

# Coastal Climate Change Adaptation Planning for Councils

## Module 4 Reviewing Adaptation Options



### I. MODULE OVERVIEW

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This module outlines the *reviewing adaptation options* phase of community-based coastal adaptation planning within your council. The aim is to provide guidance on how council can continue to explore the preferred adaptation pathway for the project area, including consideration of funding and governance frameworks, ongoing community engagement and technical feasibility, to determine its appropriateness.

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## OBJECTIVES

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- Consider and plan for the implementation of the preferred adaptation pathway.
- Develop appropriate frameworks for implementing the preferred adaptation pathway.



## OUTPUTS

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There are no clearly defined outputs associated with this module; however, the following outputs are proposed for your consideration:

- a governance framework, outlining the roles and responsibilities for implementation
- a funding framework, outlining the parties that will contribute to the costs of implementation and the proportion of cost they will pay
- technical assessments that provide further analysis to support or refute the proposed adaptation pathway.

## 2. REVIEWING ADAPTATION OPTIONS

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As part of this process, you should begin to consider how to implement the adaptation pathway that has been agreed as the preferred option by both council and the community. It is important to note that this process does not lend itself to a rigid methodology and should itself be seen as flexible. Experience from councils that have begun the process of community-based coastal adaptation planning has highlighted that there are likely to be few shortcuts in the reviewing adaptation options phase, and that time, resources and ongoing commitment is essential to furthering the process.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Planning and management of coastal areas, including the management of coastal hazards, is a responsibility that is shared by private landowners and developers, state and local government and the general community. Implementing adaptation options to respond to coastal hazards requires consideration of the roles and responsibilities of these parties to ensure options are being delivered according to statutory and other requirements.

It is important that you take the time to clearly identify the stakeholders that will play a role or have responsibility for the adaptation process in the project area, identifying their role and any obligations, and maintain open lines of communication throughout the process.

## PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT PROCESS

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As part of the risk assessment framework outlined in Module 2, you assessed the planning controls in place for the project area as part of a review of relevant planning schemes. From the assessment it is possible that you have come up with some recommendations on how the relevant planning scheme(s) could better define risk levels and how developing risks could be better addressed.

When making recommendations on possible amendments to planning schemes, it is important that you follow the approved process, consult broadly, and consider any broader planning scheme reviews or amendments that might be occurring.

## FUNDING FRAMEWORKS

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Coastal adaptation is likely to involve some financial costs, irrespective of the pathway chosen. The costs of adaptation are currently largely borne by councils (for hard and/or soft protection works), and in some cases by private landowners (for example, funding the placement of sand bags or emergency protection works to prevent or recover from storm damage) or by collective groups of landowners (for example, landowners may collectively fund the construction of a small sea wall to protect their properties). Where government-owned land and/or assets are involved, or where action is urgently required following an extreme weather event, or the costs of action are beyond the means of councils, there is an



expectation – and in some circumstances a requirement – for other levels of government to contribute to the costs.

An equitable allocation of costs would require those who benefit the most to also contribute the most. However, determining who benefits can be difficult (for example, who benefits from works to roads?) and there may be different views about:

- who directly and indirectly benefits (for example, private landholders versus the broader public benefit)
- the role of government in meeting costs
- respective contributions to costs
- the capacity of community members to pay (particularly more vulnerable groups in the community).

It is important that, as part of this phase, these issues are considered as part of a broader consideration of an appropriate funding framework for implementing the preferred adaptation pathway.

## TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

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The work undertaken so far in the community-based coastal adaptation planning process should be considered as a first-cut assessment of the hazards and associated risks for the project area. Further technical assessments should be undertaken (as required) to fully understand the risks, and how adaptation options might work in addressing them. Options to manage coastal risks can sometimes create their own risks of unintended consequences or environmental impacts, and as such it is important to have them fully explored and assessed for their appropriateness in the project area.

If more than one technical assessment is undertaken, these should be integrated to form an overarching assessment for the project area.

## ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Community engagement is a critical component of community-based adaptation planning. The discussions held with the community as part of the workshop held in Module 3 should be considered as first step discussions that build a foundation for ongoing engagement in adaptation decisions with the community. Through this phase you need to consider appropriate strategies to ensure ongoing communications and engagement with the community in the project area.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

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Throughout the reviewing adaptation options phase of community-based coastal adaptation planning it is important that you consider a thorough monitoring and review framework to track adaptation progress for its effectiveness.

As the scientific knowledge surrounding climate change increases, there is a need to review and potentially modify both the processes involved in planning for coastal adaptation, as well as the pathways chosen to deal with it. Council should consider how often it will need to review adaptation progress for the project area, and how it will undertake that review (i.e. go to broad community consultation once more).



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