



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change

Coastal Adaptation: Local Action

Preparing our coasts for climate change

This video was uploaded on:

26 February 2010

Description: Our coastal zone is highly vulnerable to the impacts from climate change given the majority of our population is located near the coast. Local governments will be among the first to experience the effects of climate change, and some are already responding to the challenge. Further discussion is needed between all levels of government – local, state and federal – communities and industry on how we all can help to prepare our coasts for climate change.

Transcript

Voice over: The way that climate will affect Australia's coastal regions demands change and adaptation. Local Government is at the forefront of climate change and around Australia Local Authorities are already responding to the challenge.

Councillor Paddi Creevey – Mayor, City of Mandurah WA: It's very important that Local Governments take early action on climate change, and the City of Mandurah certainly has a strong belief that this is critical to our future. When we're looking at adaptation plans, it's not just about sea level rise. It's about how is the community going to live healthily, how is the environment going to be protected, and how are we able to manage those public health risks that will increase with rising temperature and sea level rise? One of the major areas, of course, is the planning decisions Local Councils make. The other area is that we need to continue doing all we can to protect the environment. We also have built the Mandurah sustainable home so that people can really take charge themselves of doing things in terms of climate change.

Voice over: Mary-Lou Corcoran is Mayor of the South Australian town of Victor Harbour, whose existence like that of Mandurah, is intimately linked to the coast.

Councillor Mary-Lou Corcoran – Mayor, City of Victor Harbor SA: People travel here as an iconic tourism destination in South Australia because of the surrounding coast, and ultimately as a community that has an aging community, people retire to the area because of the coast.

It's extremely important to consult with our community because they do want to know the beach is being protected. That's been beneficial to try and get the message across to the community the importance of putting in infrastructure now to counter-react what's gonna occur in the near future.

Voice over: Climate change can affect many areas of Council operations including planning, community health and natural resource management. Various initiatives have focused on the need for a whole of Council response to climate change.

Greg Hunt – Executive Officer, South East Councils Climate Change Alliance: The City of Casey has set up a climate change taskforce to include representation right across Council. The community needs to know that all the issues are going to be covered.

Councillor Geoff Ablett – Mayor, City of Casey VIC: The climate change taskforce involves all areas of Local Government and we look forward to working with all local residents in regards to storm surge, sea level rising, high temperatures and bush fires. That's why we've got our drainage, our planning and our community care people all involved in this project.

Voice over: The most powerful tool for Councils as they develop adaptation strategies is community engagement. Particularly when revising and updating planning controls.

John Stevens – Clarence City Council TAS: Clarence Council has a hundred and ninety-one kilometres of coastline, and a lot of its low lying, and lot of it is soft sediment foreshores. In the immediate term we've identified that the most important thing to do was change our planning controls so that development could be controlled so that people wouldn't deliberately put themselves at risk.

Clive Attwater – Associate Director, SGS Economics and Planning P/L: It was also clear that most of the community that we spoke to were realists. They knew that climate change was coming, that coastal areas had risks and with rising sea levels they'd only become worse.

Voice over: Nationally the Australian Government and State Government initiatives, such as Future Coasts in Victoria, are beginning to provide Local Authorities with the tools that they need to plan and implement adaptation.

Carol MacMillan – Department of Sustainability and the Environment VIC: Some of the planning tools might include an overlay for example. They also include planning guidelines and risk assessment templates, that sort of thing.

Councillor Mendy Urie – East Gippsland Shire Council VIC: For Local Government the things that we think are important, firstly to have access to the most up to date, you know, information and research. Secondly, I think we understand the importance of strong communities, to be able to talk to communities about climate change.

Voice over: With the support of the Australian Government, of State Governments and of their communities, Local Authorities will be able to play a significant role in adaptation to climate change in our coastal regions.

The categories associated with this video:

Adaptation, Community, Buildings, Business, Coastline, Homes

Location:

AUSTRALIA