

# Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Planning for Councils

## Module 4 Reviewing the Plan



### I. MODULE OVERVIEW

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This module outlines the review phase of corporate adaptation planning for your council. By this stage you will have begun the process of implementing an adaptation plan. The purpose of this module is to review and revise the plan as necessary, with the assistance of the Adaptation Working Group.

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## OBJECTIVES

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- Review and revise your council's corporate adaptation plan in the context of Australian and state climate change adaptation developments and any emerging issues for council, and seek its endorsement.
- Provide council's senior management and the Adaptation Working Group with a greater understanding of the process of adaptive management and its relevance to this process.



## ACTIVITIES

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- Review meeting with the Adaptation Working Group.



## OUTPUTS

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The outputs will be:

- a review document describing progress towards adaptation action
- an updated corporate adaptation plan.

## 2. DOCUMENTING PROGRESS AND REVIEWING THE PLAN

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In this module you will facilitate a workshop of the Adaptation Working Group to review and document climate change action since the development of council's action plan, including relevant works, new projects and new council resolutions that have developed since the finalisation of the action plan. Decisions and actions by external agencies such as state and federal government, regional local government authorities and NRM groups, and any relevant advances in scientific knowledge and technology should also be documented so that council can stay up to date with the latest climate change information and therefore better inform the adaptive management process.

The review need not be overly detailed; a simple table such as the one below will suffice.

Risk	Adaptation actions	Progress	New actions
Increasing sea levels resulting in inundation of low-lying land and flooding of private properties decreasing community satisfaction	Scoping of a more detailed sea level rise and storm surge adaptation action plan		
	Incorporate future climate change impacts into DCPs		
	Identify areas which are at risk and determine possible preventative strategies		

Source: Hyder 2012

The workshop also provides an opportunity to update the adaptation plan.



## BEFORE THE MEETING

Familiarise yourself with the principles of adaptive management.

Adaptive management is a structured, recurring and scientific approach to decision making when dealing with uncertainty. The adaptive management process seeks to reduce uncertainty over time through systematically testing, monitoring and evaluating applied management strategies. It is an approach that uses a feedback loop where learnings from previously-tested management actions as well as new scientific knowledge are incorporated into planning and used to improve the next stage of management.

Key principles informing the basis of adaptive management are:

- testing assumptions
- adaptation
- learning



## Testing assumptions

Management actions can be based on educated assumptions without needing to wait for conclusive information to become available. Rather, assumptions can be tested by systematically trying different management strategies/actions to achieve a desired income. Results of management actions are monitored and compared to the outcomes predicted in the assumptions. The key to testing assumptions is not only to outline those actions that work, and those that don't, but also to understand the reasons why.

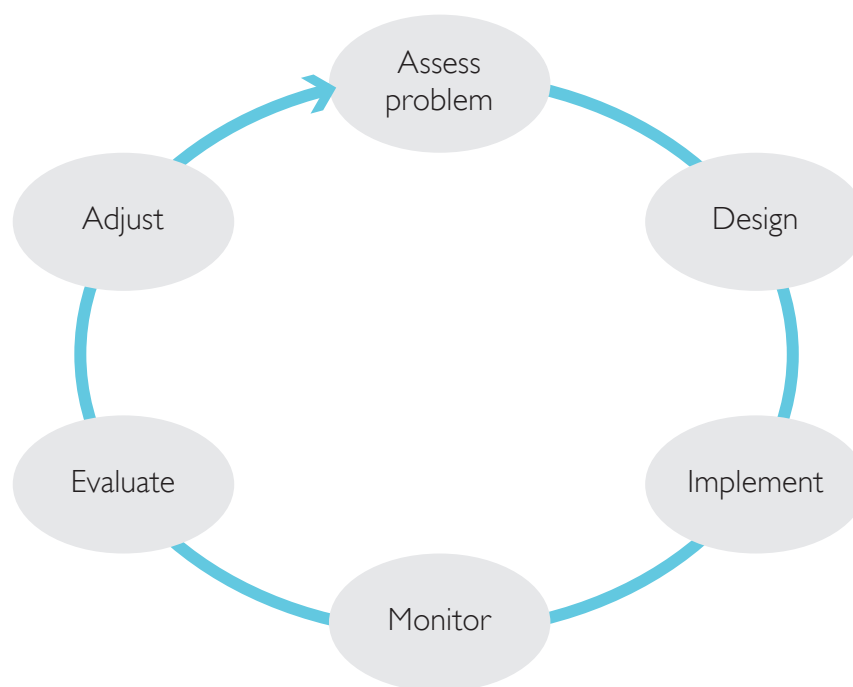
## Adaptation

'Adaptation' within adaptive management means taking action to improve management strategies based on learnings from tested management actions and newly available knowledge. Adaptation involves revisiting both assumptions and management strategies to determine their appropriateness, and reviewing them in light of the most current information.

Adapting allows organisations to enhance institutional flexibility, rather than being tied to a particular set of actions, and it helps to avoid under or over investment.

## Learning

Learning is about systematically documenting management actions and the resulting outcomes as the actions are implemented. The outcomes should be mapped against the underlying assumptions. Learning draws linkages between actions and outcomes, assisting organisations to avoid making the same mistakes in future and facilitating continual improvement.



The adaptive management process ([www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov))

In order to prepare for the workshop to review council's adaptation plan:

- Undertake a progress review one month prior to the workshop, including a review of both internal and external progress towards climate change action.
- Circulate the review document to Adaptation Working Group members and senior managers at least two weeks prior to the workshop.
- Update the climate change adaptation plan to incorporate changes and improvements.
- Prepare an overview of adaptive management and how it pertains to climate change action planning, highlighting:
  - the uncertainty of climate change
  - the consequences of getting climate change planning wrong (e.g. under or over investment)
  - how adaptive management can manage uncertainty, allowing for redirection of actions and resources as required.
- Review and revise the risks, assumptions and actions in the action plan using the assumption templates and the progress review.



## DURING THE MEETING

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Present an overview of adaptive management and its relevance to climate change action planning.

You can then review and revise the currency, appropriateness and relevance of the risks, assumptions and actions in the action plan. The group should consider the lessons/issues identified in the progress review and revise the assumptions and management action/strategies as necessary.

In reviewing the adaptation assumptions and actions:

- Distribute copies of the action progress review, relevant original adaptation action templates (using the relevant actions in the plan), all assumption templates and blank adaptation action review templates (using the example above).
- Present a progress report on the implementation of adaptation actions.
- Highlight the actions of external organisations that may impact the relevance or implementation of the action plan.
- Review the assumptions made in earlier parts of the process to determine their current validity.
- Based on the review of the climate change impacts, the group should modify risk statements where necessary, remove any redundant risk statements, and add new risk statements as required.
- Evaluate new and modified risk statements (see the Risk Assessment Workshop).
- Delete any actions associated with redundant risk statements.
- Assist the group to develop actions for new risk statements in conjunction with the relevant council business units (see the Adaptation Actions Workshop).



## AFTER THE MEETING

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Finalise the outputs by incorporating any new actions and changes into the climate change adaptation plan and redirecting resources based on any new information and actions. The Adaptation Working Group should assist you to prepare a new adaptation plan that includes any new actions and deletes those that are no longer relevant.

Once the adaptation plan has been updated, it should be distributed to senior management for approval. The Project Manager may choose to present the revised plan to senior management to step them through relevant changes and the reasons behind them.

Once the revised adaptation plan has been approved, inform staff of any changes and update any relevant documents (i.e. any stand-alone action plans, business or strategic plans).



### 3. MODULE CHECKLIST

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- Reviewed the progress towards climate change action of internal and external organisations
- Presented an overview of adaptive management to the Adaptation Working Group
- Updated and disseminated the corporate adaptation plan



### 4. RESOURCES

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ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, 2008 Local Government Climate Change Adaptation Toolkit,  
[www.archive.iclei.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/ANZ/CCP/CCPAU/Projects/All/AdaptationToolkit/Toolkit\\_CCPAdaptation\\_Final.pdf](http://www.archive.iclei.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/ANZ/CCP/CCPAU/Projects/All/AdaptationToolkit/Toolkit_CCPAdaptation_Final.pdf)



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