



## AdaptNSW Newsletter - September 2021

Hello

As Covid-19 continues to test our resilience locally, extreme weather events across the northern hemisphere demonstrate how vulnerable the global population is to climate related natural hazards. The climate change adaptation content provided in this newsletter and on the [AdaptNSW website](#) aims to equip you, and enable our NSW community to increase resilience to climate impacts, now and into the future.

This edition covers:

> **International climate news**

- \* COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow
- \* IPCC releases sixth assessment report
- \* Global extreme weather

> **National climate news**

- \* National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

> **NSW Councils news**

- \* Climate Risk Ready course
- \* South East & Tablelands region wins funding for Climate Blueprint
- \* New resources to support councils on their net zero emissions journey
- \* Hear how regional water managers are striving for water sensitive communities
- \* NSW Councils action on climate change recognised by awards
- \* Be inspired by how local communities are adapting

> **Events | Conferences | Grants**

### COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow

The [26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties](#) (COP26) will be held in Glasgow on 31 October – 12 November 2021. With Adaptation one of the five primary Goals of the conference, member nations will address strategies to avert, minimise and address the loss and damage that is already occurring from climate change by discussing:

1. **Plans and financing** to improve early warning systems, flood defences, and build resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid further loss of life, livelihoods and natural habitats.
2. **Protecting and restoring habitats** as a powerful way to boost resilience to the impacts of the changing climate.

3. **Why all countries should produce an 'Adaptation Communication'**, a summary of what they are doing and planning to do to adapt to the impacts of the changing climate, challenges they face and where help is needed. These plans will help countries learn together and share best practice.

NSW will be contributing to the COP through the Commonwealth-led Australian Adaptation Working Group.



(COP26) will be held in Glasgow on 31 October – 12 November 2021.

## IPCC releases sixth assessment report

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the Working Group 1 report of its sixth assessment (AR6) 'The Physical Science Basis of Climate Change' on Monday 9 August 2021. This report is based on over 14,000 scientific publications, and confirms that human activities have caused global warming at a rate faster than has been experienced in *at least* 2000 years. This report addresses the most up-to-date physical understanding of the climate system and climate change, brings together the latest advances in climate science, and combines multiple lines of evidence from paleoclimate, observations, process understanding, and global and regional climate simulations. It enables us to explore what the world may look like at different levels of warming in the coming decades to centuries, and emphasises the dependence our decisions today have on our future climate.

[For all details click here.](#)

## Global extreme weather

In the past few months, extreme weather events have affected the northern hemisphere, highlighting the vulnerability of large populations, infrastructure and services:

- Heat records tumbled across [North America, Canada](#) with north American cities setting up [cooling centres](#) to protect communities;
- The heatwave affecting the Pacific Northwest saw significant impacts on natural ecosystems, causing a [marine mortality event](#);
- Extreme heat was also experienced across [Eastern Europe, Russia and Siberia](#) with [wildfires ravaging Turkey](#);
- The [UK Met Office issued its first extreme heat warning](#);
- [Arctic sea ice](#) has seen near-record melting. [NASA's Global Ice Viewer](#) allows you to see changes in ice across the Arctic/Antarctic, glaciers and Greenland/Iceland;
- [intense wildfires](#) have affected large parts of northern America, Canada, and [Siberia](#), with associated [air quality impacts](#);

- [severe drought has affected nearly 95 percent of western America](#) with [impacts to agriculture](#), while intense thunderstorms and rainfall have been so frequent in New York that almost [twice the amount of rain](#) had fallen by mid-July than is usual for the entire month;
- Large-scale flooding has seen loss of life and caused significant damage in [Germany](#), [Belgium and the Netherlands](#), with severe flooding also seen in [China](#);
- These extreme heat-related events in northern America follow on from the [Texas polar-vortex event](#) in February affecting a reported 4 million people with power outages
- [forecasts](#) for global natural disaster insured losses are expected to be as high as \$42bn for the first six months of 2021

Check out this [photo essay](#) documenting some of these events.

## National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy out for comment

The [National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy](#) is currently open for public consultation until 5pm AEST Monday 6 September 2021. This Strategy is being updated from the 2015 version to provide a roadmap toward a climate resilient Australia and is expected to be released in late 2021.

As climate adaptation is a shared responsibility, and the AdaptNSW audience has valued expertise in this area, your input is encouraged via the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's '[Have Your Say](#)' page. Please feel free to share this with your networks.

For further information on the strategy please see [National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy | Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment](#).

## Climate Risk Ready course

The potential risks of climate change are attracting increased attention from all areas of government, the financial sector, and our community. Whilst the globe works to curb climate change, it is imperative that Governments – the owners and operators of infrastructure, assets, and services – understand their climate risks and develop adaptation responses.

The Climate Risk Ready NSW Accredited Training can help. The training, developed with Western Sydney University and AECOM with support from NSW Treasury, assists government to assess and manage risks and opportunities arising from climate change. A recent state government participant, noting that he will soon be undertaking a department wide climate change risk assessment, testified that "Completion of this course has made a big difference in my capacity to undertake this work."

Expressions of interest for the next cohort, commencing in October, can be lodged via the Western Sydney University The College [website](#) now.



Climate Risk Ready NSW Accredited Training

## South East & Tablelands region wins funding for Climate Blueprint

The [Canberra Region Joint Organisation](#) is partnering with NSW Government and member Councils to deliver a *Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW* (the Blueprint) in the wake of the 2019/20 bushfires. The bushfires demonstrated the need to support an adaptive community, economy and natural environment to respond and, as far as possible, thrive under future climate conditions.

The *Blueprint* project aims to equip local councils and communities with the tools and support they need to prepare for disasters and climate change impacts. Working in collaboration and building on current work, regional councils and communities will co-design and deliver targeted training and communication tools. The project will include a regional data platform and identifying community resilience indicators to support ongoing measurement and investment in climate resilience efforts.

The *Blueprint* is funded under the joint Commonwealth-NSW Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement's [Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund](#) and [Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund](#) to assist NSW councils and communities in fire-affected areas assess to recover from, and prepare for, natural disasters. The *Blueprint* project builds on the NSW Government's [Enabling Regional Adaptation](#).

For further information please contact Kalina Koloff at CRJO ([kalina.koloff@crjo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kalina.koloff@crjo.nsw.gov.au)) or Mel Hillery at NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment ([Melinda.Hillery@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Melinda.Hillery@environment.nsw.gov.au)).

## New resources to support councils on their net zero emissions journey

The Department is equipping local councils to embrace the opportunities that reaching net zero emissions presents. Councils now have access to new webpages with a suite of resources that cover key aspects of the net zero journey.

Resources now available include:

- **Net Zero Emissions Insights Webinar Series recordings:** presentations that assist local councils to plan towards net zero.
- **Net Zero Emissions Guidance for NSW Councils:** a step-by-step guide to develop a net zero strategy for community emissions.
- **Net Zero Emissions Video Series:** a three-part video series highlighting the work of four unique councils and their progress towards net zero.
- **Supporting NSW Councils to Reduce Emissions research outputs:** providing a snapshot of NSW councils collective progress on reducing operational and community emissions.
- Coming soon: **case studies** that demonstrate the 'why and how' in specific emissions reductions projects led by local councils across NSW.

Visit the website to access these resources and explore more about what net zero means for local councils: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/netzerocouncils](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/netzerocouncils)

For more information contact: [netzero@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:netzero@environment.nsw.gov.au)



*Rowan Bentick, Environment & Waste Officer at Lachlan Shire Council features in the video series and explains how Council is reducing emissions and saving money through their Energy Sustainability Plan*

## Hear how regional water managers are striving for water sensitive communities

Series two of the [Climate Resilience podcast produced by Local Government NSW](#) is now available. The three-part series explores emerging policy and practice in water sensitive urban design.

Talking with council staff, the first episode, *In Development*, looks at urban development practice and the second, *Sponge City*, considers the idea of urban areas as a sponge and the value of benchmarking progress towards this new way of planning for water. The third episode, *Water Collaborations*, features Sydney Water's Water Sensitive Planner in discussion with council staff, talking about the barriers and opportunities to strengthen collaboration between councils and local water utilities to realise water sensitive communities.



These unique stories were produced and presented by former ABC documentary maker, Gretchen Miller with sound engineer Judy Rapley.

This project was proudly funded through the NSW Government's [Increasing Resilience to Climate Change grants](#).

To listen, **search for *Climate Resilience* on your favourite podcast app.**

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## Greater Sydney Planning Award recognition for Climate Change projects

Two projects funded by the [NSW Increasing Resilience to Climate Change \(IRCC\) council grants](#) have been recognised in the [Greater Sydney Planning Awards 2021](#).

The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WESROC) project, *Urban Heat Planning Toolkit and Cool Suburbs design support tool* was successful in winning the **Great Sustainability Initiative** category. This project received a grant to develop two tool kits for local government to address the detrimental impacts of extreme heat and urban heat on human health, economic productivity, infrastructure resilience and the environment.

The *Future Proofing Residential Development to Climate Change* project won the **Planning Disruptor** category. This collaborative partnership received a grant to investigate the impacts of climate change on residential housing in Sydney's Eastern beaches. The project showed that building controls based on historical climate records are undermining the resilience of residential development and threatening the safety of communities. The recommendation is to design for a hotter climate now using future climate data files to update planning instruments.

The [NSW Increasing Resilience to Climate Change council grants](#) are a partnership between The Department and Local Government NSW to address climate change risks and vulnerabilities facing NSW councils. Over three funding rounds, The Department provided \$2.8M in grant funding from the NSW Climate Change Fund.

## Be inspired by how local communities are adapting

The NSW Government's *Increasing Resilience to Climate Change* [community grants](#) support 23 community groups across the state to increase resilience and reduce the impacts of climate change. Awarded in June 2020, the grantees are now at the mid-point of their project delivery and have been achieving fantastic outcomes in building the capacity of their local communities and implementing practical actions to adapt to climate impacts.

Check out the progress of a few of the exciting projects:

### [Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation](#)

The first 'Land Studio' camp pilot unites urban and rural volunteers in Capertee Valley, testing a creative collaboration model of land restoration, building soil carbon and creating more sustainable food systems for better climate resilience.



Check out the [Land Studio blog](#) and uplifting [video of how these grants are resonating](#) across large range of people, environment and cultures.



[Link-Wentworth Community Housing](#) project seeks to address heat challenges for social housing in Western Sydney where the temperature topped 48.9°C in January 2020. Check out a couple of videos showing how social housing tenants and private renters can [stay cool in a heatwave](#), and [industry leaders speaking about heat](#) what the future looks like for social housing.



The Friends of Foresthaven Inc and its Joyalty Project partnered with Byron Youth Theatre to deliver the '[How on Earth](#)' project. [Watch](#) testimonials of how combining theatre and workshops helped the community and young people explore their reactions to climate change and how to transform feelings of indifference, anxiety or rage into connection and action. The leadership course in climate resilience supported 18 participants aged 14-25 to recognise their own strengths to help peers, family and communities build resilience to the impacts of climate change. Now completed, the project delivered 13 performances to seven high school

communities, reaching 368 students/teachers and 350 community members. Listen [here](#) for an insight into this transformative process for our young people!

Read all of the 23 community grant stories on the [AdaptNSW website](#).

## Events | Conferences | Grants

**EIANZ Learning 2 Adapt Bushfire Planning** online professional development course is running 9, 16 and 23 September 2021 <https://www.eianz.org/events/event/learning-to-adapt-bushfire-planning>

**National Biodiversity Month** runs throughout September to promote the importance of protecting, conserving and improving biodiversity both within Australia and across the world. <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/biodiversity-month>

**National Threatened Species Day** will be recognised on 7 September 2021 to raise awareness of plants and animals at risk of extinction <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/saving-our-species-news/threatened-species-day>

The Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC) **Local Government Energy and Innovation Conference 2021** is being held 8 – 9 September 2021 to showcase the latest innovations in energy generation, energy management and energy efficiency <https://reroc.com.au/local-government-energy-and-innovation-conference>

The **Investor Group on Climate Change (IGCC) 2021 Summit *Investing in the Transition to Net Zero*** will be held 25-26 October 2021 <https://igcc.org.au/igcc-2021-summit/>

*Past event:* The Sydney Environment Institute hosted the **Reimagining Climate Adaptation Summit** in April 2021. Recordings of the summit are available at <https://sei.sydney.edu.au/events/reimagining-climate-adaptation-summit/>

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