Deliverable: Policies for Working with Communities of Color

We have approached this deliverable as a starting point, in which we review past and present activities for working with communities of color at NCEAS, and outline some considerations and processes going forward. We have identified parts of the community engagement process that need more attention and effort, and we plan to iterate on them as we learn. We plan to update and refine this document in consultation with Indigenous communities and other communities of color, and as we gain insights and experiences from ongoing work.

Past and Present NCEAS activities

Examples of projects in which NCEAS has developed partnerships with local communities:

- State of Alaskan Salmon and People (SASAP) working group
- SNAPP working groups: Biocultural Indicators; 4Site
- OHI projects in British Columbia and Northwestern US
- Ocean Tipping Points Project, Haida Gwaii case study
- LTER groups do a lot of local outreach and some sites have strong relationships with the local communities
- Permafrost Discovery Gateway (PDG) - a targeted community for the end product

Coauthorship for community members and inclusion in presentations/outreach was prioritized in the Guidance for Collaborative Synthesis Science Working Groups.

Challenges & Considerations

1) **Scope of synthesis work**: The work at NCEAS is often global and spans multiple communities. This becomes a challenge when trying to engage in communities involved in our work. How do we ensure that there is meaningful engagement?

2) **Many different programs within NCEAS**: How can we connect across organizations/projects/working groups at NCEAS so we are not reinventing the wheel? Is there some way for us to build some institutional knowledge/capacity for best ways to engage communities?

3) **Funding timeline**: Funding is often limited and constrained to 3-5 year time frames. This may restrict our ability to build meaningful relationships with the communities we work with. How do we give feedback to the funders to know what to expect in NCEAS engagement with the community?
4) **Open data & data sovereignty:** Often there is real or perceived conflict in the data sovereignty and open data policies. How do we ensure that data can be openly available while respecting and protecting local group’s rights to the data?

5) **Compensation and recognition of labor:** We should be mindful that Indigenous communities and other communities of color are potentially being bombarded with requests for participation (many times without compensation). The current NCEAS model does not compensate for participation in working groups. Scientists get publications and prestige but how do Indigenous communities/participants outside of academia benefit? Compensation is a barrier to inclusion; how can we support people in different ways that would allow them to be included in this work and conversation?

6) **Location of NCEAS:** Ideally, we should go to the communities that we want to engage (e.g., the Arctic Data Center (ADC) holding a meeting in Alaska instead of requiring a meeting in Santa Barbara, in order to engage stakeholders), but the budget may not be able to accommodate this. Are there novel ways we can encourage participation by Indigenous experts when travel to Santa Barbara is necessary?

7) **Marine Protected Area (MPA) Projects:** How much have local projects engaged with local Chumash communities? New MPA projects have collaborations with Chumash peoples. However, NCEAS has not been engaging with this community historically so the first step may be to consult with people who have been actively working in this space (e.g., Marine Science Institute (MSI) or anyone doing work at the islands, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)). We need to do more work in asking local groups how they want to be represented.

**Next steps**

**Questions for the Diversity Team & Leadership Team**

- What is the process by which institutional memory (e.g., about working with Indigenous communities and communities of color) is developed and then shared across the NCEAS community?
- How will the work of this deliverable and the outcomes on engaging local indigenous communities be dispersed across the NCEAS community so everyone can benefit from progress made?
  - And how will this work be informed by any work that has already been done?
  - A place to update information as we learn what works and iterate on best practices.
- Identify any tasks related to the above deliverable that can be handed over to the Diversity Team (and must be, given the realistic constraints of this pod)
- **Arctic Data Center (ADC) -** Can we partner with local universities that already work with Indigenous communities to help share data?

**Continuum of community involvement and activity**
What do we want to do with these materials? Can we use this to help us develop our own roadmap to have more meaningful engagement with communities:

- Considerations along the continuum of community engagement in research (Key et al., 2019):
  - How are you defining community? *Not monolithic*
  - What activities are needed?
  - Research allocation ratio
  - Message to the community(ies) you are sending
- See also: Movement strategy center spectrum of community engagement - The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

**Code of Conduct**
- Integrate specific language about respecting culture and customs into the NCEAS code of conduct
- Co-create code of conduct for each working group; diverse participation in working groups (get people in the room), and then ensure that all working group participants have a say in shaping norms/rules

**Acknowledge local communities / Indigenous tribes in research**
- Look into when is it appropriate to acknowledge? It should be accompanied with meaningful engagement (not just lip service or performative).
  - We can potentially add a land acknowledgement in the LTER and NCEAS website
  - There may be opportunities in the new building to include acknowledgement of the land that NCEAS is on.
● Look into guidelines for how to do this in publications, presentations (e.g., land on which data were collected) to help prompt everyone to start the process with engaging indigenous communities and other stakeholders earlier in the process
  ○ E.g. “The ideal situation is X, designed at the beginning of a project. If that’s not possible, Y…”
  ○ These guidelines could be included in submission guidelines for the arctic data center to encourage researchers to include acknowledgements with their data sets and provide a resource on how to do so

Agreement by pod members

We, the members of the NCEAS URGE Pod, support this deliverable and agree to hold each other accountable to enacting it:

● Kristen Peach
● Jasmine Lai
● Annie Colgan
● Amber Budden
● Sam Csik
● Geoff Willard
● Paul-Eric Rayner
● Courtney Scarborough
● Kaitlyn Gaynor
● Danielle Ferraro
● Marty Downs
● Christopher Jones
● Juliette Verstaen
● Julia Lowndes
● Carrie Kappel

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Not yet reviewed
● Tess Hooper (stepped back from pod)