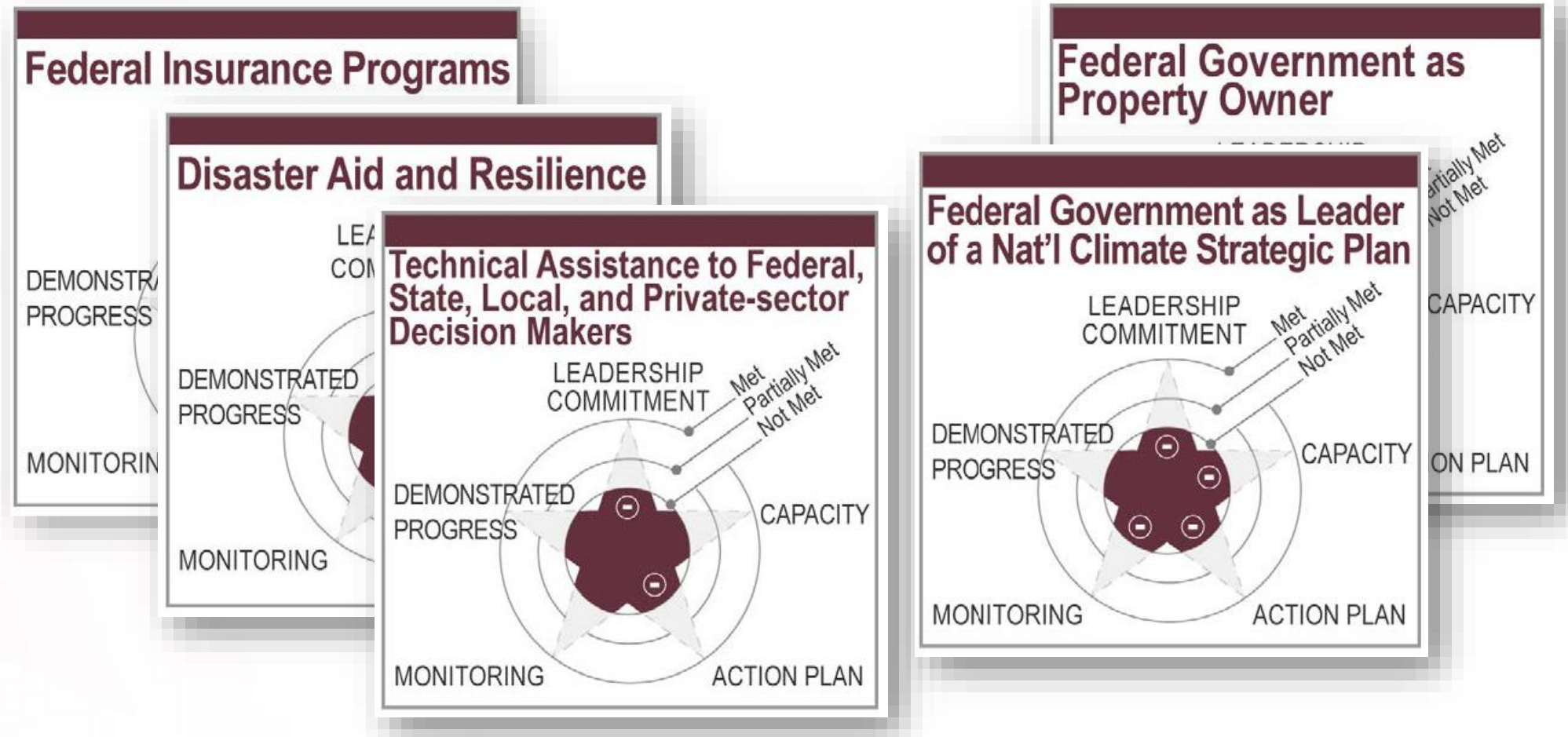


GAO's Work on Climate Resilient Agriculture

EESI

**Micah McMillan and Joe Thompson
Natural Resources and Environment Team
U.S. Government Accountability Office**

GAO's High Risk Series: Limiting the Federal Government's Fiscal Exposure by Better Managing Climate Change Risks



High-Risk Series: Efforts Made to Achieve Progress Need to Be Maintained and Expanded to Fully Address All Areas (GAO-23-106203)

Two Categories of Recommendations

Agency Mainstreaming

- Water systems
- Roads and bridges
- Defense facilities
- Energy infrastructure
- Superfund sites
- Agriculture

New Institutions

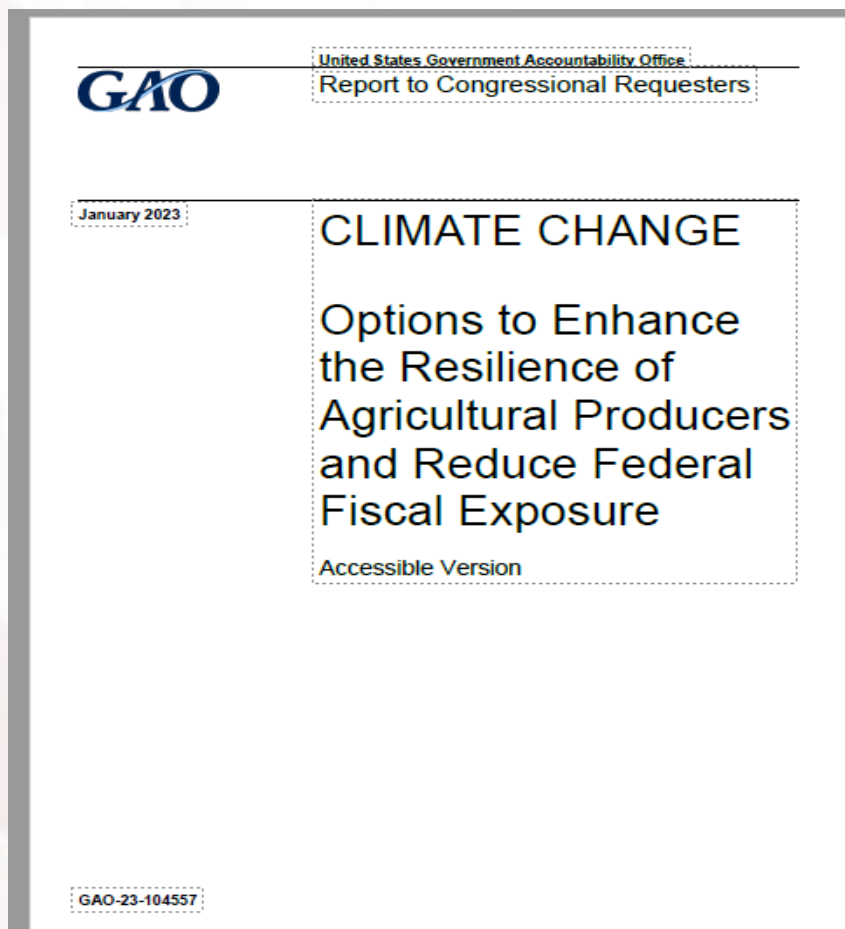
- National Climate Information System
- Identify high-priority adaptation projects
- Address climate migration

Disaster Resilience Framework



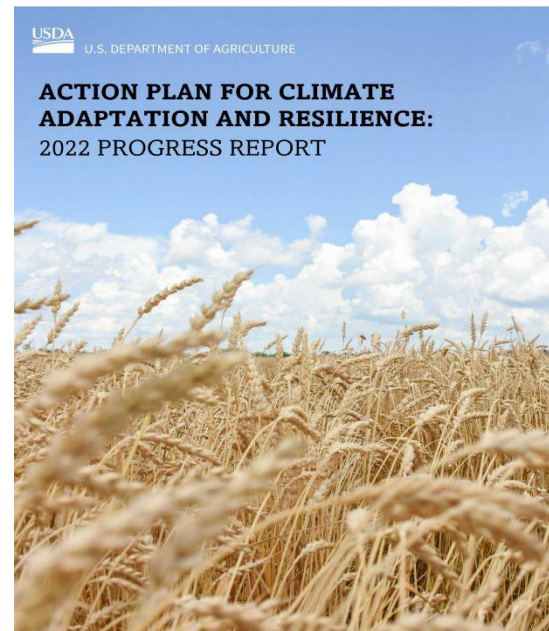
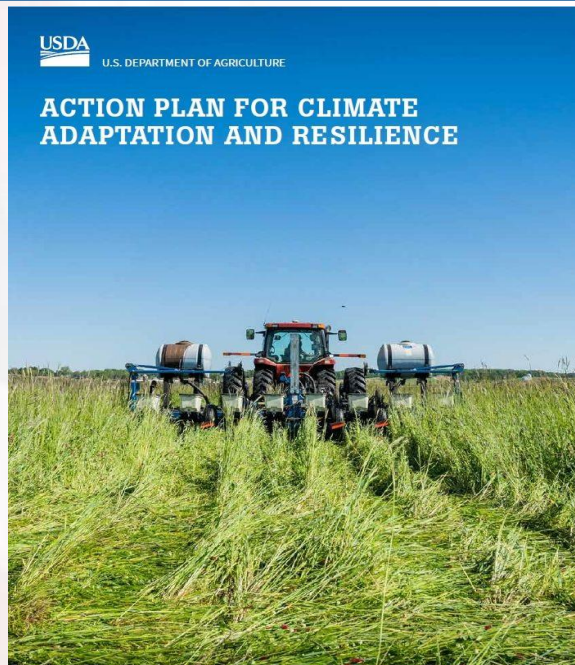
- Framework organized around 3 principles—information, integration, and incentives—and a series of questions.
- Framework principles can help:
 - Officials that manage federal agencies/programs consider actions they might take to increase resilience to natural hazards.
 - Analyze or identify gaps in existing federal efforts.

Climate Resilient Agriculture: USDA Actions



- **Federal fiscal exposure:**
 - Crop insurance program.
 - Agricultural disaster relief programs.
- **Objectives:**
 - Actions USDA has taken to enhance producer resilience.
 - Policy options available to USDA to enhance producer resilience.
- **Methodology:**
 - Literature review.
 - Interviews with experts and key stakeholders

Climate Resilient Agriculture: USDA Actions



- **Information**
 - Climate Hubs regional vulnerability assessments.
- **Integration**
 - *Action Plan for Climate Adaptation and Resilience*
 - 13 agency level adaptation plans
- **Indirect Incentives**
 - Conservation programs.
 - Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.

Climate Resilient Agriculture: Potential Options

1. Collect data on practices that enhance climate resilience.
2. Expand technical assistance to prioritize and promote climate resilience.
3. Prioritize climate resilience in whole-farm conservation planning.
4. Expand the capacity and expertise of USDA's Climate Hubs.
5. Develop an agricultural climate resilience plan that addresses regional needs.
6. Establish standards for climate-resilient agricultural operations.
7. Revise the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Conservation Practice Standards to include climate resilience.
8. Expand conservation program eligibility to include and prioritize climate resilience.
9. Expand the capacity of USDA's conservation programs.
10. Research the feasibility of incorporating climate resilience into crop insurance rating.
11. Require producer adoption of climate-resilient practices to receive crop insurance premium subsidies.
12. Offer crop insurance premium subsidies for climate-resilient operations.
13. Require producer adoption of climate-resilient practices to maintain Farm Bill Title I program eligibility.

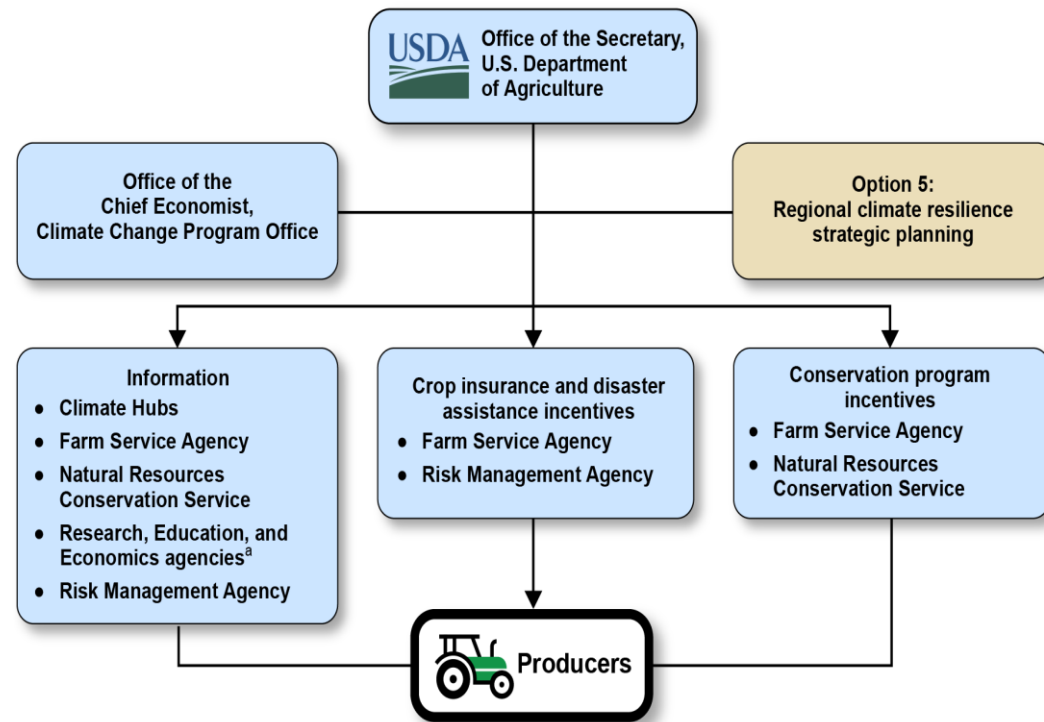
Climate Resilient Agriculture: Potential Options



Source: USDA

- Implementing multiple options:
 - Most potential to improve producer resilience
 - Leverages strengths and addresses limitations.
 - Timing and sequence are important.
- USDA unsure of statutory authority and resource needs for implementation.
- Comprehensive analysis would help:
 - Identify planning priorities
 - Inform Congressional decisionmaking.

Climate Resilient Agriculture



Federal agency or program
 Option

Source: GAO analysis of information provided by U.S. Department of Agriculture. | GAO-23-104557

We recommended:

USDA should analyze options to enhance the climate resilience of agricultural producers and integrate them into USDA's future climate resilience prioritization and planning efforts. The analysis should:

- Explain USDA's decision to prioritize or not prioritize the options.
- Identify any additional authority and resources needed for implementation.

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