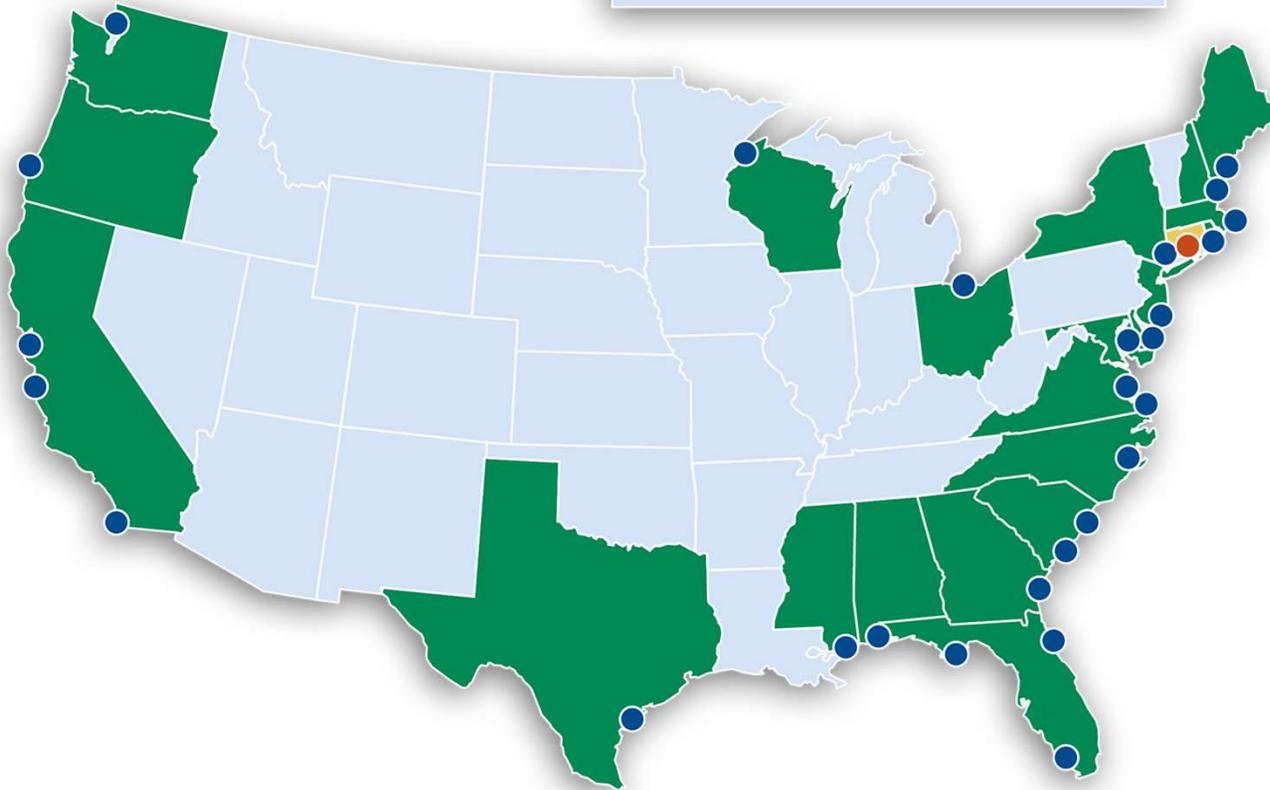




How do you know if decision-makers are
ready to act on climate change?

Ask them.

Karina Heim | karina.heim@wisc.edu
Erin Burkett | erin.burkett@wisc.edu



Part of a national system...



...housed under a state partner...



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

...doing local work.





Lake Superior
coastal decision makers



Shorelines, water levels and erosion



Stormwater & green infrastructure



Water quality & pollution prevention



Wetlands & coastal habitat health



Community economic and social issues



Community development, planning and regulation



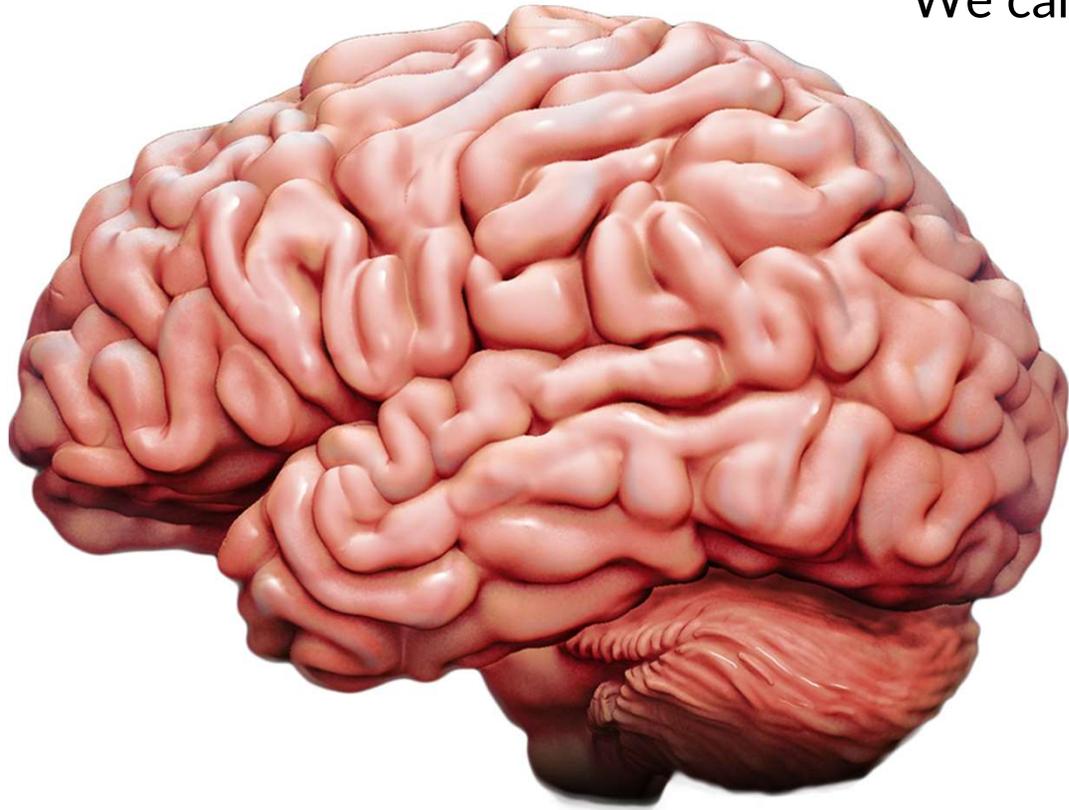
Climate change in the Lake Superior region



Is climate change important to coastal decision-makers?

What do they need?

We can't even say climate change!



Most people around here don't believe climate change is real!

If people had more information about climate change, they would do something about it!



Training interests by
topic

What do
people want
to learn?

Local
government
officials

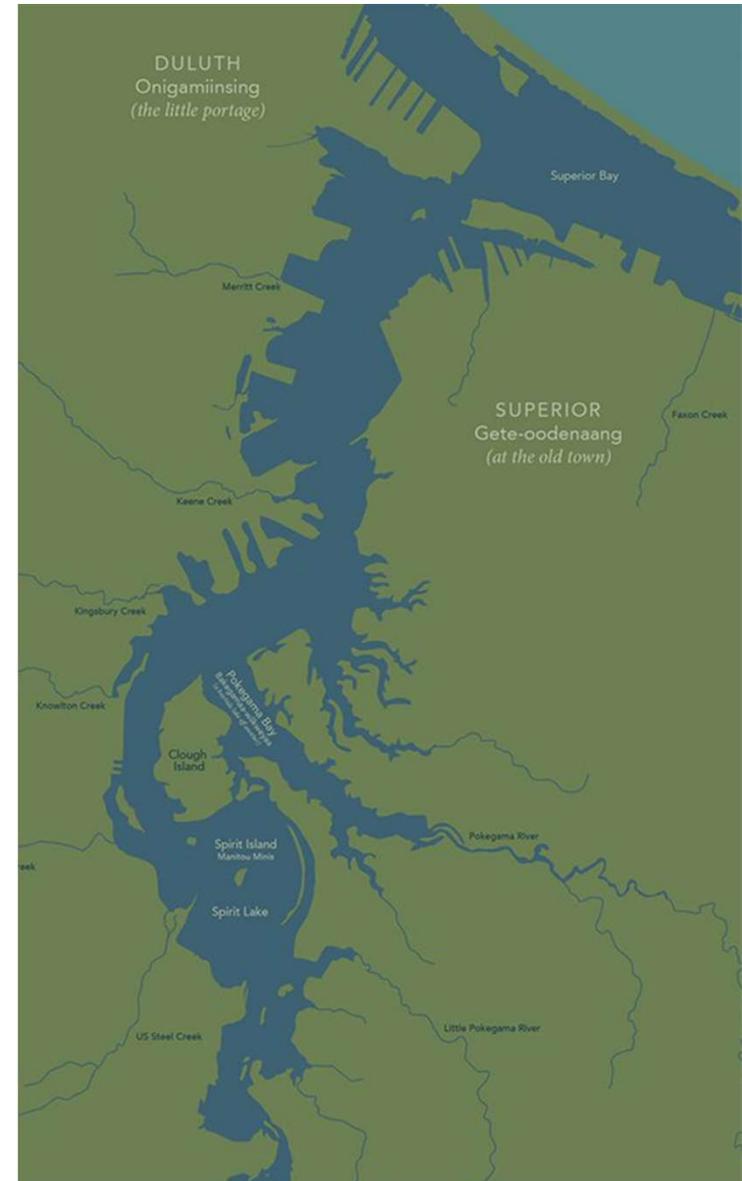
Tribal
government and
authorities

Land and water
management
specialists

Conservation
and restoration
practitioners

Agency
regulatory and
resource
management

Coastal outreach
professionals



Involving our
institute's Evaluation
unit in the
deployment and
analysis of this survey
was a **huge plus.**



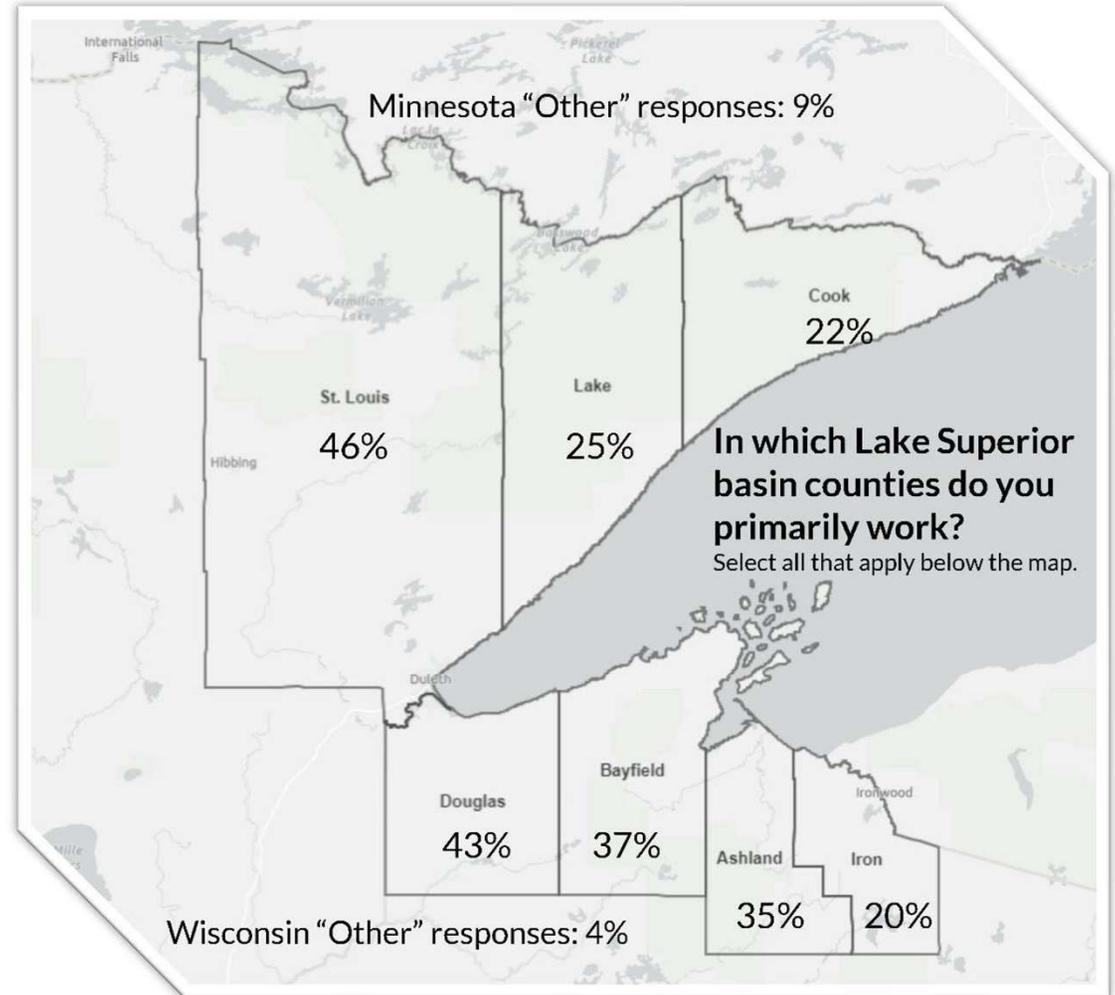
Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

319

respondents completed the Needs Assessment survey

What do you do in your professional role?
Select all that apply.

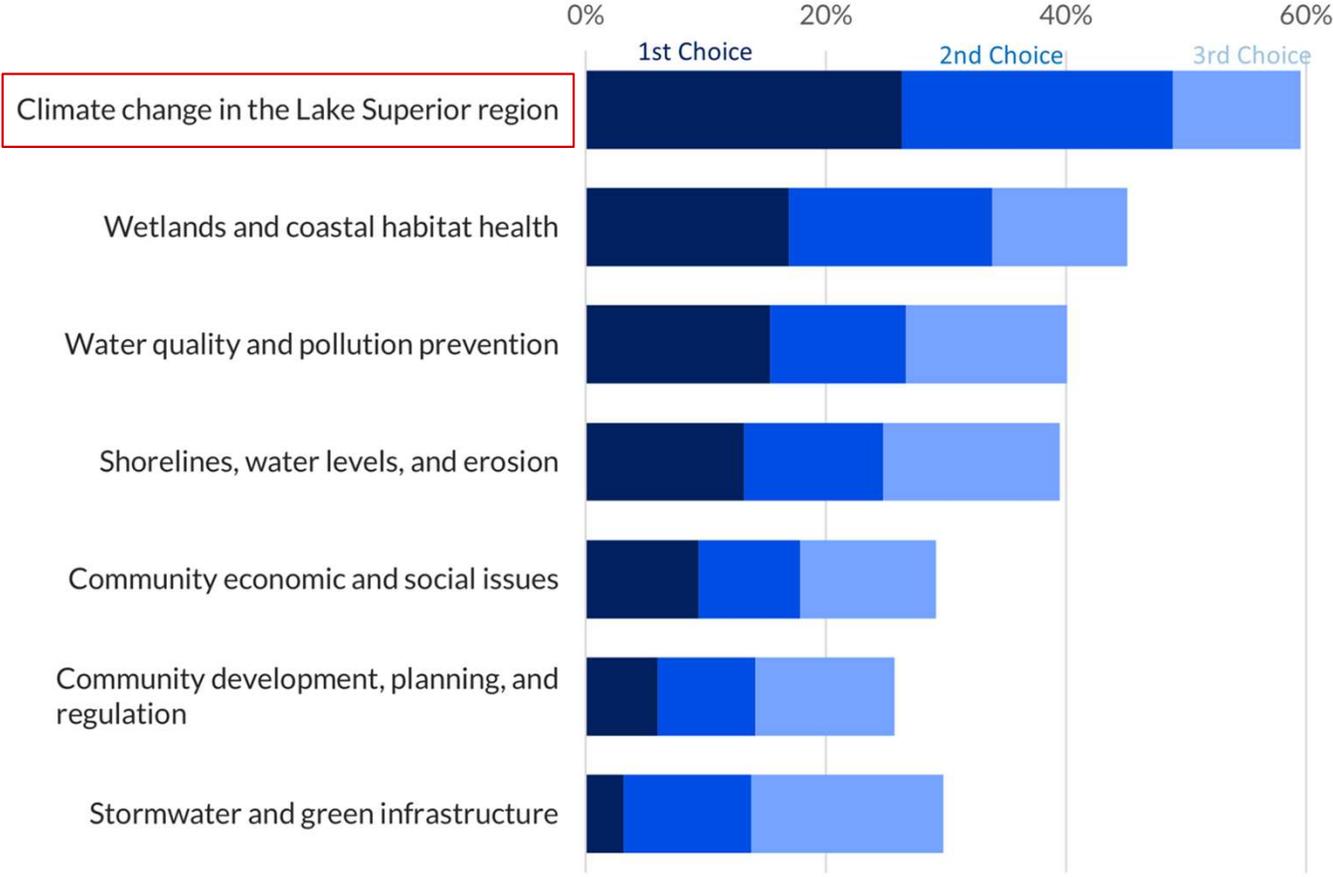


Survey finds:

Out of seven major coastal learning topic areas, **climate change** was by far the area where the greatest share of respondents want to maintain or grow their knowledge.

Of the seven topics listed below, please indicate the **top three topic areas** where you are most interested in growing or maintaining your professional knowledge.

PERCENTAGES ARE OUT OF 319 RESPONDENTS



Survey finds:

Out of 43 learning “subtopics”, the top four topics with the most interest are directly climate-related.

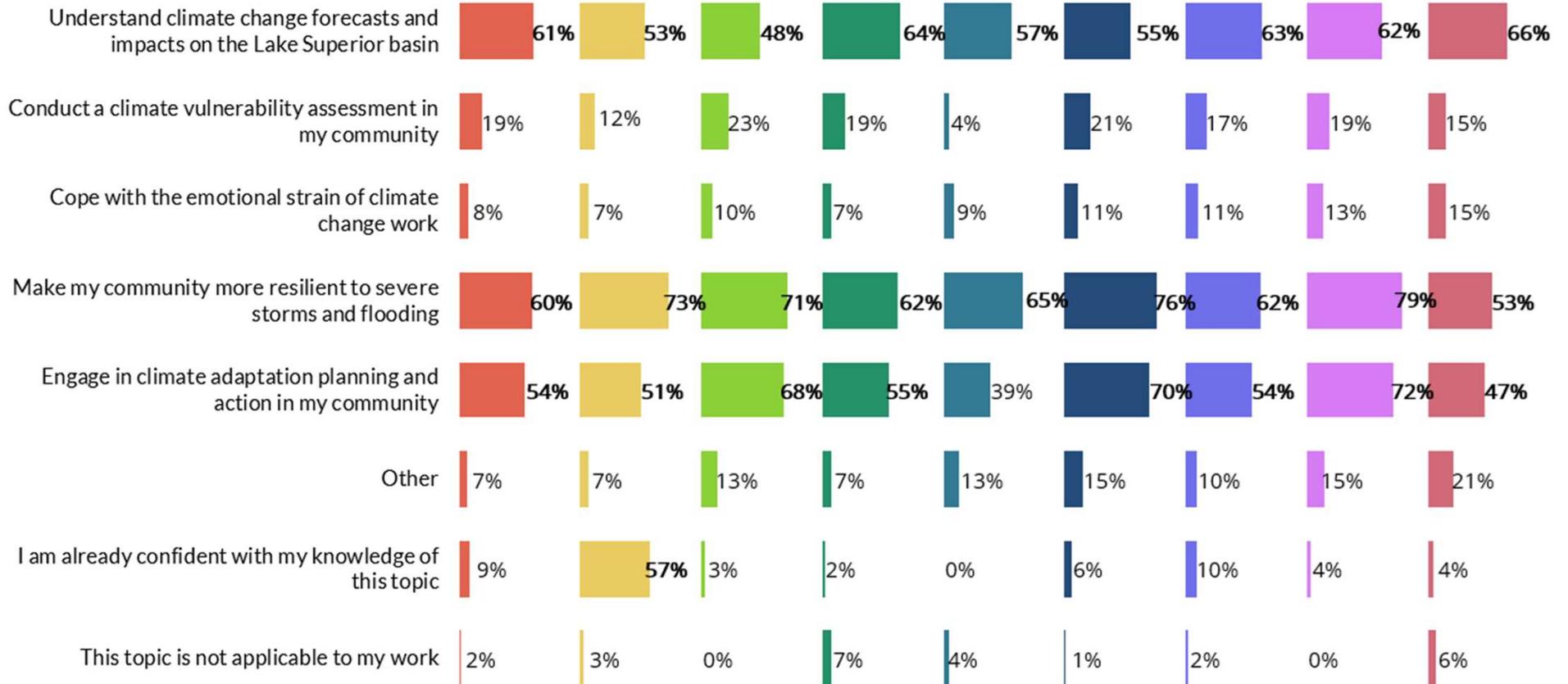
Specific Training and Learning Subtopics	%	N
Make my community more resilient to severe storms and flooding	57%	182
Understand climate change forecasts and impacts on the Lake Superior basin	55%	175
Engage in climate adaptation planning and action in my community	48%	153
Encourage resilient design of waterfront spaces and infrastructure in my community	45%	145
Learn about emerging contaminants (e.g. PFAS and microplastics)	45%	145
Promote wetland preservation and restoration on private lands	44%	141
Help my community plan for fluctuating Lake Superior water levels	42%	135
Understand causes and trends of Lake Superior water levels	40%	127
Increase communication between natural resource scientists and coastal practitioners	39%	126
Measure and monitor success of habitat restoration projects	39%	125
Incorporate more natural features (e.g. vegetation, sills) into shoreline stabilization projects	39%	124
Integrate coastal issues management in comp planning, hazard planning, and/or other planning efforts in my community	39%	123
Encourage stormwater management practices in my community	38%	121
Reduce risks to my community from natural hazards	38%	121
Have access to helpful decision-making tools for resource planning and management	38%	120
Reduce plastics and marine debris in our waterways	37%	118
Build strong relationships with diverse coastal stakeholders	37%	118

Survey finds:

Climate change learning topics are of high interest to coastal professionals across disciplines.

	Resource management: Manage natural or water resources, lead conservation or restoration projects
	Local government: Implement or enforce policies, codes and ordinances, community and economic development, planning, public works and engineering, park management
	Civic leadership and policy: Serve in an elected or appointed position on a board, commission, or council
	Built environment: Design, build, and maintain landscapes or infrastructure
	Waterfront places and industries: Operate waterfront or coastal-dependent business or manage public waterfront access points
	Community outreach and assistance: Provide technical assistance or funding to communities, media, landowners, agencies or other audiences
	Research: Study coastal, estuarine, or watershed ecological systems, or the human dimensions of coastal communities
	Communications: Develop communications on coastal-area topics or issues
	Other (Please specify)

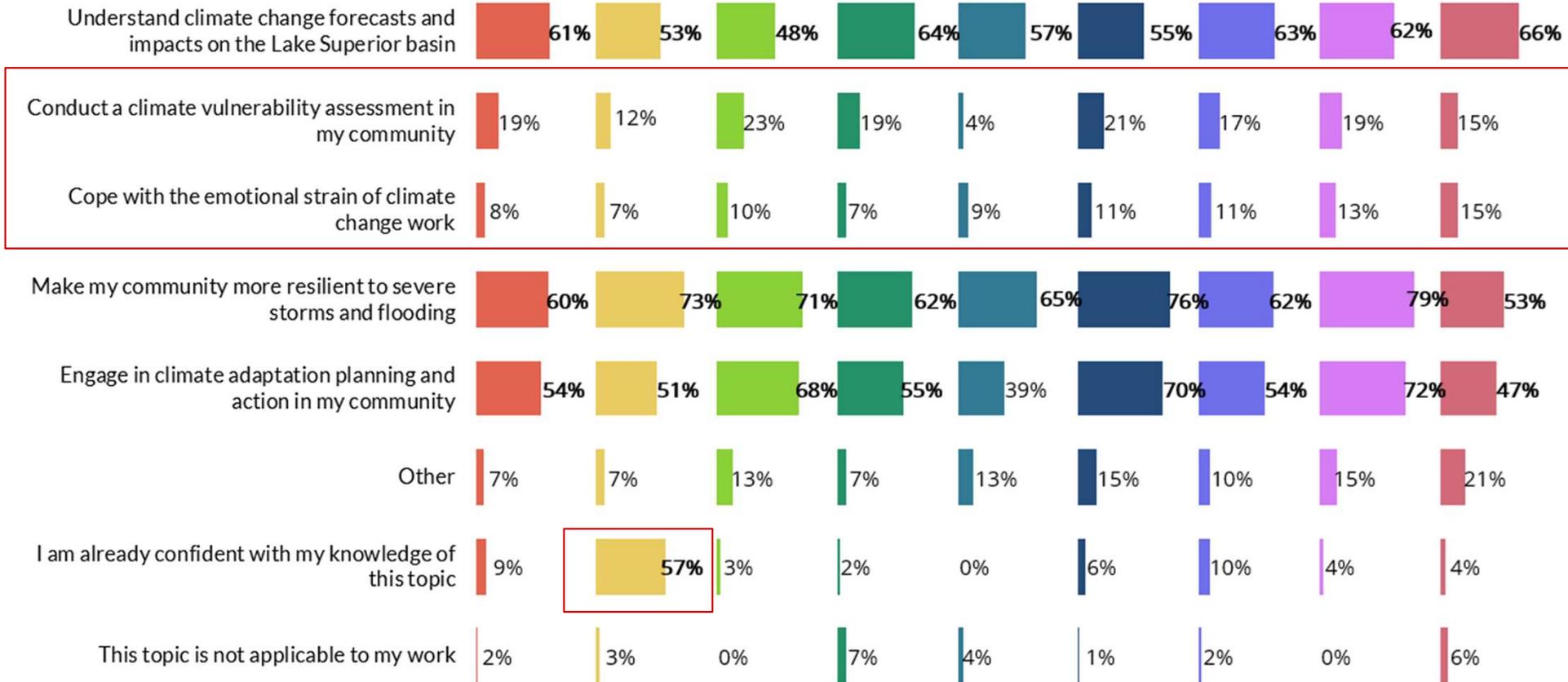
I'm interested in **climate change in the Lake Superior region** because I'd like to...

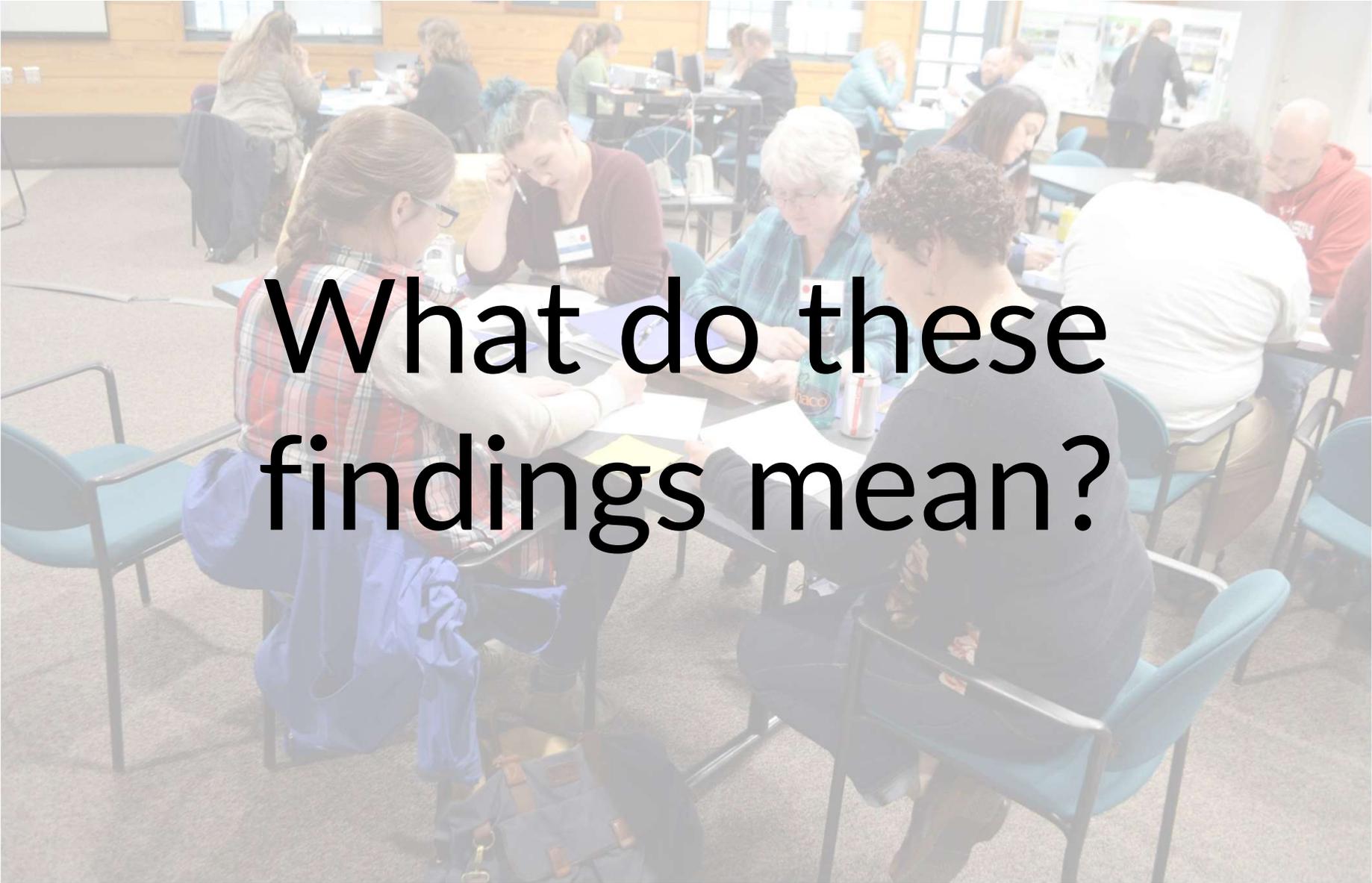


Survey finds:

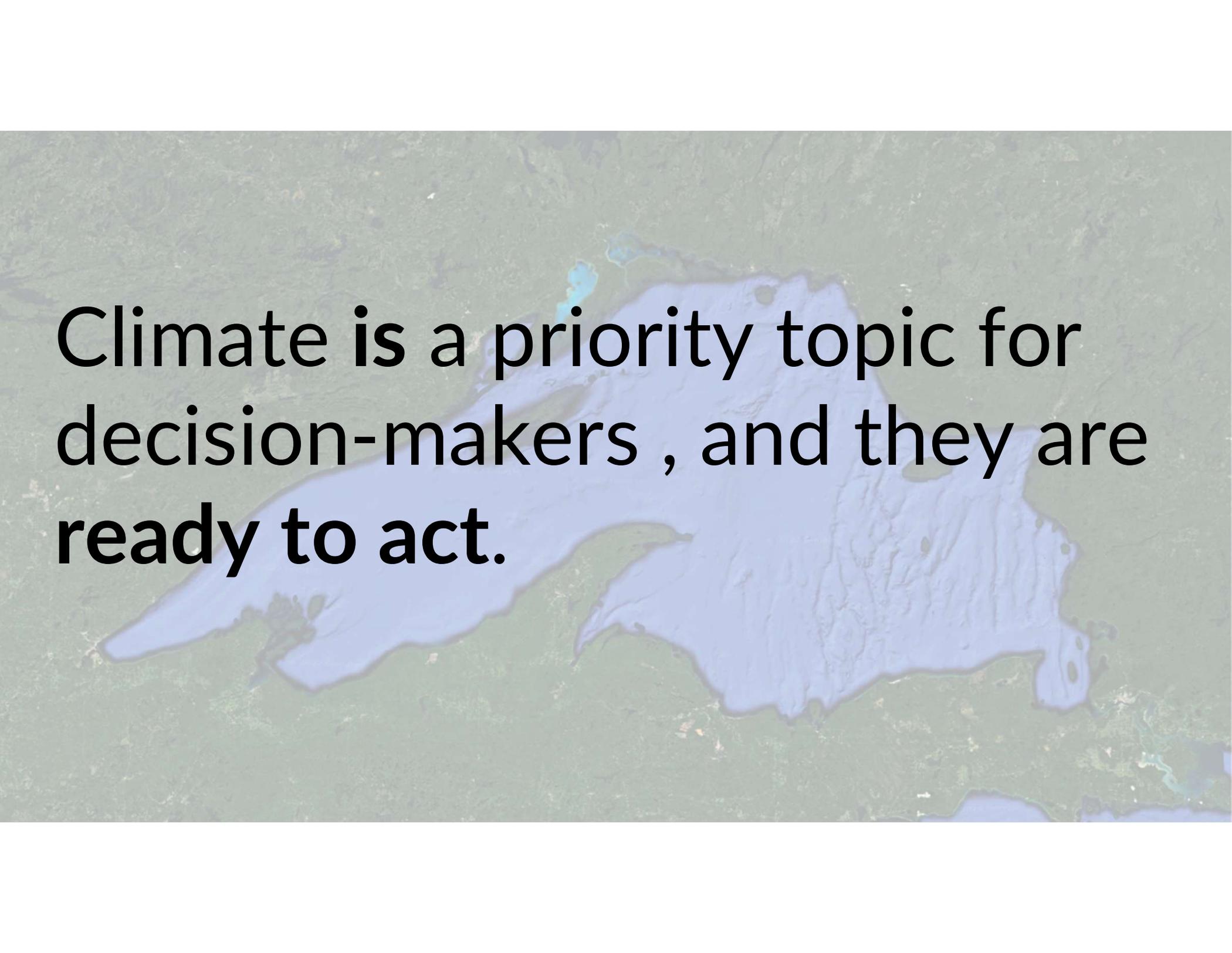
We see some nuance when we parse out climate change interest by topic and professional discipline.

I'm interested in **climate change in the Lake Superior region** because I'd like to...

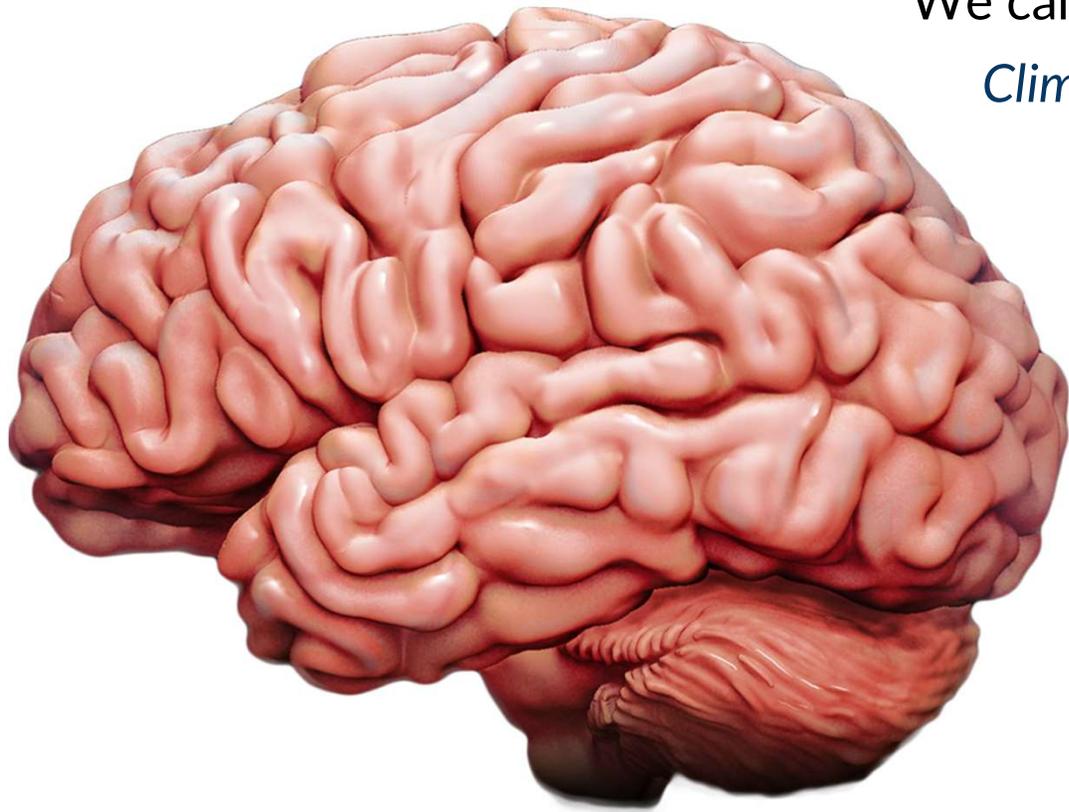


A photograph of a group of people sitting at tables in a meeting room, looking at documents and talking. The room has wood-paneled walls and large windows. The people are dressed in casual to business-casual attire. The text "What do these findings mean?" is overlaid in large, bold, black font across the center of the image.

What do these findings mean?

An aerial photograph of a large, irregularly shaped body of water, likely a reservoir or a large lake, surrounded by green, forested land. The water is a deep blue color. A semi-transparent blue overlay is applied to the water area, and the text is overlaid on this area.

Climate is a priority topic for decision-makers , and they are ready to act.



We can't even say climate change!

Climate change is a high priority topic.

Most people around here don't believe climate change is real!

Climate change is a major concern across professional disciplines.

If people had more information about climate change, they would do something about it!

Knowledge about climate change is already high. Communities are ready for action.

Move your community forward with the Lake Superior Climate Champions program

Climate change is a reality for communities in Wisconsin's Lake Superior basin. Warming waters and winters are changing our lifeways and livelihoods. Changing storm and flood patterns can bring costly destruction. As a community leader in the region, you may be motivated to act on climate issues to protect the place where you live.



Climate change work takes time and resources. The Lake Superior Climate Champions program provides a yearlong structured opportunity for Northern Wisconsin community teams to work on a goal of their choosing that addresses climate change with guided climate learning and tailored assistance.

With the expertise of our program staff and our connections to statewide and national resources, your team will have access to a program budget of at least \$2,500 as well as planning tools, information, facilitation support, and help navigating progress toward climate goals and actions that are important to your team and your community.

Your community might be ready to tackle a resilience project, undertake an assessment or seek dedicated funding. Perhaps you are focused on climate communications and community engagement, or maybe you are incorporating climate change into a community plan for the first time. **Wherever your community is at, we can find a climate project or goal to tackle together!**

Participating communities must be from the four coastal counties of northwest Wisconsin (Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland or Iron counties).



Apply for the program now

Applications are due by August 1, 2022. To participate in this program, you must apply as a team of 2-4 community decision-makers, which may include local (city, town, village), tribal or county government staff, elected local officials and members of local boards and committees. Two teams will be selected for the 2022 cohort.

To learn more and apply, visit <https://lakesuperiornerr.org/focus-areas/coastal-leadership/lake-superior-climate-champions/>



With this knowledge, we can try new program approaches.



We can bring this understanding of needs into other regional climate initiatives to guide outreach.

Want to know how receptive your audience will be to climate change programming?

Just ask them. The answers may surprise you.

Karina Heim
karina.heim@wisc.edu

With gratitude to Erin Burkett, who co-developed and supported this assessment process.

Thank you, NRI Evaluation Unit at UW-Madison Division of Extension, for deploying and analyzing the survey!

Read the entire CTP needs assessment report at
lakesuperiornerr.org