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By CURTIS MORGAN The Miami Herald

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Cmorgan@Miamiherald.com

South Florida, low-lying and smack in the middle of Hurricane Alley, has the greatest number of people and places at risk from rising sea levels, according to a new report released on Wednesday.

The report from Climate Central, an independent research and journalism organization, suggests Miami-Dade and Broward counties alone have more people vulnerable to flooding than any state except Florida and Louisiana.

The "Surging Seas" report, which echoes and expands on previous studies by universities and government agencies that have pinpointed South Florida as ground zero for global warming impacts, can be found at climatecentral.org. It includes an interactive map that can zoom in to show which communities would inundated under different potential levels of sea level rise.

The analysis was based on a projected potential rise of four feet, with increased damage from hurricane storm surge and flooding from seasonal high tides compounding the threats.

Overall, Florida also ranks as the most vulnerable to sea level rise, with some 2.4 million people, 1.3 million homes and 107 cities at risk from a four foot rise, according to the report. Louisiana, by comparison, has 65 cities below the four-foot mark. New Jersey and North Carolina have 22 each, Maryland 14 and New York 13.

The study projects that under current trends, the most vulnerable areas could see increased flooding as early as 2030. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an international science panel, officially estimates that the average sea level could rise from seven to about 24 inches by 2100 but notes it could be higher under some scenarios.

Read more here: http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/03/13/2691984/florida-at-highest-risk-for-flooding.html#storylink=cpy