



# RMCG

Consultants for Business, Communities & Environment

Climate Change  
Economics & Policy  
Rural Industry Development  
Recycled Water Management  
People, Knowledge & Strategy  
Agribusiness & Farm Management  
Integrated Water Resources Management  
Natural Resource Management & Landscapes



## Adaptation planning with various levels of government in Victoria: Knowledge, Tools and Principles

### Purpose

Planning for adaptation to climate change will be important in enabling government and organisations respond to likely impacts, including increased extreme events (IPCC 2007; IPCC 2012).

In several recent projects, we have assisted local and state government agencies in Victoria to prepare climate change adaptation plans. The knowledge requirements of stakeholders, and tools used, are critical to adaptation planning. We have identified a number of common principles that can be applied to future adaption planning. We aim to use our experience to highlight factors that we believe are integral to successful adaptation planning.

### Key findings

Information and knowledge needs of stakeholders involved in adaptation planning vary, and is dependent on operating context.

The tools required to undertake adaptation planning govern the process and outcome. We found drawing on people's learned experience from recent extreme events was a useful technique when coupled with climate change scenarios.

A number of principles for adaptation planning have been identified across the development, planning, implementation and review spectrum. These include:

#### Development:

- Learn from the past and 'look back before we look forward'
- Ensure collaboration and communication
- Frame the debate: obtain buy-in and ownership through appropriately framing issues (CRED 2009).

#### Planning:

- Undertake a whole-of-business approach to drive a deeper and shared understanding of the issues
- Make it real and relevant: translate and communicate climate change information and scientific data in a meaningful way (CRED 2009)
- Use trusted and authoritative knowledge brokers in delivering climate change and scientific data
- Clarify roles and responsibilities (NCCARF 2012)
- Determine the relativity of climate change risk and vulnerability to non-climate change related factors.

#### Implementation:

- Anticipate and avoid the tendency for adaptation planning to be treated as a process separate from the other functions of the business (DSE 2013)
- Identify synergies with existing plans and strategies to improve efficiency (Rogers 2009)
- Embed adaptation responses in existing frameworks and planning documents.

#### Review:

- Employ adaptive management to address uncertainty, and undertake monitoring, evaluation and review of short-term adaptation strategies (NCCARF 2012).

#### Conclusions

Climate change presents an additional element of uncertainty in undertaking strategic planning. In recognising the information and knowledge needs of various stakeholders and effective tools, it is important that government agencies and organisations consider their operating context and learn from the past, while taking a holistic, iterative and flexible approach to adaptation planning.

**Session:** Speedtalk Session 10 - The role of tools and knowledge in adaptation  
**Date:** Wednesday 26 June 2013  
**Session start time:** 4.35pm  
**Location:** Grand Ballroom  
**Contact:** Carl Larsen (M: 0419 622 393 E: carll@rmcg.com.au)



**RM Consulting Group**  
Suite 1, 357 Camberwell Rd,  
Camberwell, VIC 3124  
P: 03 9882 2670 W: [www.rmcg.com.au](http://www.rmcg.com.au)

**Contacts:**  
Carl Larsen E: [carll@rmcg.com.au](mailto:carll@rmcg.com.au)  
Shayne Annett E: [shaynea@rmcg.com.au](mailto:shaynea@rmcg.com.au)  
Shelley McGuinness E: [shelleym@rmcg.com.au](mailto:shelleym@rmcg.com.au)

#### References:

Center for Research on Environmental Decisions (2009) The Psychology of Climate Change Communication: A Guide for Scientists, Journalists, Educators, Political Aides, and the Interested Public, New York

Department of Sustainability and Environment (2013) Victorian Adaptation Plan, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne

IPCC (2007) Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, M.L. Parry, O.F. Canziani, J.P. Palutikof, P.J. van der Linden and C.E. Hanson, Eds., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 7-22

IPCC (2012) Summary for Policymakers. In: Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation [Field, C.B., V. Barros, T.F. Stocker, D. Qin, D.J. Dokken, K.L. Ebi, M.D. Mastrandrea, K.J. Mach, G.-K. Plattner, S.K. Allen, M. Tignor, and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY, USA, pp. 1-19

Municipal Association of Victoria (2011) Stocktake of Current Victorian Local Government Climate Change Adaptation Planning, report prepared for MAV by RMCG, Camberwell

NCCARF (2012) AdaptNote: Eight Principles of Adaptation Planning, Griffith University, Gold Coast

Rickards, L., Hayman, P. and Eckard, R. (2012) Agricultural adaptation to climate change: acknowledging different frames, Primary Industries Adaptation Research Network, University of Melbourne, Melbourne

Rogers, N. (2009) A study of regional partnerships and collaborative approaches for enhanced local government adaptation to climate change, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Australia