



# Considering Reputational Risk at NOAA

**National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration**

March 19, 2024

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# What is Reputational Risk?

The threat or danger to  
the good name or standing  
of an organization

*Reputations are built over decades...  
but can be lost in an instant*

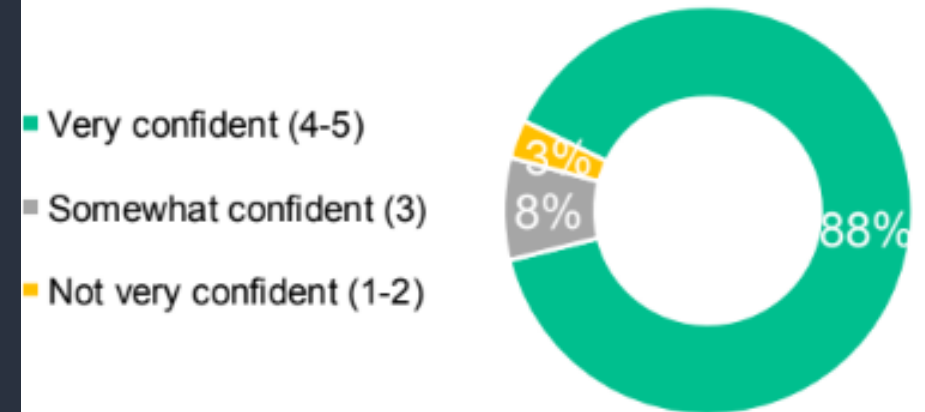


# NOAA is a trusted source of information

NOAA has a strong reputation with the general public and with users of our products and services:

- American Customer Satisfaction Index scores for NWS are consistently high
- CX survey on climate products and data

## Confidence in the accuracy and reliability of NOAA climate data/services



Data collected as part of *Advancing NOAA's Equitable Service Delivery (CX) for Underserved Communities*; n=259



# Types/Sources of Reputational Risks

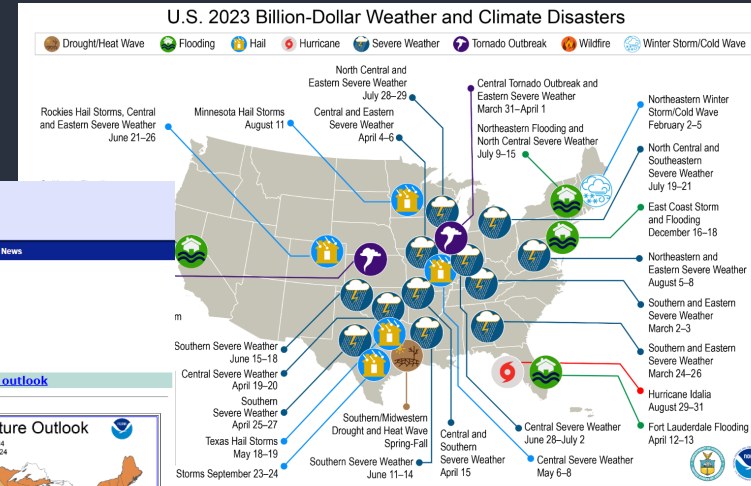
- (i) direct risks related to the actions of the organization itself (e.g., a “busted” forecast)
- (ii) indirect risks due to the actions of employees (e.g., research-related fraud)
- (iii) tangential risks through peripheral, third-party relationships (e.g., data agreements, MOUs, political interference)



# Why is reputation important?

Our reputational standing affects:

- use of our products and services
- workforce recruitment and retention
- ability to form/maintain partnerships



National Weather Service  
Climate Prediction Center

Three-Month Outlooks  
OFFICIAL Forecasts  
Feb-Mar-Apr 2024

Click here for information about the three-month outlook

Seasonal Temperature Outlook  
Valid: Feb-Mar-Apr 2024  
Issued: January 18, 2024

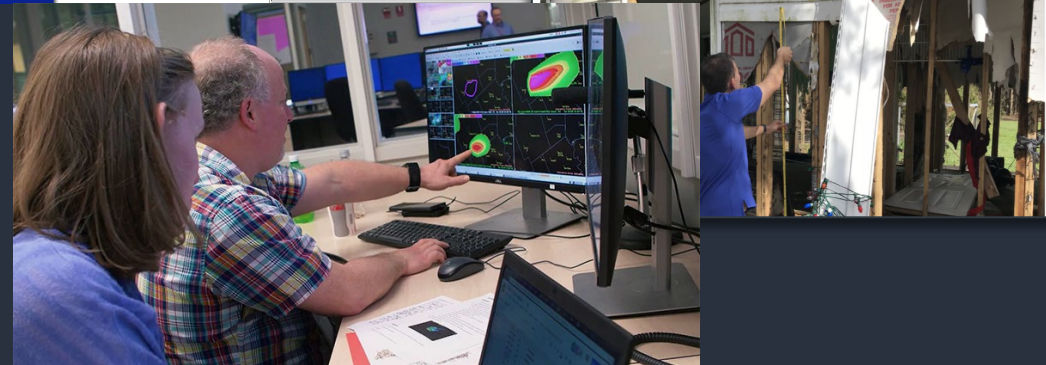
USA.gov

## Agreement between NOAA, ASCE prepares nation for climate-ready infrastructure

Focus areas: Climate, Research, Topics: Infrastructure, Climate-Ready Nation

UPDATED: February 15, 2023. Updated to include the link to the full Memorandum of Understanding.

February 2, 2023



# NOAA's management of risk, including reputational risks

- NOAA has an Enterprise Risk Assessment process and community of practice among risk managers
- The Scientific Integrity Policy recognizes actions that could damage reputation (ex: fraud, fabrication, lack of transparency, inadequate access, perceived or actual conflicts of interest)
- Discussions of reputational risks occur regularly at Line/Staff Offices and Leadership levels



# Internal NOAA discussions of reputational risks

## Key questions raised

- **How do we communicate assessments** of reputational risk across programs? How do we adjudicate if different conclusions emerge from different programs?
- As we grow our partnerships and expand engagement activities, what are the **challenges and opportunities for our “due diligence” processes and tracking?**
- **What can we learn from other organizations** and their risk management processes?



# Additional considerations

- What are potential “reputational scenarios” associated with climate research that are on your mind?
- “Adverse framing” and “noble cause corruption” are tied to the actions of external organizations (i.e., not inside science agency fence lines):
  - can we be constructive with our comms/engagement to avoid?
  - when does engagement carry its own reputation risk?
  - using the Scientific Integrity Policies as a guide







# Thank You!

