



Job Aid: Choosing and Prioritizing Indicators & Metrics to Track

Questions to ask yourself and/or your organization to better understand what indicators and metrics (I&Ms) make the most sense to track.

Capacity to track and analyze indicators and metrics

- Are there specific times of year the I&M need to be collected, and how does that integrate with your workflow?
- Do you have staff who can relatively easily do the tracking?
- How many I&Ms are manageable for staff to track?

What I&Ms can we afford to track? (e.g., expensive equipment, one-time vs. periodic vs. ongoing, staff capacity)

- What I&Ms do you have the technical capacity to track? (i.e., ability to analyze data collected)
- Do you have the resources to hire assistance with tracking or analyzing I&Ms?

Potential and likely uses for indicators and metrics

- How will the I&Ms be used? (e.g., communications, inform management, inspire behavior change...)
- What decisions are you trying to inform? (i.e., is tracking a particular I&M going to help inform your work)
- What I&Ms would be most impactful in informing management/policy decisions? (e.g., what's important to elected officials, other decision-makers or stakeholders)
- Is the I&M useful on its own or does it need to be interpreted in the context of other I&Ms? (i.e., will an I&M on its own tell a story, or will you need to track several I&Ms to have a meaningful analysis)
- What I&Ms are most likely to gain support internally? (e.g., support from elected officials, other decision-makers)

Importance of/Need for indicators and metrics

- How essential is a particular I&M to your ability to tell whether something is working/effective?
- How essential is a particular I&M to your ability to tell whether something is progressing?
- How essential is a particular I&M to your ability to tell whether something has the desired effect, but also positive or negative side effects?

Access to existing data and monitoring systems

- What I&Ms are already being tracked and can be leveraged internally? (i.e., already have baseline data; check in all departments/divisions)
- Are there I&Ms other agencies/organizations are tracking that can be leveraged? (or can you partner with organizations to get indicators tracked, e.g., schools, universities, NGOs)
- Are there specific events that could be leveraged to collect a particular dataset? (i.e., an annual conference...)
- How easy is it to access external or internal data to support this I&M?
- Do you need to involve other agencies/partners? If yes, how likely is it that you'll get support from these external partners?
- If the data doesn't already exist, can you (or a partner) collect the relevant data?



This job aid was created to serve as a reference for individuals interested in indicators and metrics to help communities define and track progress on their climate adaptation goals. Additional background and resources are available on the website: www.ResilienceMetrics.org. This website was developed in partnership with the National Estuarine Research Reserve System with funding from NOAA.