

20 Waves of grief and anger: Communicating through the “end of the world” as we knew it

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20.1 Introduction

“To retreat or not to retreat” is the very heart of what millions of individuals and thousands of communities across the United States and beyond already do or will have to confront. It is a question that must draw on the best available climate change science and contend as well with finance, law, governance approaches, and a host of technical and logistical aspects of planning and implementing adaptive solutions. Advancements in science make it ever clearer that scores of people located in or near coastal regions, wildfire zones, floodplains, and areas exposed to extreme heat will face extraordinary challenges due to the unprecedented scope, scale, and speed of climate change. In a century from now, we may think of this growing crisis as humanity’s greatest public works project and humanitarian challenge, experienced first and foremost by those already marginalized racially, socioeconomically, and politically. We must either defend and maintain in place a human-dominated landscape in perpetuity or return once-inhabited places to the forces of nature. And millions of people must find new homes, jobs, schools, a sense of community, and peace of mind.

The fact that “retreat or not” is a question and not a foregone conclusion *requires* that we talk about it: To frame it, explore it, and understand it. It asks us to depoliticize and debate it, envision and examine our options, organize ourselves, come to decisions, and grapple with their implications. It demands that we find solutions, particularly for those at greatest risk and with the least resources. We must locate our collective resolve, build our strength, and support each other through the process. In short, to retreat or not is a question that cannot be answered without communication and deep engagement. And yet, it is one of the hardest issues to talk about.

Many are stymied by the challenge of how to talk about and “message” retreat or relocation – an utterly unpleasant, even unthinkable possibility (particularly, but not only) in the American mind, and particularly the white, privileged mind. And yet, land-use managers, planners, extension/outreach staff, researchers, technical service providers, and other professionals working in communities already confronting relocation need urgent help in finding pragmatic and feasible ways to communicate about it.

The single most-frequently heard communication concern to date has been over “the right words” to use, what alternative there might be to the “R” word (retreat, relocation, resettlement, and realignment) (Koslov, 2016). This narrow framing of the communication challenge reduces the focus to the precarity of guessing the least-triggering, most-persuasive language, which people hope will remove resistance and guarantee “buy-in.” This fails to recognize the bigger need that retreat communication has to answer: Namely, to empathetically and respectfully assist people in making a difficult change that severs their ties to place, community, heritage, and livelihoods (Maldonado et al., 2020). Nor does it recognize that human responses to the specter of retreat are rooted in, and complicated by, underlying political dynamics and racial histories, people’s socioeconomic realities, personal and communal aspirations, and beliefs. Retreat communication must deal with people’s relational needs and emotions in the face of an overwhelming, intractable, and – for hundreds and more years – unstoppable problem. In short, a more comprehensive look at communication and the process of engagement in the face of relocation is needed which addresses the human needs throughout that process.

This chapter aims to take on this broader challenge: How to communicate about relocation in the full and messy complexity in which it unfolds. While the focus will primarily be on “planned” or “managed” retreat, *unplanned* retreat also involves communication. Managed retreat, however, entails the ever-present opportunity to take on communication in a deliberate, respectful, empathetic, culturally appropriate, mindful, and reparative fashion. It offers an opportunity to ease a difficult process for all involved. As such it is not only a utilitarian means, but also a humane act amidst the deep structural, policy, and financial reforms necessary to enable the transformative changes necessary to create fundamentally safer, socially just, and environmentally sustainable living conditions for all.

In the next section, drawing on a broad literature survey, I will sketch out the deeply human needs in a transformation process. Thereafter, I will lay out key tasks that transformative communication needs to address (Moser, 2019) and apply them to relocation.

20.2 Insights on communication and engagement from the retreat literature

20.2.1 *The retreat experience*

In preparing this chapter, I reviewed 63 peer-reviewed articles, two Masters theses, and four reports on coastal¹ relocation/retreat published between 2000 and 2020 for insights on communication and engagement. I examined what keeps people in place or allows them to move; influences on retreat attitudes and behavior; perceptions and emotional experience of retreat; the language of retreat; the geographic, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts; retreat approaches

and governance mechanisms used; and any specifics on the communication and engagement methods deployed.

From this review several important insights ensued. First, the initial literature search yielded thousands of articles on relocation. Managed (coastal) retreat constitutes but a small, if growing subset of this much larger multi-disciplinary literature (e.g., voluntary or forced relocation due to urban restructuring, war, or infrastructure development; relocation after disaster; and relocation of workplaces). In that broader relocation literature, there is no notable concern with the word “retreat” or the other “R” words. In these other contexts, the word either serves as a neutral descriptor or is part of a larger (often dominant) narrative of progress, improvement, advance, or safety. This linguistic concern emerges thus as a unique feature of the climate-driven retreat literature. Notably, only one coastal retreat-focused study critically questioned the widespread search for the “right word” to name the process (Koslov, 2016).

Second, the broader literature review also reveals extensive attention to people’s psychological experience of such relocation experiences (e.g., well-being, life satisfaction, posttraumatic stress, long-term impacts, and social connectivity) as well as to socioeconomic outcomes (e.g., educational attainment of children, housing, income, wealth, and debt). In contrast, the literature on climate-induced retreat is more narrowly focused on conflict, resistance, and conditions of acceptability, not on the lived experience of going through relocation. Explanatory variables often focus on place attachment, sociodemographic factors, design and implementation of retreat policies, lack of adequate financial assistance, and perceived necessity/belief in climate change. These studies do not reveal much about the actual experience of having to give up one’s home and belonging to a place, or the experienced retreat outcomes. While they frequently end with pleas for proactive communication and engagement between governments and affected residents to address the observed resistance (and underlying experiences of fairness and justice), there is little depth to trying to understand people’s experiences beyond place attachment.

Third, the vast majority of reviewed retreat studies mentions only negative emotional experiences associated with the process, predominantly resistance, refusal, and conflict. Some even acknowledge relocation can be traumatic and note a range of posttraumatic stress symptoms. The majority of these studies relate those negative emotional experiences to people not wishing to let go of home, property, and community (rather than, say, to legacies of injustice). Others make clear, however, that the emotional experience of retreat is just as much driven by the quality of the retreat process (e.g., duration, clarity of communication between authorities and affected communities, ease of process, availability and sufficiency of financial compensation, and interactions with neighbors). This reinforces the crucial importance of effective communication and engagement throughout the retreat process.

Only a very small number of studies look at positive emotional experiences of retreat. Those are typically associated with the process or outcomes at the vacated and new location (Bazart et al., 2020; Gini et al., 2020; Koslov, 2016). One might hypothesize that either there are many more negative experiences, or the negative experiences draw more research (and media) attention than the positive ones, or both. Importantly, however, negative and positive experiences are not separate; rather, what distinguishes them and what can lead from the more painful to the more positive outcomes is conscious psychological processing, social organizing, good governing, and communicative reframing (Gini et al., 2020; Hanna et al., 2020; Koslov, 2016). Drawing on this literature, Figure 20.1 attempts to capture this full-spectrum emotional landscape and the dynamic processing that can lead to



Figure 20.1 The emotional landscape residents may experience in the course of climate-related retreat.

Source: The author.

either the oft-reported negative outcomes or the less frequently reported positive ones.

Many studies report positive emotions associated with the place in question (e.g., love, care, and attachment), in addition to people feeling more or less at risk from climate-related hazards or having experienced hazardous events there (Agyeman et al., 2009; Burley et al., 2007; Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2013; Moser, 2013). Leaving a place (by choice, necessity, or social pressure) frequently involves a wide range of emotions associated with grief, anxiety, and anger. Depending on circumstances, the quality of the engagement process, and government communication, individuals and communities sometimes understandably resort to defensiveness and can end up with unresolved trauma. Some manage to process their emotions, individually and collectively, reframe, retreat, and arrive at what might be described as posttraumatic growth: In an accepting, grateful, positively transformed state of mind, embracing the new location, community, and life. To the extent the retreat trauma is also racialized, the emotional posttraumatic legacies may or may not get resolved. Deeper systemic changes, restorative justice, and reparative measures would be needed.

Regarding the reframing, Koslov (2016) points to the importance of not just finding the right word to name the relocation process, but reshaping the larger narrative that is being enacted in each case. In one case, the narrative was one of righting the wrongs of inappropriate development; in another, it was about realizing the American dream in a safer location.

20.2.2 *Limited recommendations for communication in retreat contexts*

The reviewed literature does not offer many concrete recommendations of how to implement an effective communication and engagement strategy for retreat. Only one of the reviewed documents holds any (albeit quite generic) suggestions on what that might look like (Plastrik & Cleveland, 2019). Drawing largely on suggestions from the Climigration Network (<https://www.climigration.org/engagement>), they offer three communication-specific recommendations, namely to:

- design engagement processes for the emotional and social aspects of considering managed retreat;
- expose, rather than hide, climate risks, vulnerabilities, and the implications for retreat; and
- reframe retreat from a loss to a positive redevelopment and improvement story (p. 25).

These recommendations are diametrically opposed to the cognitive-behavioral scientific literature, which emphasizes mostly education about climate change risks and adaptation options. They also diverge from the dominant instrumentalist practice, which tends to focus on eliciting formal input while conveying technical details of climate change and retreat and the logistics of

implementing it so as to obtain buy-in. Their recommendations fail to articulate, however, the fundamental shift required toward a relational approach, that is, one that understands retreat as being about changing relationships between residents and their governments, between coastal residents and their neighbors, and people and the places they are attached to (Hanna et al., 2020). They are also silent on how to proactively address the frequently observed “resistance” and “conflict,” implying presumably that if the general guidance offered would be followed, such resistance or conflict would not emerge or be sufficiently addressed. This white, privileged stance clearly does not address the lack of safety experienced particularly by communities of color to express themselves or to feel heard in government contexts. It leaves the lived experience of those faced with retreat – often the already socioeconomically and racially marginalized and politically silenced – if not off the table, at least not addressed directly. Other studies emphasize not just “delivering the right message” but also the importance of “meaningful community engagement” (Bazart et al., 2020; Bukvic & Owen, 2017; Piggott-McKellar et al., 2020), but what this means remains largely underdeveloped.

In summary, the insights gained from the existing literature point to the need to take seriously the psychological and relational dimensions, as well as the legacies of injustice, in retreat communication. Relocation – as one manifestation of potentially transformative change in the face of climate disruption – demands that we think much harder about what it means to communicate in the midst of and in support of a societal transformation (Moser, 2019). To date, climate communication research and practice has been rather silent on this question. Taking the psychological and relational needs of transformative change seriously, I develop ten tasks that an effective communication amidst profound change needs to accomplish (Box 20.1).

Box 20.1 Ten tasks of communication amidst a societal transformation

Naming and Framing the Depth, Scale, Nature and Outline of (Necessary) Change

- Fostering the Transformative Imagination
- Mirroring Change Empathetically
- Helping People Resist the Habit of Acquiescing to Going Numb
- Orienting and Course-Correcting Toward the Difficult
- Distinguishing (and Deconstructing) Valuable (Un)Certainties
- Sense- and Meaning-making of Difficult Change Through Story (Not Facts)
- Fostering Authentic and Radical Hope
- Promoting and Actively Living a Public Love
- Fostering Generative Engagement in Building Dignified Futures For All

Next, I explore what each of these tasks means in the context of retreat to make these proposals specific and actionable for individuals and communities involved in relocation discussions.

20.3 Addressing the psychological and relational needs of transformative change

Taking the psychological and relational needs of people facing profound change seriously does not supplant or invalidate the need for a better understanding of climate change-driven risks. The tasks discussed here should be integral to the educational goal already embraced.

20.3.1 Naming and framing the depth, scale, nature, and outline of (necessary) change

As numerous studies have found, when people do not have a good sense of the nature, persistence, and growing magnitude of the risks they are facing where they live, they are far less willing to entertain retreat (Bazart et al., 2020; Dachary-Bernard et al., 2019). Many still have only a limited understanding of the adaptation options available and what their respective requirements, costs, and other pros and cons might be (Jones & Clark, 2014; Kuruppu & Liverman, 2011). Thus, explaining both climate change and related risks for the locality and offering successively more detailed information on various adaptation options are important elements of retreat communication.

However, as with all communication, it would be a (repeated) mistake to assume that simply delivering technical information will help people make sense, fully grasp the implications of, or motivate, action. Delivering such information can, in fact, backfire if not framed and handled carefully. The local context will matter in important ways here: Has the community recently experienced a damaging climate-related event? Was it a “first” in many years or one of several in sequence? Does climate change already produce disruptions or are the impacts still mostly anticipated? Are residents looking at scientific projections on paper or at water coming up through the stormwater pipes? Is there a foreboding sense of dread within the community or first-hand trauma experiences? Was that trauma experienced against a backdrop of ongoing racial, gender, or socioeconomic trauma? What is the history of development and land use in the community and who has control over it? What are the options? How much time is there to choose?

All these questions will relate to how communities (and the experts and officials supporting them) frame the threat they are facing and the choices available to deal with them. But the prospect of ending residence in a particular location should never be solely framed as an ending. To help people come to embrace such profound change, their losses and sacrifices must be placed into a narrative arc toward a new beginning, toward something that is meaningful and good in the eyes of those affected (Berzonsky & Moser, 2017). Such truth telling

must lift people up, be part of a fair process, and restore and repair not just physical environments but human communities as well.

20.3.2 *Fostering the transformative imagination*

Summoning people to a vision of a better future is easier said than done. What framings, what visions for life after retreat can “help [...] audiences hold the immensity of what is unfolding without collapsing under its weight” (Moser, 2019, p. 150) *while* simultaneously opening up people’s imagination to a desirable if reality-bound future?

As some authors (Paterson et al., 2020; Plastrik & Cleveland, 2019; Shein et al., 2015) suggest, inviting participation in artful expression can be helpful here, but so are visioning exercises (Ames, 2001; Wiek & Iwaniec, 2014), scenario planning (Amer et al., 2013; Tevis, 2010), or raising “futures consciousness” (Adam & Groves, 2011; Kunseler et al., 2015; Sharpe, 2013).

In the retreat context where time pressures, financial constraints, historical legacies, and narrowly focused governance processes all conspire against an expansive and open-ended imagination, facilitators of local relocation conversations must take this task seriously, not because it may foster buy-in and delay action due to unresolved grievances, but because it offers an opportunity to generate novel ideas with which to create something potentially better than what is being left behind.

Whether it is undoing patterns of inappropriate development, restoring natural environments, establishing important services to the community, or ending forms of exclusion of certain community members, imagining how multiple problems may be solved in the course of relocation can be empowering and encouraging for all involved. Clearly, *just* fostering such an expanded imagination is not enough, as many great ideas may exist but fall “on the cutting room floor” of bureaucracy, narrow agency mandates, and lack of funding. It is essential, however, to ensure deep policy and finance reform.

20.3.3 *Mirroring change empathetically*

Opening up the imagination to develop a vision of a desirable future does not obfuscate the difficulties of facing present realities or future outlooks (much less the relocation process itself). When adaptation professionals (elected officials, government staff, facilitators, or community leaders) muster the courage to have public conversations about retreat, residents themselves may follow in facing the stark realities of irreversible climate change impacts. Insights from psychology tell us that such serious “diagnoses” must be delivered with empathy, time, and sensitivity to the needs and experiences of those affected (Cunsolo & Landman, 2017; Groopman, 2004; Lonsdale & Goldthorpe, 2012). This is made easier if facilitators of such conversations have grown their own comfort with the emotional territory of climate grief (Moser, 2020a, 2020b) and of racial and socioeconomic injustice and antiracist work. It enables them to be with, and

hold safe space for, volatile emotional reactions and mirror these responses empathetically back to those involved.

To date most government officials and professionals involved in relocation are not trained to facilitate such emotion-laden processes. While one answer to this challenge is for them to step back and let community members lead, those that remain engaged may not be trained in trauma-aware risk communication, grief work, and the psychology of transformation. This points to the need for critical professional development training for adaptation professionals (Gilford et al., 2019).

20.3.4 Helping people resist the habit of acquiescing to going numb

Many residents will come to the “retreat or not?” question after dikes, sea walls, levees, vegetation breaks, and hearts were broken, after homes were shattered, family possessions lost, and life savings burnt or washed away. News outlets will not only repeat their traumatic experiences *ad nauseum*, often adding racist insult to physical injury; stories just like it will be reported with growing frequency from around the country and world. Such is the nature of exponential change curves rising up against densely developed and redeveloped population centers. The temptation will be to “go numb” to growing devastation and loss. The phenomena of compassion and climate fatigue are already being observed (Figley, 1995; Kerr, 2009).

To meet the changing needs of residents throughout the prolonged relocation process as they prepare to leave and try to gain a foothold in a new location (e.g., financial assistance, government bureaucracies, suitable alternative housing, implications for work, schooling, health care, and social connectivity) requires patience, stamina, and emotional resiliency among all involved: From elected officials to support staff on the ground, to the residents themselves. It is critical to attend to both the logistical and the psychosocial needs in the current and new location. And because relocation is not always a wholesale community process, but often involves only some, there are also the needs of those who stay behind. Several reported cases speak to the lack of infrastructure maintenance, services, and neighborliness, and a sense of having been abandoned and forgotten after other neighbors moved away (Purdy, 2019). These are instances of “numbing” and suggest emotional support is an ongoing need throughout the process. Residents choosing to stay or to leave should be made aware of the physical and psychological consequences of their choices and be asked about their support needs.

20.3.5 Orienting and course-correcting toward the difficult

Relocation is a difficult and prolonged process. Even the purely managerial and technical is fraught with challenges. And yet, those managerial aspects are the easier tasks. Oftentimes, especially in the increasingly climate justice-conscious adaptation field, the relocation process will not be constrained to matters of land-use decisions and hazard mitigation. Given structural, economic, and

governance interdependencies, it does and should surface questions about systemic racism, housing injustices, gentrification, exclusion from economic opportunity, and deeper questions about community safety in a disruptive climate context (Agyeman et al., 2009; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Keenan et al., 2018).

Rather than assume this is *not* their work, adaptation professionals must expect and embrace these interrelated issues, by doing their own antiracist work and involving skilled facilitators and community members to navigate these difficult conversations. They offer the opportunity to address a pressing environmental concern as well as interrelated socioeconomic ones. While governance processes and funding cycles will have their own timelines, the deeper reckoning and healing will move along at its own pace. This should be openly recognized and commitments sought from those who created and perpetuated those past harms to stay in the process as long as it takes. This task of course-correcting toward the difficult often will fall to career staff and advocates who stay while elected officials – bound by terms of office – may be unwilling to take on such uncomfortable conversations. And yet, career staff require financial and political backing for their work from those elected officials. Voters will need to hold their representatives accountable for putting their political weight behind this crucial reparative work.

20.3.6 Distinguishing (and deconstructing) valuable (un)certainities

Climate change is an observed phenomenon at present and the laws of physics ensure that it is a future certainty as well. However, how much and how fast impacts will manifest in any one location is scientifically uncertain. Nearly everything else about retreat is fraught with lack of information and knowledge as well. In short, “uncertainty is the fundamental condition for [living into our collective futures]” (Moser, 2019, p. 153).

Thus, one task of transformative communication is to foster curiosity, open minds, and ask questions where simplistic answers or searching for premature certainty would be a disservice. Ideally, such difficult-to-answer questions should not be addressed in the wake of crisis when the impulse is to quickly re-establish normalcy and safety, but in the more spacious process of pre-disaster and adaptation planning. Adaptation professionals will need to finely balance this understandable need for safety in reliable knowledge with opening up conversations that avoid quick resolutions. What will help is a willingness to remain in the discomfort of not knowing and together seek meaningful solutions to the retreat problem. If facilitated well and centered around corrective action, such conversations are generative and healing, rather than stymying progress or fostering dissatisfaction, frustration, and hearsay.

20.3.7 Sense- and meaning-making of difficult change through story (not facts)

Facts do *not* speak for themselves. How they are being read depends on the lenses through which they are viewed. By helping communities face difficult

facts, generate a vision of a desirable future, and frame the work at hand, the unfolding story of retreat turns from one of loss and ending into one that makes sacrifice meaningful, renders change from a permanent disaster to a time-limited discomfort, and helps to move people to tolerable and maybe even improved prospects (Braamskamp & Penning-Rowse, 2018; Kozlov, 2016; Purdy, 2019). Through this meaning-making process, people adopt and rewrite the narrative of their lives, from being victims of oppression or fate to being creators of their destinies (Hodgson, 2007).

The more profound a shift is in our lives, the more likely we are to need such meaning-making and the more likely we are to ask deep questions about what is important and meaningful to us. Experience with relocation processes to date show that what is meaningful is highly dependent on the cultural, historical, social, and individual context of those needing to move (Piggott-McKellar et al., 2020). For indigenous communities (e.g., in the Arctic, Louisiana, or Washington), detaching from ancestral land involves questions of tradition, community, and tribal identity (Bronen, 2014; Maldonado et al., 2020; Sakakibara, 2008). For island communities (e.g., in the Pacific), relocation involves questions of national identity, sovereignty, security, belonging, and economic survival (Adger et al., 2011; Weir & Pittock, 2017). For long-time residents of a working-class neighborhood relocation may become meaningful if matters of community, livelihood, justice, and environmental restoration are centered (Koslov, 2016). All communities faced with retreat, however, now stand in the dynamic context of humanity having irrevocably set global changes in motion. As such humans relocating from areas long occupied will write a unique set of chapters in the larger narrative of the Anthropocene (DeSilvey, 2012).

20.3.8 Fostering authentic and radical hope

Ultimately, retreat communication has to engage with how we source and maintain hope – a grounded, authentic hope (Moser & Berzonsky, 2015). Such hope does not negate the seriousness of the present situation nor the difficult outlook, but it embraces the diagnosis, identifies a worthy goal, charts a path between one and the other, and demands active participation in realizing it, deeply anchored in personal and collective meaning, along with steady and strategic support from others.

Importantly, in the case studies of successful relocation experiences (e.g., in Valmeyer, IL; Oakwood Beach, NY; and Louisa County, IA), people not just found hope and empowerment in a positive vision to help them get through the difficult relocation process but from their own sense of agency. This manifested in control over data, information, and decisions, political organizing, shaping their own story, and succeeding not against nature but against authorities, bureaucracies, and retreat opponents (Gini et al., 2020; Koslov, 2016). “Hope,” as Tippett once said, “is a function of struggle” (2016, p. 251). For adaptation professionals, the task here is to not allow the conversation to get stuck in

unrealistic optimism or diatribe and despair, even when both the future and the way to get there must be radically re-envisioned (Lear, 2006), but to make that struggle productive, honorable, just, and reparative.

20.3.9 Promoting and actively living a public love

Rethinking one's future may be hardest when parties to a relocation process become stuck in interest politics, old power dynamics, and adversity. Historical legacies and persistent social and economic injustices create an uneven playing field for navigating retreat processes. Communication alone cannot undo these inequities. But communication can either worsen and feed into these old dynamics or it can serve a process of reconciliation and healing. That communicative work might be considered a form of "public love." It must consistently foster a sense of solidarity so that community members feel they are going through the challenge together and they are strengthened and restored, rather than diminished, by it. "Living a public love ... would help community members to learn to go through transformation with an open hand, that is, to approach each other from a stance of giving instead of taking; from a place of gifting instead of expecting" (Moser, 2019, p. 158).

There is no illusion about how challenging this will be. Retreat occurs against the backdrop of a widespread litigation culture in the United States, and corruption and human rights violations everywhere. It is for this reason that I emphasize this task. At-risk communities could enter a vicious cycle of costly lawsuits on top of costly adaptation, leading to time-consuming distraction, economic decline, and fewer options, particularly for those who need it most. Thus, this countercultural task requires not just changes in communication among adaptation professionals and affected residents; it requires re-education of legal professionals and others. It also requires involvement of individuals skilled in conflict transformation. Thus, at heart, this task may be the most challenging of all, even if begun simply: By people stopping how they have always interacted with each other, call on their highest selves, and do something different.

20.3.10 Conclusion: Fostering generative engagement in building dignified futures for all

In the end, the task of communicating with people facing the "end of the world as they knew it" and helping them find a way to a new world is about navigating not just inadequate and unfair policies, archaic bureaucracies, and exclusionary processes, but waves of grief and anger. It is about bridging differences, old rifts, and systemic injustices. It is about tapping, in ourselves as communicators and in others, a desire not just to "be right" but to "do right" by each other, and thus maybe – against the overwhelming odds of an inexorably changing climate – not just "do good" but "be good."

Communication cannot accomplish this alone. But a more effective, more deeply engaging, transformative communication should be an integral, crucially

important part of deep policy, structural, and financial reforms. This chapter suggests that a transformative communication that effectively assists the retreat process must:

- stop being preoccupied with finding “the right word” and instead assume that the right language is context-specific and found together with the affected communities;
- approach communication and engagement from a relational perspective;
- pay deep attention to the psychosocial needs of individuals and communities;
- work toward a narrative that draws an arc from an ending to a new, better, and reparative beginning; and
- address climate change risks and adaptation, together with the concurrent and often deep-seated legacies of racial, socioeconomic, gender, and other injustices.

Note

1 The literature review drew largely on literature on *coastal* retreat, although there are examples of other floodplain retreat cases, and there is increasing interest in retreat from extreme heat and wildfire-prone locations, but that literature is still sparse and did not yield insights on communication.

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