



SUPPORTING PEOPLE PLACES SECTORS

Climate Ready Communities Toolkit

Facilitator
Handbook



A regional approach to climate change adaptation



ADAPT Climate Ready Communities Principles

Value lived experience

Local people understand their communities' values and concerns, and are best placed to lead action that builds climate resilience by creating a shared sense of community pride, identity and participation.

Peer-to-peer learning

Conversations between community members can build local climate awareness and knowledge, create community connections, and identify direct actions to help respond to local climate impacts.

Capacity building

We want to build capacity for grassroots action that supports resilient and thriving communities by providing tools and resources that give local leaders a foundation to influence change in their communities.



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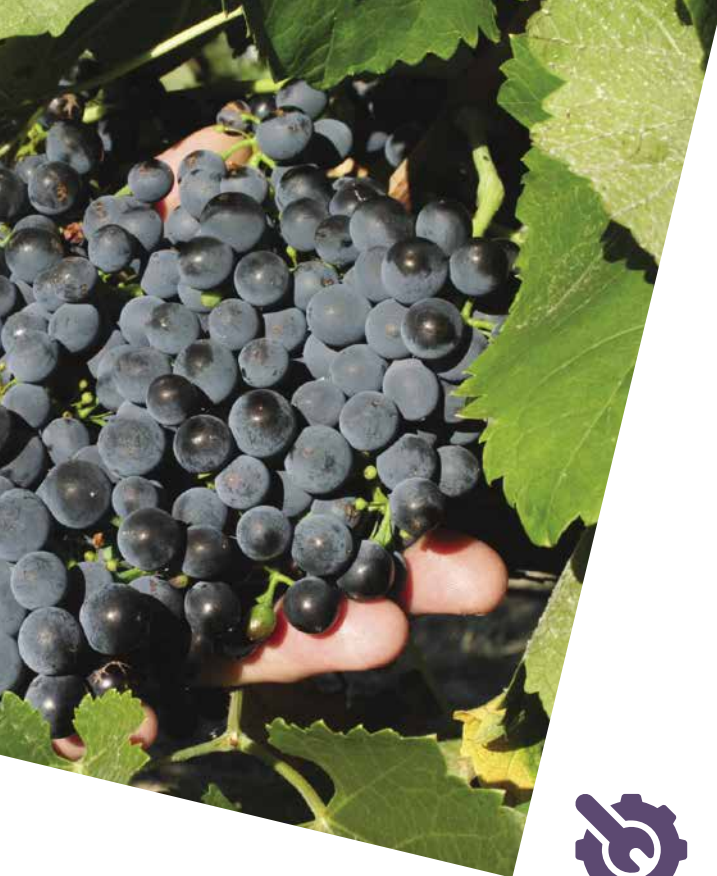
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SECTION 1

About this toolkit

Conversations are really important when it comes to addressing the impacts of climate change.

Climate ready conversations will build awareness and knowledge about how climate change will impact what we most value about our community. Whether you talk to your friends, colleagues or family members, a conversation is a great way for people to have their thoughts heard, to share information and provide advice in a friendly and supportive environment.



This toolkit has been created in collaboration with local community leaders to support anybody who wants to host a climate ready conversation.

The Facilitator Handbook will:

Step you through a process that will help you think about and prepare for your climate ready conversation (including some reflective questions)

Share tips for facilitating a conversation

Thank you
for having
this important
conversation
in your
community.

Let's get
started...



Why have a climate ready conversation?

Individuals, communities, businesses and governments all have a part to play in building resilient and thriving communities.

The challenge is too big for anyone to act alone.



Building resilience in communities involves planning and preparing for climate changes in ways that are inclusive, meet communities' specific needs and support those most at risk. Having a climate ready conversation will allow people in your community to see different points of view, build relationships and identify shared values.

Understanding local climate impacts and preparing for them will help your community build resilience, so you can be ready to face the challenges and embrace the opportunities of a changing climate.

ADAPT Loddon Mallee wants to know your community...

What do you, as a community, value?

How might you prepare and respond to climate risks to ensure a safe and thriving community?



How will the impacts of climate change affect your community's values and assets?

Where are the opportunities and where might your community need support?



Why is it important to think about adaptation?

Climate change is already impacting social, cultural, environmental and economic systems in our region.

If we want to continue to have thriving, resilient communities, we are going to have to change the way we do some things to be better suited to a climate-changed environment.

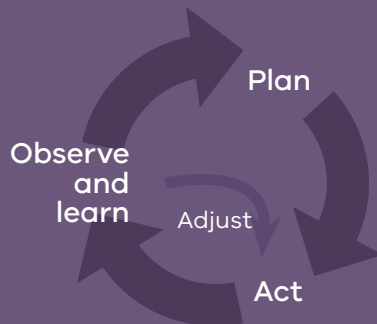


Adaptation involves taking practical actions to manage climate risks across our communities so they are more resilient. Of course, this includes harnessing new opportunities, managing the transition to renewable energies and a circular economy, and changing the way we do other things to reduce our carbon emissions.

Even if emissions are dramatically decreased in the next decade, adaptation action will still be needed to manage global changes that have already been set in motion.

Climate change adaptation will help individuals, communities, organisations and natural systems become more resilient to the impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided.

Communities are often best placed to understand local climate impacts, identify key priorities and take adaptation action that benefits their differing needs.



What makes a resilient community?



Resilience is the long-term capacity of a system to deal with change and continue to develop.

A community's resilience to climate change comes from a combination of the ability to resist certain climate risks, the capacity to self-organise and recover from extreme events, and to adapt to new conditions and take advantage of opportunities that arise.

When thinking about getting your community climate ready, think about the characteristics that make up a resilient community and the steps you might need to take to develop those characteristics in your community.





How to talk about getting climate ready in a time of crisis

It has been a challenging
couple of years for
Victorian communities.



After a summer of record bushfires in 2019-20, communities then faced the social, cultural and economic impacts of the lockdown in response to the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

It might seem like a difficult time to talk to your community about how climate change is going to further impact their lives, so consider the following before starting your conversation.

Speak to overarching values

In times of crisis, communally held values such as collaboration, equality and fairness, community support, compassion, and a sense of responsibility to future generations, resonate with people and may be an effective way for them to return a feeling of control over their lives.

'...individual change is a crucial part of wider systemic change in the climate sphere'

Climate Outreach



Be respectful

Even people concerned and wanting to act on climate change may not be willing to engage at this point. People might be more concerned about their businesses, employment, schooling, older parents and family health and wellbeing. Climate change may seem less pressing and 'into the future'.

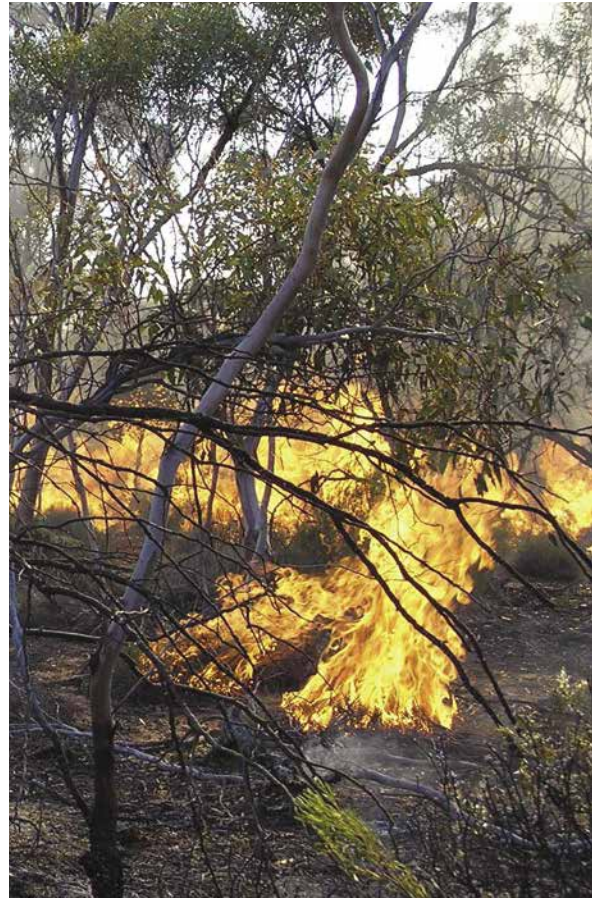
Everyone makes a difference

During a time when people could feel overwhelmed by multiple challenges, it is important when talking about climate change to build a sense that there is something that people can do, and that if they do something it will make a difference.

It is important to prepare

Framing your conversation about climate change and the importance of planning, preparation and building resilience is more likely to bring people along on the journey and give them a sense of empowerment in a time of uncertainty.

Planning and preparing builds resilience and lessens panic/denial responses – eg having a fire plan doesn't stop a fire coming but it does reduce uncertainty and anxiety and map out actions that you need to take.





SECTION 2

Before your conversations: activities for facilitators

To help prepare you for your community conversation please complete the following activities.

You can record your responses in the Facilitator Workbook (part 2 of the toolkit).



ACTIVITY 1

Reflection

What has inspired you to become engaged in creating a climate ready community?

It is important for facilitators to be clear from the beginning about the purpose of hosting a Climate Ready Conversation.

As the facilitator, your role is to lay the groundwork for change in your community and clearly communicate why you are initiating a climate ready conversation.

To support you in clarifying your purpose, please turn to pages 6–7 in your workbook to complete Activity 1 – Reflection.



ACTIVITY 2

Understanding your local area

Climate science

To get a great overview of the latest climate science for our regions please visit:

- myclimate.acf.org.au/index.html
Look for your town (or close to it) to see a visualisation of what a high emission scenario looks like for 2050.
- www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/adapting-to-climate-change-impacts/victorian-climate-projections-2019
- www.adaptloddonmallee.com.au/initiatives/climate-ready-communities/#_local-climate-update

See also Additional resources at the back of this handbook

**Please turn to page 10 in your workbook to complete Activity 2
– Understanding your local area Part A – Climate risks.**

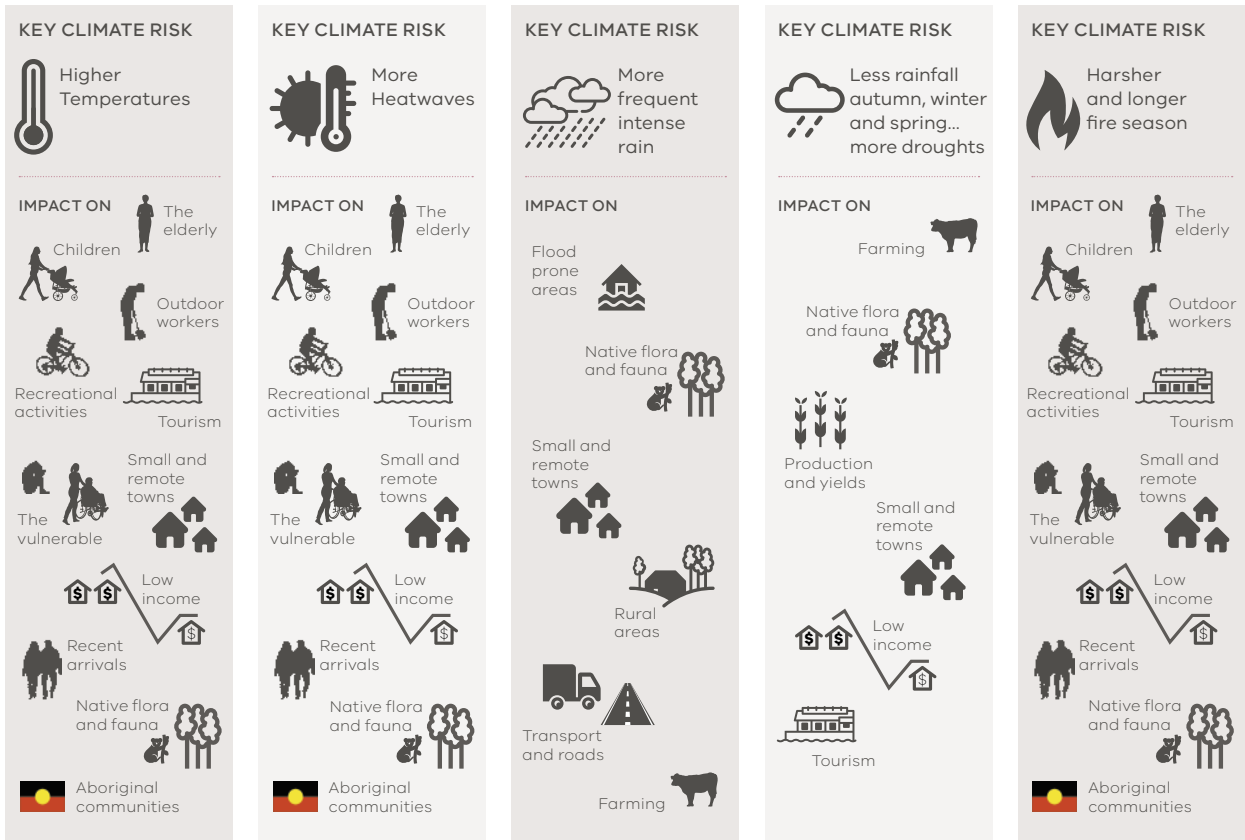


Figure 1



Impacts and vulnerability

Figure 1 on the previous page shows current and future climate risks and who/what in our communities will be the most impacted.

Understanding vulnerability

A community's vulnerability to climate change depends upon how exposed they are to climate risks, as well as their capacity to adapt to change. See Figure 2.

Please turn to Page 12 in your workbook to complete Activity 2 – Understanding your local area Part B – Understanding vulnerability.

How exposed are you to the direct and indirect impacts?

Eg Low laying areas sensitive to flooding

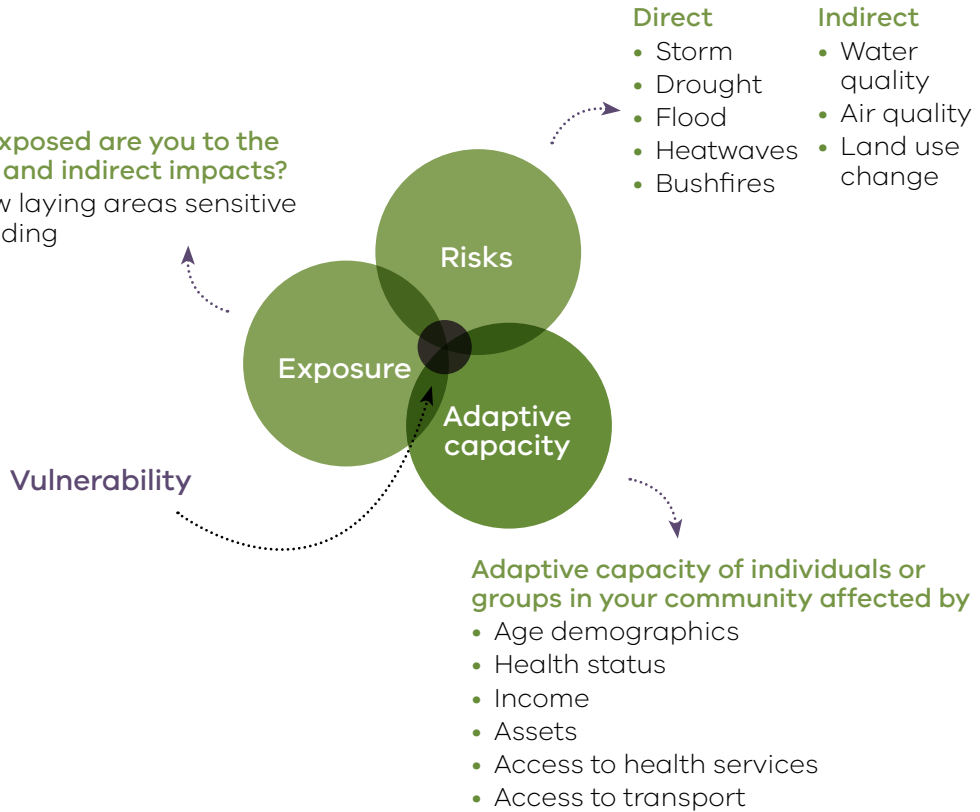


Figure 2



ACTIVITY 3

Who will you be talking to?

Understanding your audience

Now you understand why you want to host a climate ready conversation and what are the potential climate impacts in your community, it's important to think about who it might be best to start the conversation with.

You can host a conversation with anyone – your neighbours, your parents, volunteer or sporting group or even your mates at the pub.



Please turn to Page 14 in your workbook to complete Activity 3 for Facilitators

– Who will you be talking to?



ACTIVITY 3

Who will you be talking to?

Before you start your climate ready conversation take some time to think about who it is that you want to talk to and why.



Are you hosting a small group or a larger group?

A small group would fit around a table.



Are they potentially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change?



Has your group been engaged with climate action in the past?



How much capacity do they have to take adaptation action?





ACTIVITY 4

What do you want to say?

What are you hoping to get people to talk about?

In getting ready for your climate ready conversation you have identified your purpose, clarified your understanding of local climate projections, impacts and vulnerabilities and identified your audience.

It is important to identify some key messages you can use throughout the conversation process.



Make sure they reflect what you know about your community, the purpose of your conversation and who your audience is.

Please turn to Page 16 in your workbook to complete Activity 4 for Facilitators – What do you want to say?



ACTIVITY 4

What do you want to say?

What are some of the topics you are hoping to explore? What would you like to encourage the participants to talk about?



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For example:

- Rural and regional communities are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.
- Climate change is affecting our community now.
- It's important that we have a plan to protect our community against future risk.
- We can all do something.



'...What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.'

Jane Goodall

Facilitator Workbook 17



SECTION 3

Conversation tips

What is a community conversation?

A community conversation is a planned conversation where fellow community members listen to each other in order to understand and explore what is valued by that community and create a shared sense of purpose.



The process

The process involves having planned conversations between community members, in which participants listen to each other in order to understand. The process will also provide a safe and inclusive way to discuss how the community can build resilience to current and future climate impacts.

Anyone can host

Anyone can host a conversation or participate in one. The more diverse the participants, the better the understanding of the differing ways climate change will impact your community, what your local priorities are and what adaptation measures need to be taken.

The process will also provide a safe and inclusive way to discuss how the community can build resilience to current and future climate impacts.

What makes an effective community conversation leader?

Enjoy

The conversation! If you enjoy yourself, you are far more likely to be authentically engaged with, and connected to, the people you are talking to – and they are more likely to feel positive about the conversation too.

Respect

Show people that you value their concerns, priorities and experiences.

Open

Remain open to other ideas and discussions with no judgement.

Listen

To people and build trust. Check in to make sure you understand what people are saying.

Share

Who you are? What is your story? Why are you interested in hosting a climate ready conversation?

Ask

Display a genuine sense of curiosity. Ask questions. Give people the space to reflect on their own experiences and views on the issue.

Challenge

Respectfully push people to consider different perspectives. Help people understand why others think in different ways.

Focus

Stay focused on the goal of the conversation – this is about supporting your community to become climate ready, not to engage in political debate.

Keep it local

When talking about big issues it's easy for people to feel overwhelmed by the scale of the problem. To avoid this happening, keep the focus of your conversation local.

Persevere

Every conversation you have is valuable. Find opportunities to connect with other like-minded people who are also supporting their communities to build climate resilience.

If you enjoy yourself, you are far more likely to be engaged with, and connected to, the person you are talking to – and they are more likely to feel positive...



But what if?

Dealing with denial

Your climate ready conversation is about identifying how climate change will impact what your community holds most dear and taking action to build climate resilience. **It is not a platform for debating the science.**

- Communities are already feeling the impacts of climate change.
- You are not there to debate the science. 97% of the world's climate scientists agree, so it's important to get your community ready.
- The climate modelling is rigorous – direct people to the resources at the end of this handbook if they want more details.



A few people dominate

- Engage each person from the start.
- Ask, 'Are there any new voices on this issue?' or 'Does anyone else want to jump in here?'
- Be direct and say, 'We seem to be hearing from the same people. Let's give others a chance to talk.'
- Call on people by name to answer.
- Ask, 'How does what you're talking about relate to our challenge?' or 'What does that lead you to think about (the question at hand)?'
- If you can't get a person to focus, interrupt them when they take a breath and move to another person or question. Then bring them back into the conversation later.

People argue

- Debate is ok as long as it is not mean-spirited.
- Find out what's behind the argument; ask why people disagree, get to the bottom of it.
- Stop to review the ground rules.
- Take a break.



What happens next?

Congratulations – you are now ready to plan your community conversation!

Next steps, conversation activities and how to use the conversation cards are all explained in the Section 2 of your Facilitator Workbook.

Remember

After you have hosted your event please feedback your learnings to ADAPT Loddon Mallee so we can continue to support our region to get climate ready.







Conversation climate change glossary

Adaptation

Action that helps cope with the effects or impacts of climate change

Atmosphere

Is made up of gases including carbon dioxide, hydrogen, methane, nitrogen and oxygen. It acts like a tent or greenhouse, protecting the Earth from high levels of the sun's radiation, known as ultraviolet (UVB) radiation. Without the atmosphere, heat from the sun would penetrate Earth and make it far too hot for any life to exist.

Climate

The changes in weather (temperature, rainfall wind, storms, clouds etc) measured over decades or longer. Weather can change hourly, daily, weekly or yearly.

Climate change

The significant changes in climate patterns and related changes in oceans, land surfaces and ice sheets that occur over several decades or longer.

Climate projection

A climate projection is the simulated response of the climate system to a scenario of future emission or concentration of greenhouse gases using climate models.

Greenhouse effect

A process where radiative energy from the sun passes through the atmosphere and warms the surface of the Earth. The Earth's surface then releases most of the energy as heat, back into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases absorb some of this heat and raise temperatures on Earth's surface, making it suitable for life.

Greenhouse gases

Are invisible and include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide which surround us and make up the atmosphere. They have helped to keep the Earth's temperature constant for the past 5000 years and without them, Earth would be too cold for life to exist.

Enhanced greenhouse effect

Human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, are adding more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. This is enhancing the greenhouse effect, trapping more heat and causing global temperatures to rise.

Emissions scenarios

Emission scenarios are possible pathways that society might take in the emission of greenhouse gases in the future. Typically, they are broken into low, med or high emission scenario categories.

Additional resources

- bit.ly/SnapshotReportLM
- www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/adapting-to-climate-change-impacts
- www.csiro.au/en/Showcase/state-of-the-climate
- www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/
- myclimate.acf.org.au/index.html
- climaterealityproject.org/climate-101





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