

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide Council's response to the effects of climate change and help support the way in which Council discharges its responsibilities in-line with Council's Corporate Plan 2014-2019. The strategy will also guide Council to implement its responsibilities under the Local Government Act (1993).

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will support informed decision-making by mapping out priorities for action, clarifying roles and responsibilities, identifying triggers for action, guiding the acquisition and use of relevant information and generally improving climate change adaptation governance.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all Council activities and staff.

Applicable Legislation

This policy is in reference to:

- Local Government Act 2009
- Whitsunday Regional Council Planning Scheme 2017
- Sustainable Planning Act 2009
- Coastal Protection and Management Act 1994
- Disaster Management Act 2003
- Environmental Protection Act 1994

Policy Statement

1. Council will aim to address the core elements articulated within the Whitsunday Regional Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
2. Council will implement programs and initiatives that strive to improve the Whitsunday Regional Council community's resilience and understanding of the potential impacts of climate change and maximise opportunities to communicate and consult on critical issues and changes.
3. Council will strive to develop integrated representative case studies in climate change adaptation and community resilience for existing sites and greenfield development, for example using Bowen as a case study for quantifying assets and attributes exposed to climate change.

4. Council's approach to climate change adaptation recognises that a diverse range of roles and responsibilities exist across all levels of Australian governments with regard to climate change adaptation. As such, the policy guidelines will be created to help determine Council's most relevant responses. The guidelines will contain specific actions and procedures to guide staff and Councillors.
5. Council recognises the importance and validity of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and will review Council's actions upon the publication of new IPCC assessment reports within six months of publication. Council also recognises that global greenhouse gas emissions are at the high-end (worst case) of global projections and as such, Council will use where practical, the top two global Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) during decision-making (these currently being RCP6 and RCP8.5). These are derived from the top two global greenhouse gas (GHG) projections for warming (2.0 °C – 5.8 °C global average warming above pre-industrial levels by 2100). Where reliably available, Council will seek to utilise results for the WRC region. Until further studies are undertaken by the Queensland Government, WRC will use 80cm in 2100 as the sea level rise number to align with Queensland Hazard Mapping (The Queensland Government has determined that these are broadly similar to the IPCC 5th Assessment). Rainfall perturbations for flood modelling and other decision-making will be based on the Australian Rainfall and Runoff section on Climate Change Considerations (Chapter 6). Council decisions will also consider the climate change projections described in the WRC Technical Climate Change Guidelines.
6. As well as the above Council's response to climate change will be guided by the following principles:
 - i) Focus on informed decision-making and undertake an adaptive management approach (continuing to review actions in the light of new information);
 - ii) Maintain the focus on total community wellbeing, noting that this may result in adverse consequences to more directly impacted individuals;
 - iii) Encourage private adaptation by making information publicly available;
 - iv) Consider climate change as part of an overall risk reduction and resilience program for Whitsunday Regional Council;
 - v) Identify vulnerable areas and implement an ongoing program that reviews their vulnerability as more information becomes available;
 - vi) Review the provisions of the planning scheme to ensure that development is appropriately regulated to consider climate change risk;
 - vii) Where appropriate, goals should be measurable and evaluated on a regular basis;
 - viii) Perform a range of roles (regulatory, information provider, advocate, facilitator, service provider, funding body) that are necessary to reduce future climate change impacts; and
 - ix) Work cooperatively with other Councils and State Government and ensure that the respective roles and responsibilities are appropriate, and duplication is avoided.



Climate Change Adaptation Policy

Community & Environment

LSP_C&ENV_19

Revokes: 067.01

Definitions

CEO refers to the Chief Executive Officer of the Whitsunday Regional Council appointed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Council refers to the Whitsunday Regional Council

Employee refers to any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of the Council

Relating Documents

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2016-2020

Effective Date

23 April 2019

Review Date

23 April 2022

Page 3 of 3

Correspondence: Chief Executive Officer, Whitsunday Regional Council, PO Box 104, Proserpine QLD 4800

P: 1300 WRC QLD (1300 972 753) F: (07) 4945 0222 E: info@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

Bowen
Cnr Herbert & Powell Streets, Bowen QLD 4805

Proserpine
83-85 Main Street, Proserpine QLD 4800

Collinsville
Cnr Stanley & Conway Streets, Collinsville QLD 4804