

Local and State Government-Led Climate Action Initiatives in the United States: Progress, Barriers, and Efficacy

Shreya Nalla, Master's Student in Urban & Regional Planning (Presenting author)

Qian He, PhD, AICP, Assistant Professor; Kevin Keenan, PhD, AICP, Associate Professor

Department of Geography, Planning, and Sustainability, School of Earth and Environment, Rowan University

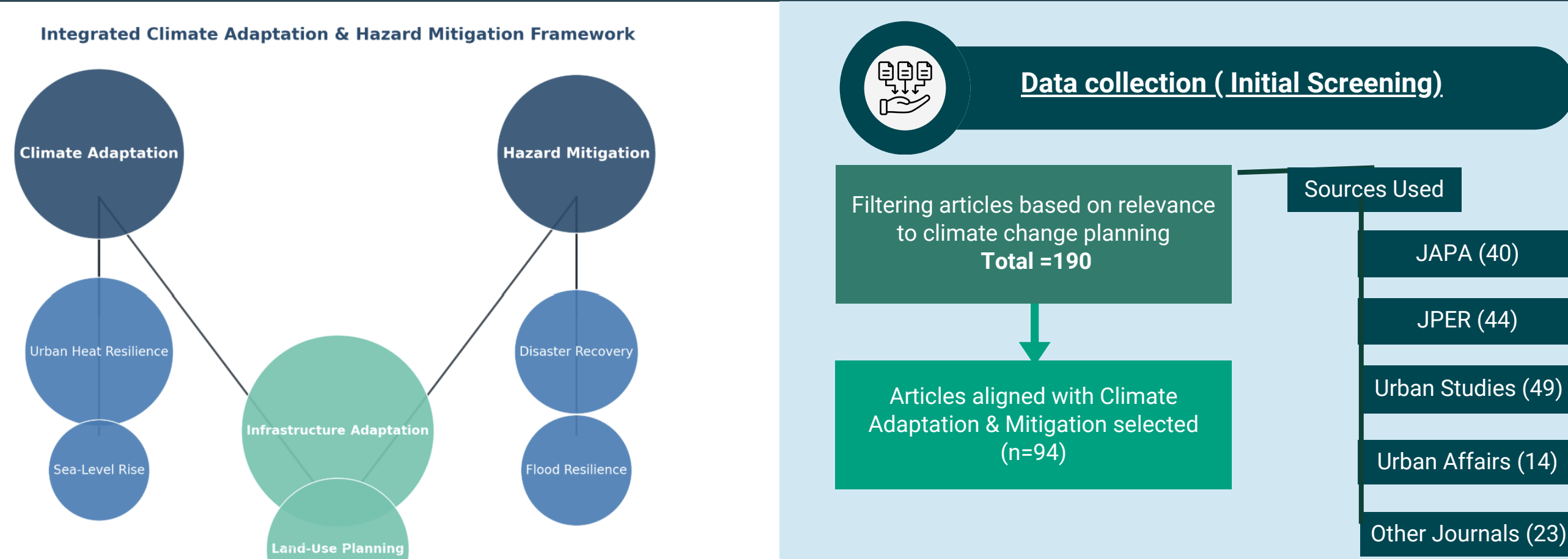
Introduction

Local and state governments play a crucial role in driving climate action in the U.S., balancing both long-term adaptation and immediate hazard mitigation. State mandates, such as California Senate Bill 379 and Florida's Peril of Flood Act, push local governments to integrate climate resilience into planning. However, fragmented governance, political resistance, and funding constraints remain significant challenges. This study synthesizes a decade of research (2014–2024) to assess the effectiveness, scope, and barriers of local and state-led climate initiatives, highlighting emerging strategies like green infrastructure, climate-induced migration planning, and equity-driven frameworks.

Why Focus on Local & State Governments?



Methodology



Literature Review

Role of Local and State Governments in Climate Action

Local & state governments play a crucial role in climate adaptation & hazard mitigation

Policies address long-term climate risks and immediate disaster response

Studies highlight both progress & challenges in local climate action

Implications for Policy & Planning

Informed Decision-Making
Provides actionable insights for policymakers, urban planners, and researchers

Strengthening Local Efforts
Helps strengthen subnational climate initiatives.

Building Resilience
Contributes to building resilient communities

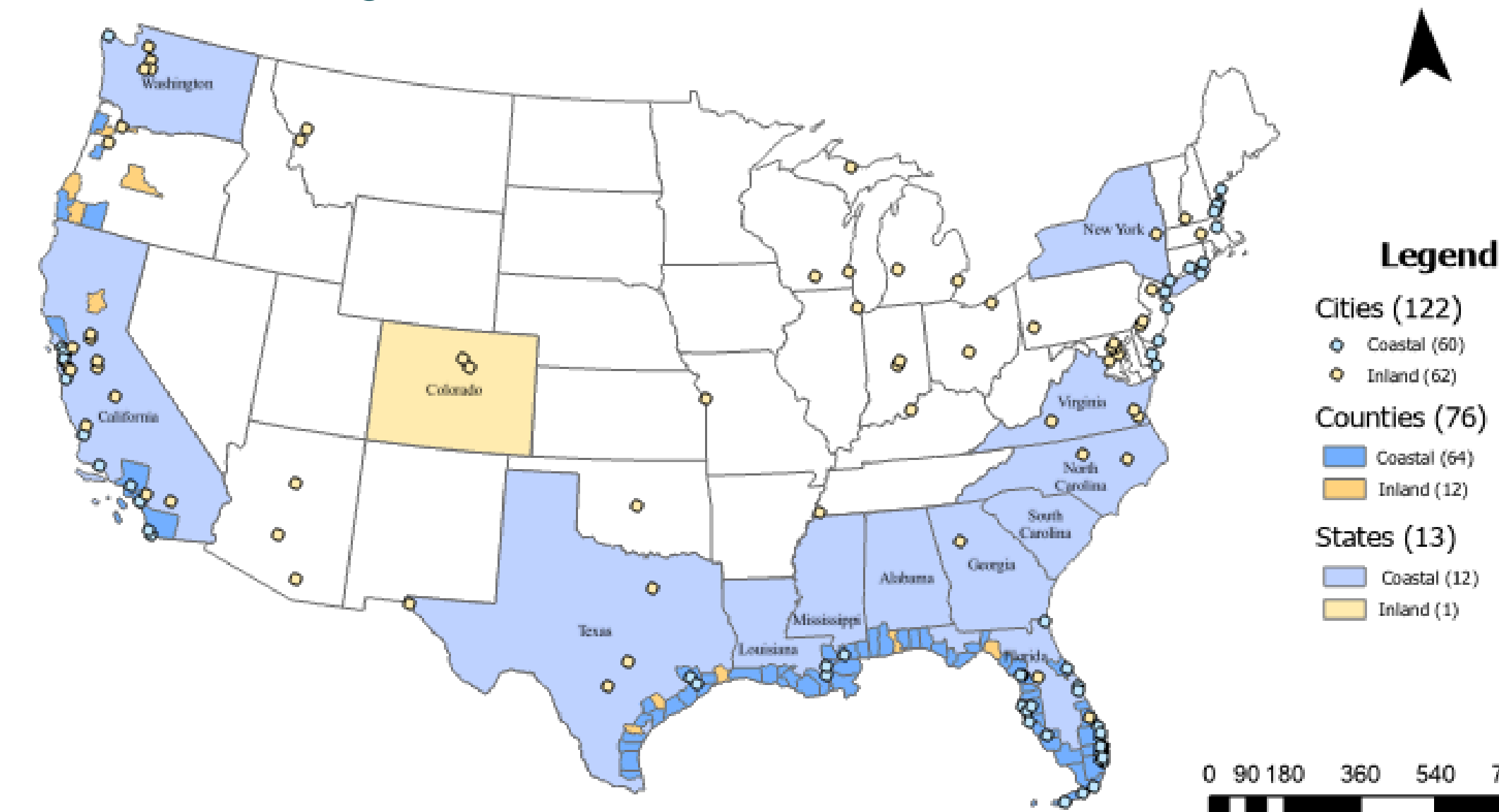
Study Contribution & Research Scope

This Study's Focus (2014-2024 Scoping Review):
Analyzes local & state-led climate adaptation & hazard mitigation in the U.S.

Evaluation Criteria

Geographic patterns of climate policies. Effectiveness of state and local initiatives. Barriers to implementation.

Geographic & Thematic Focus of Research

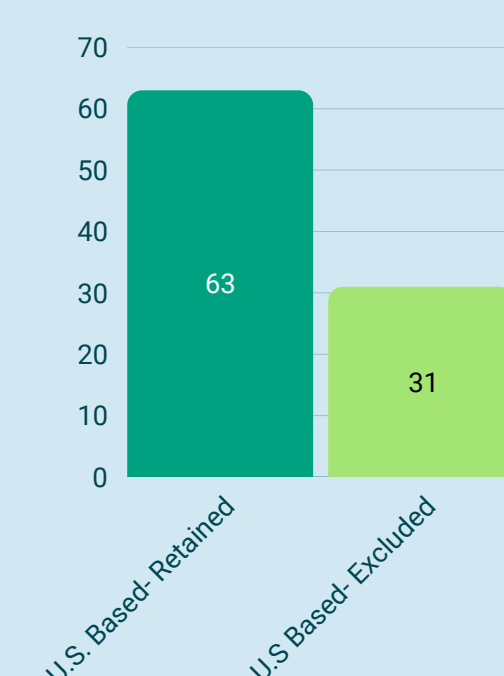


Findings

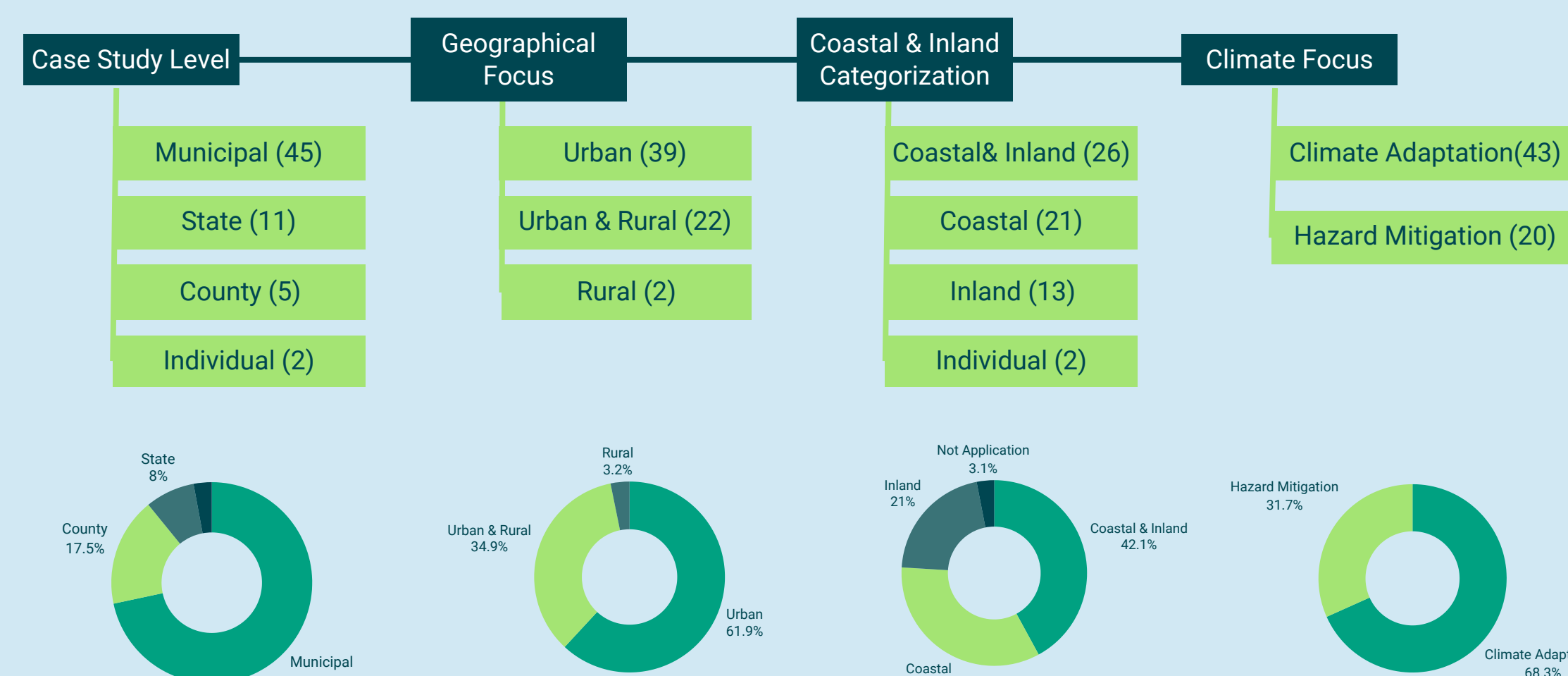
Data Refinement (Case Study-Approach)

Filtering case study articles based on U.S. Context

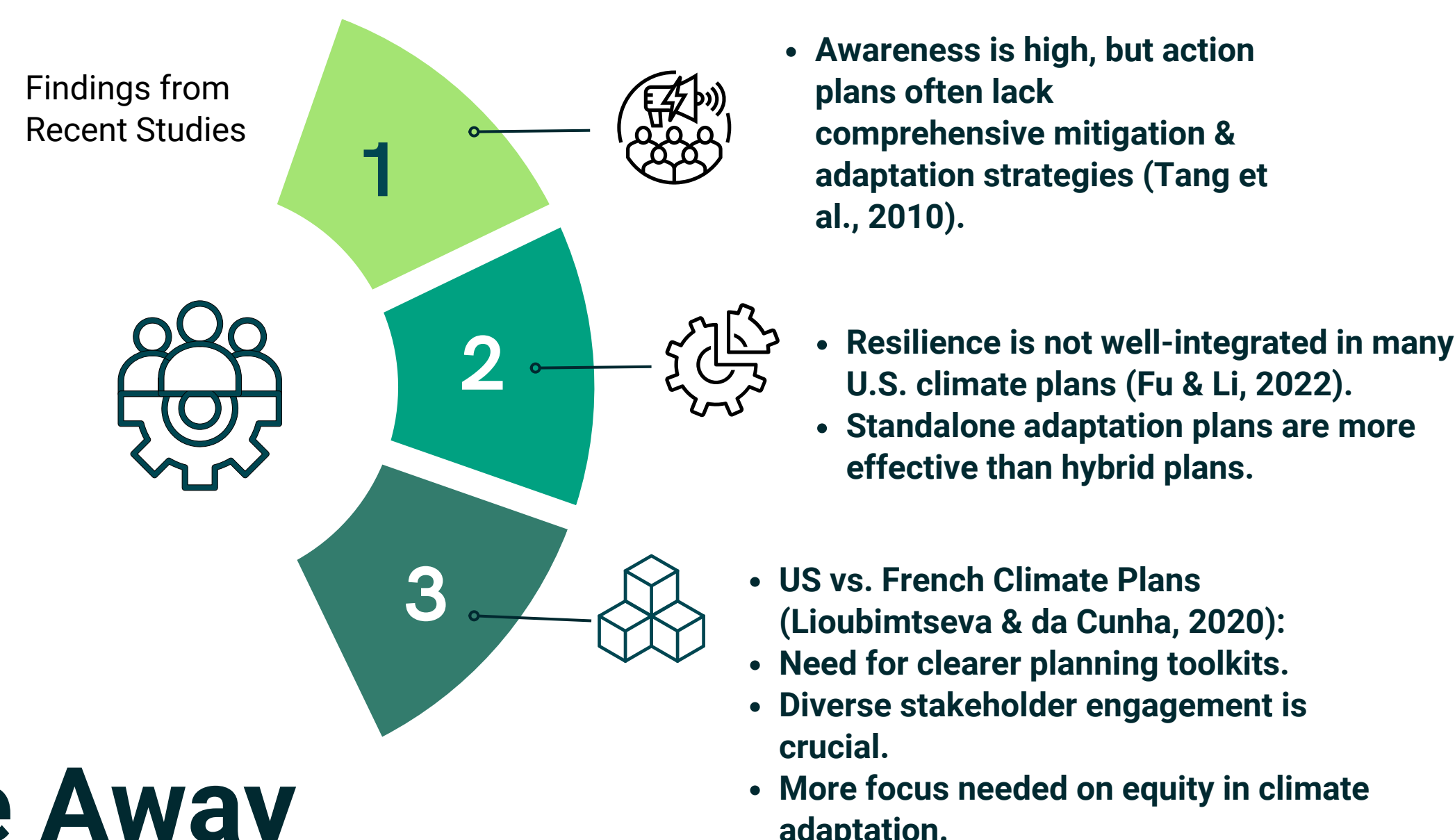
U.S. based case studies retained (n=63)
Non- U.S. Case Studies Excluded (n=31)



Data Classification



Evaluating Local Climate Adaptation Plans



Take Away

While Climate Adaptation and Hazard Mitigation are often discussed separately, they overlap in key areas such as infrastructure, equity, governance, and planning strategies. The insights suggest that integrated planning approaches that address both immediate hazard risks and long-term climate resilience are crucial for effective urban and regional planning. Recommendations for stakeholders: The insights suggest that integrated planning approaches that address both immediate hazard risks and long-term climate resilience are crucial for effective urban and regional planning.

This study is supported by the National Science Foundation (#2427242, PI: Qian He) and the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy (PI: Kevin Keenan, Co-PI: Qian He). For further information, please contact Dr. Qian He (he@rowan.edu), Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Planning, and Sustainability, Rowan University