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### **Vulnerability and Resilience: All Politics is Local**

In examining vulnerability and resilience, many efforts are made to quantify the concepts or to systemize the qualitative data. The underlying and implicit assumption is that some form of universal or near-universal truth exists with respect to defining, analyzing, and interpreting vulnerability and resilience. Problems in disaster risk reduction research and application can be linked to the failure to recognize the theoretical and empirical evidence demonstrating the subjective nature of vulnerability and resilience. In fact, the concepts are culturally and social constructed meaning that, additionally, risk, disasters, and even hazards are culturally and social constructed.

Framed by the theory and practice of island governance, this session examines the local and political influences on people's understanding of and responses to vulnerability and resilience. Islands are useful case studies due to their smaller, more isolated, and more marginalized features, as will be exemplified by evidence from field work on the South Pacific island state of Tuvalu. In particular, political and subjective perceptions and applications of vulnerability and resilience will be discussed, yielding questions related to operational ethics, island sovereignty, and local traditional knowledge.