

ClimateSmart Adaptation 2007-12:

An action plan for managing the impacts of climate change



Climate change is one of the most significant challenges facing the world today. Queensland's climate is naturally variable and extreme. Climate change is likely to influence this with potentially more frequent droughts, heatwaves and heavy rainfall. As the climate changes, we need to change too in the way we interact with our environment.

Much of Queensland's natural environment and community and economic activities are climate-sensitive. To ensure the lifestyle and standard of living that Queenslanders enjoy is maintained into the future, we have to make adjustments to respond to our changing climate. This process is called adaptation.

The action plan

ClimateSmart Adaptation 2007-12 is a five-year plan that provides the foundations for building Queensland's resilience to climate change and is a

response to public discussions and submissions about how we can prepare for climate change and lessen its impact.

The Queensland community played an important role in developing the action plan. Discussions were held throughout the state to seek the views of Queenslanders on how projected changes in climate might affect them, and how the state can be better prepared

to manage these impacts. This feedback, and the latest climate change science, was used to develop the action plan.

The action plan:

- confirms the Queensland Government's commitment to dealing with the issue of climate change, and provides direction for managing its impacts;





- aims to raise awareness about the effects of climate change and provide advice and guidance on including it in decision making;
- integrates the latest climate change science research and projections into policy responses and adaptation actions ‘on the ground’;
- aims to build an understanding about the risks to Queensland’s regions and sectors from climate change;
- includes 62 practical actions for government and businesses to consider the potential effects of climate change when they make decisions about: water planning and services; agriculture; human settlement; natural environment and landscape, emergency services and human health, tourism; business and industry; and finance and insurance.
- aligns with national initiatives for climate change adaptation.

Taking action now

The earlier we act, the more effective our actions will be. There are a number of things that Queenslanders can start doing now including:

- using water more efficiently;
- changing some agricultural practices so that they are better suited to the projected changes in climate;

- protecting our plants and animals from impacts such as habitat loss so they are better able to endure change in the climate; and
- making sure our homes, buildings and infrastructure are located and built to withstand more extreme weather conditions including more hot days and more intense cyclones.

As part of *ClimateSmart Adaptation 2007-12*, the State Government will work to ensure that Queenslanders have a good understanding of what the changes to our climate will be, and how we can take practical action to ensure the state’s communities, environmental wellbeing and economic performance can be maintained into the future.

Implementing the action plan

The Office of Climate Change, within the Environmental Protection Agency, is implementing and coordinating *ClimateSmart Adaptation 2007-12* and working closely with key stakeholders, such as the tourism sector and local government, to implement adaptation actions throughout the state.

Of the 62 priority actions contained in the adaptation plan – 17 have been completed.

Key achievements include:

- delivering a suite of climate change workshops for the tourism industry;
- integrating climate change responses into regional plans for Far North Queensland, Maranoa, South West Queensland, Central West Queensland, North West Queensland and the SEQ Regional Plan Review;
- integrating the latest climate change science into Regional Water Supply Strategies; and
- ensuring the latest climate change science informs the review of the State Coastal Management Plan.

The Queensland Government is reviewing, updating and consolidating the adaptation plan in light of the latest scientific assessments as well as national and international developments in climate change and climate change policy.

More information

Climate change in Queensland

www.climatechange.qld.gov.au