



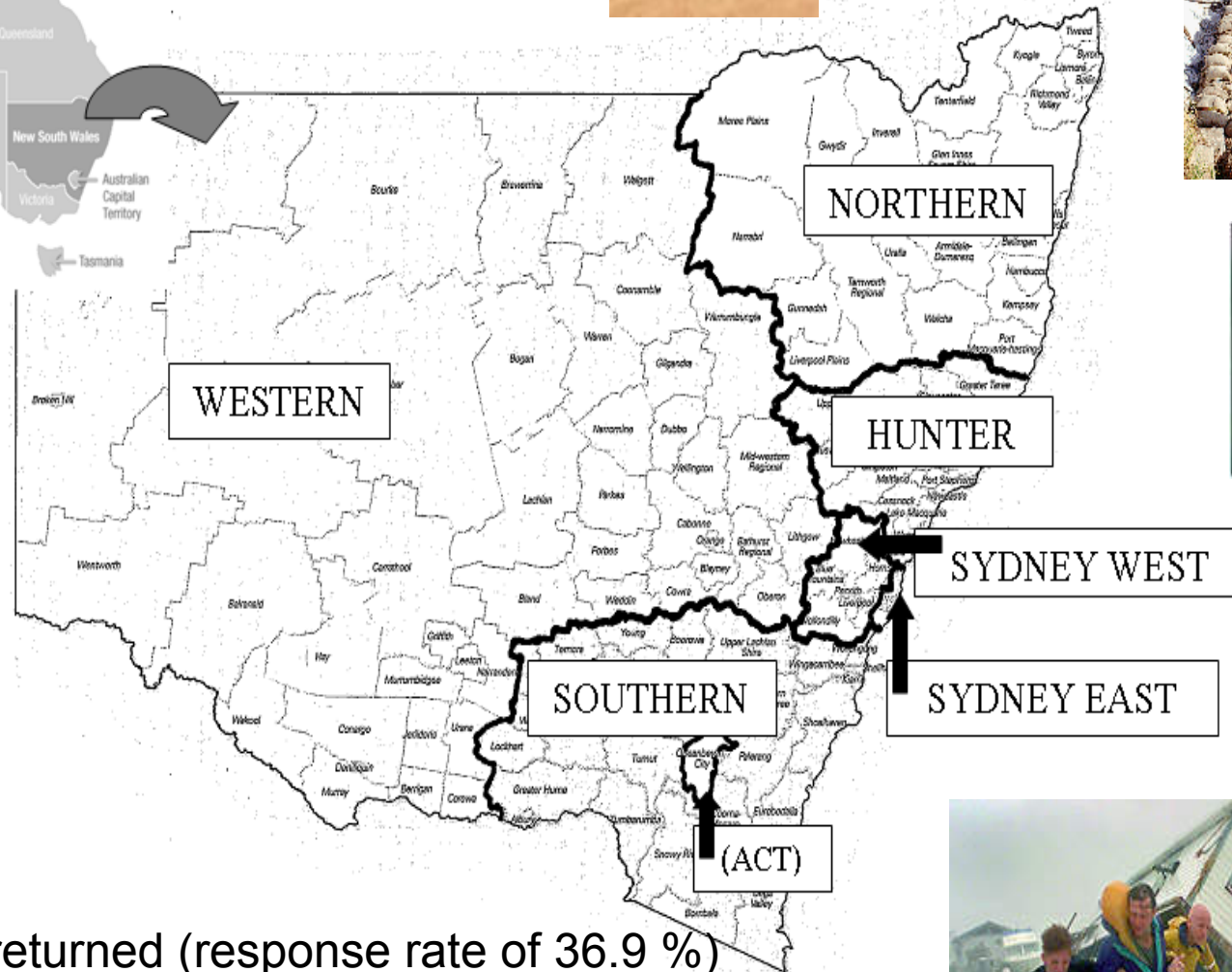
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# **Tourism, Climate Change and Adaptation: New South Wales Local Government Responses**

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56/152 surveys returned (response rate of 36.9 %)

## New South Wales LGAs and planning regions

(source: NSW Department of Planning 2008)



## Background

Each council is required by law to execute the environmental planning function.

Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs) are made under the EP&A act and are legally binding. At the time of research these were:

- Local Environmental Plans (LEPs)
- Regional Environmental Plans (REPs)
- State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)

Other non-statutory (not legally binding) documents include

- Development Control Plans (DCPs)

Councils also have a responsibility:

*“- to properly **manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment** of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of **ecologically sustainable development**;*

*- to have regard to the **long-term** and cumulative effects of its decisions;  
- to bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively **account for and manage the assets** for which it is responsible”*



- High perceived vulnerability of LGAs to the Physical Impacts of Climate Change (PICC) but a broad lack of confidence in planning measures.
- Increased extreme storm events were rated as the most significant potential physical impact of climate change, followed by damage to infrastructure and increased drought.
- The effectiveness of all planning and policy instruments, the NSW standard LEP framework and the EP&A Act was perceived as very low, indicating a broad scale lack of confidence in planning measures in NSW for the PICC.
- The perceived effectiveness of these same planning elements rated only slightly better for tourism planning.
- One quarter of respondents thought their council had taken no steps at all to plan for the PICC.
- The most selected step planners thought their council had taken was collaboration with other council(s).



- The overall efficacy of steps that had been taken received a low rating from the planners.
- Respondents, on average, thought their council should take more than double the number of steps over the next five years to plan for the PICC than they have to date.
- Respondents overwhelmingly thought that their councils should undertake risk assessments for the PICC over the next five years. The development of policy and collaboration with other councils were also considered important steps that councils should take.
- Two thirds of planners thought that special provisions addressing climate change should be added to planning instruments and the NSW standard LEP framework.



## Implications

- Local governments that fail to plan for the PICC are considered more vulnerable, not only to the PICC, thereby reducing their resilience, but also to civil and public liability claims and litigation.
- The implications for tourism industries include increased vulnerability to the PICC but are also compounded by the poor perceived efficacy of the tools to plan for tourism.
- The results of the study indicate that improved tools for planning for the PICC and for tourism are needed.
- These improved planning tools can emerge through the application of an iterative adaptive management framework which facilitates constant learning from past inadequacies and applying the lessons learnt to adjust the planning tools.



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# Questions?

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