This map depicts a social vulnerability index (SVI) in relationship to the low elevation coastal zone (LECZ) of West Africa in 0–2m, 2–4m, 4–10m, and 10–20m increments. The LECZ approximates areas that could be affected by varying degrees of sea level rise and storm surge. The SVI represents combinations of population exposure (density and change from 2000–2010), poverty levels, and areas of armed conflict that suggest higher levels of “defenselessness”. The SVI depicted here is only one measure of social vulnerability and could be refined through additional analysis. Note that patterns of land subsidence in the Niger delta and other crustal processes means that sea level rise will not be uniform in the coastal zone. Storm surge will also exhibit patterns of spatial differentiation depending on wind patterns. Because of differences in scale and spatial resolution in the original data sets, there are spatial mismatches between the LECZ, the land layer, and the political boundaries. As a result, areas at the ocean’s edge may appear to be outside the LECZ but are in fact within the LECZ, and political boundaries do not always match the

References: