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Climate Change Is a Fiscal Disaster for Local Governments.

A new study of Florida's fiscal vulnerability to climate change finds that flooding directly threatens many local tax bases.

Climate change is affecting communities nationwide, but Florida often seems like ground zero. In September 2022, Hurricane Ian devastated southwest Florida, killing at least 156 people and causing an estimated US\$113 billion in damages. Then Hurricane Idalia shut down the Florida Panhandle in September 2023, augmented by a blue supermoon that also increased tidal flooding in southeast Florida.

Communities can adapt to some of these effects, or at least buy time, by taking steps such as upgrading stormwater systems and raising roads and sidewalks. But climate disasters and sea-level rise also harm local governments financially by increasing costs and undercutting their property tax bases. Local reliance on property taxes also can discourage cities from steering development out of flood zones, which is essential for reducing long-term risks.

In a [newly published study](#) and supporting [online StoryMap](#), we present the first-ever municipal fiscal impact assessment of sea-level rise in Florida and combine it with a statewide survey of coastal planners and managers. We wanted to know how sea-level rise would affect municipal tax revenues and whether coastal planners and managers are accounting for these fiscal impacts.

[Continue reading.](#)

Route Fifty

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