempt to accomplish those broad goals while also serving to protect Monroe County's unique quality of life and economy, guide future investments, and foster livable, sustainable and resilient communities.