

Department of Environmental Science and Policy Seminar Series

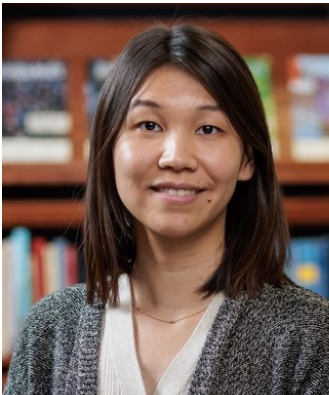
Can Removing Development Subsidies Promote Adaptation? The Coastal Barrier Resources Act as a Natural Experiment

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Resources for the Future

DATE: Friday, 9/22/2023 TIME: 10:30 am ROOM: Ungar 230-E

Zoom: <https://miami.zoom.us/j/92964807674>



Abstract: As natural disasters grow in frequency and intensity with climate change, limiting populations and properties in harm's way will be key to adaptation. This study evaluates one approach to discouraging development in risky areas --- eliminating public incentives for development, such as infrastructure investments, disaster assistance, and federal flood insurance. Using novel machine learning and matching techniques, we examine the Coastal Barrier Resources System, a set of lands where these federal incentives have been removed. We find that the policy lowers development densities by 85% inside designated areas, increases development in neighboring areas, reduces flood damages, and alters local demographics.

Bio: Yanjun (Penny) Liao is an economist and Fellow at Resources for the Future. Her research primarily focuses on issues of natural disaster risk management and climate adaptation. She has studied the impacts of disasters on local government budgets, housing markets, and demographic changes. Her ongoing work investigates how disaster insurance interacts with the housing and mortgage sector, as well as the economic and fiscal impacts of adaptation policies on local communities.

