

# Preface

*Climate Change and the Future of Southern California* is an essays publication which introduces readers to the scenarios, impacts and potential responses with respect to climate change. It is written mainly from the perspective of Southern California. A primary objective is to disseminate information and perspectives about climate change, particularly with respect to its impacts under various scenarios, and to illustrate how Southern California could respond to address this global challenge.

It should be noted that this publication may not capture the full spectrum of opinions and perspectives on the science of climate change or its underlying causes. Discussions of this subject can be found from numerous sources. The primary intent of this set of essays is to focus on potential impacts and response options for the Southern California region. Our hope is to continue raising the awareness and understanding of climate change issues and facilitate constructive policy dialogues and actions.

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the largest regional planning organization in the nation. The SCAG region, also referred to as Southern California in this report, includes six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) and 189 cities. Currently, with almost 19 million residents, it is also one of the top global gateway regions and would rank 15th among all national economies in the world.

For the past ten years, SCAG published the State of the Region Report and Report Card each year to track and assess the progress of the region. Each State of the Region Report also included essays prepared by experts in the respective fields. These essays explored the underlying factors and dynamics of selected regional issues, and discussed policy implications. Beginning in 2009, SCAG will publish the essays separately on an annual

basis to continue highlighting important regional issues and their policy implications. In addition, SCAG will publish the State of the Region Report and Report Card every two years instead of annually so that cumulative changes would be more likely to be detected.

The purpose of the new annual essays publication program is to provide a forum for deliberation on one significant regional issue. The audiences include elected officials, key local government/agency staff, planning partners/stakeholders for the region, as well as the general public. One of the objectives is to inform and assist policy formulation and implementation through an integrated regional planning approach. For the first essays publication, the Benchmarks Task Force selected climate change as its focus given its regional and global significance.

In focusing on one overarching regional issue in the annual essays publication, we also hope to gain additional knowledge about our region, including its strengths, weakness, and potential threats and opportunities it might face. With more understanding, we can better prepare for the future of our region.

Preparation of *Climate Change and the Future of Southern California* was guided by SCAG's Benchmarks Task Force, consisting of local elected officials and regional issue experts in Southern California. The complete 2009 climate change essays report, along with past State of the Region Reports, has been posted on the SCAG website at [www.scag.ca.gov/publications](http://www.scag.ca.gov/publications).

# SCAG Region

