

Business Plan: Adaptation Research Network for Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions of Climate Change

Goal

The primary goal of this network is to assist in the development of the human resources necessary for advancing understanding and effective decision making on the social, economic and institutional dimensions of adaptation to climate change.

This network on the social, economic and institutional dimensions of adaptation to climate change will build a large, inclusive and diverse community of researchers and decision makers from all universities and all levels of government, develop a community of future leaders in adaptation research and policy, and drive thinking across sectors and disciplines through its activities. It will be hosted by the University of Melbourne in association with the Australian National University, the CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship, Monash University, the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, and the University of New South Wales. The convenors are leading social scientists with a demonstrated capacity for research on the human dimensions of adaptation to climate change. This partnership of convenors and institutions provides an extensive set of networks from which this network can subsequently develop.

Approach

During its term, the Network will engage in three principal activities: (1) building network membership and developing opportunities for information exchange, including via a Network electronic mailing list, and a website; (2) the development of a vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Indigenous Communities Programme; and (3) an annual workshop and 'Adaptation College' that will galvanise interest in this area, promote the network, forge interdisciplinary thinking, and build connections between researchers and decision makers.

Management structure

The network will be governed by a steering group comprised of the convenor and co-convenors (see table below). Each will have equal input on all decisions relating to the substance and activities of the network. The convenor will be additionally responsible for the ongoing management of the network. The convenors will formally meet in person once a year, ideally coinciding with a workshop and at other times as required and via tele- or video- conferencing; and informally on a regular basis. Responsibility for the management of the network rests with the convenor, who will make decisions about the substance and activities of the network in conjunction with the co-convenors. The staffing structure will ensure that there is sufficient labour for the network to run effectively and efficiently.

The network will also work actively with the NCCARF and the convenors of other networks to ensure a measured and well planned programme of activities that constructively engages the research and policy community.

Name	Role	Institution
Dr. Jon Barnett	Convenor	Melbourne University
Prof. Philip Adams	Co-Convenor	Monash University
Prof. Tim Bonyhady	Co-Convenor	Australian National University
Prof. Stephen Dovers	Co-Convenor	Australian National University
Dr. Marcus Lane	Co-Convenor	CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship
Prof. Marcia Langton	Co-Convenor	Melbourne University
A./Prof. John Merson	Co-Convenor	University of New South Wales
Mr. Joe Morrison	Co-Convenor	North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

The network funds support two postdoctoral fellows based at Melbourne University, throughout the course of the network. One research fellow - Dr. Saffron O'Neill will support Dr. Barnett in his role as lead convenor of the network. The fellow has four principal roles(in order of priority)

- a) monitor and synthesise Australian and relevant international research on the social and economic dimensions of adaptation to climate and other cognate changes
- b) assist with the synthesis and integration of work as it arises from within the activities of this network (it will be somewhat diverse given the different themes)
- c) liaise and provide support as appropriate to other NCCARF networks (given the cross-cutting nature of this network)
- d) support Jon Barnett in his role as lead convenor of this network, including in assisting NCCARF (for example developing research plans); maintaining the intellectual content of the website; monitoring and initiating discussions on the list server; and assisting with the transfer of knowledge to the broader community beyond the network.

There is another four-year research position to manage the program on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Indigenous Australia, supported by Prof. Langton, Mr. Morrison and Dr. Barnett. The four principal roles of this fellow will be:

- a) establish and maintain a national network of researchers and decision makers interested in the issue of climate change vulnerability and adaptation in Indigenous communities

- b) conduct ongoing reviews and synthesis of information about the processes that structure vulnerability and may enhance adaptation in Indigenous communities
- c) provide information to potential researchers about appropriate protocols and processes for conducting research with Indigenous Australians
- d) facilitate indigenous input into research and policy on adaptation to climate change.

For each national conference and associated work programme the hosting institution will receive funds to employ a Research Fellow for one year to prepare a briefing paper, collates ideas from members of the network, develop key questions to be addressed by the conference, and prepare a synthesis report. The hosting organization will also receive funds to employ casual staff to help with organization of the workshop and assist during the workshop.

The convenor will be responsible for the appointment and supervision of a project officer - Tina Soundias - a full-time professional staff member who will manage the operation of the network, including updating the website, maintaining the list server, organising conferences and workshops, and supporting where necessary the manager of the vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Indigenous Australia program.

Milestones and deliverables

1. Initial recruitment and e-exchange

Utilising the networks that the convenors and researchers in their institutions already have, we will invite all interested parties to register with the network, and to join an email list-server. We will also develop a website that performs a communication and information dissemination role, and which also acts as a repository of materials such as articles, reports, and bibliographies, and which lists all members of the network and their respective interests. We aim to have this stage substantially completed within the first 6 months, with regular updates of the website, and ongoing recruitment of new members throughout the life of the network.

Milestone:

- a functional web interface and email list-server within 6 months of commencement of the network
- a database of publications relevant to social, economic and institutional dimensions of climate change will be compiled and made available on-line
- (if desired) a meeting of the convenors, in association with other relevant researchers, to provide initial input into the development of a national plan for research to enhance understanding of the social, economic and institutional dimensions of adaptation to climate change, within the first six months

2. Annual Workshop and Adaptation College

A series of intensive activities will ensure that an adequate degree of specialisation in networks and human resource development is maintained. Each intensive activity revolves around a national workshop, which will galvanise interest, promote the network, forge interdisciplinary thinking, and build connections between researchers and decision makers. Indicative themes of the conferences

are:

Year	Convenor	Theme
2009	NAILSMA (Joe Morrison)	Issues and approaches to understanding adaptation to climate change in indigenous populations
2010	UNSW (John Merson)	Adaptive environmental management and policy
2011	ANU (Tim Bonyhady and Steve Dovers)	Legal and policy frameworks for facilitating adaptation
2012	Monash (Philip Adams)	Approaches to understanding the economic impacts of climate change and climate change policies

Each workshop will last for 3 days, with approximately 100 participants at each. For each there will be awards of free travel and accommodation to 3 postgraduate students selected on the basis of the quality of abstracts submitted, and 5 similar awards to encourage attendance by representative of Indigenous and social welfare groups.

In the year leading up to each workshop the hosting organization will prepare a briefing paper, and on the basis of the outcomes of the workshop the host organization will compile a synthesis report. Both the briefing paper and the synthesis report will be posted on the network website. For this purpose the network will provide the hosting organisation with a Research Fellow for one year.

The 'Adaptation College' takes the form of an additional two-day event following each annual workshop, attended by 20 or so people who are a mix of early career people from research organisations, community organisations and Indigenous groups, and people from government. The same cohort of people will go to each annual workshop, and after each to spend a couple of days getting to know each other, learning from each other, and doing a few activities to help this process along. The College events will focus on interdisciplinary research and praxis elements of the corresponding Workshop theme. The aim is to build a community of future leaders in adaptation research and policy that is able to work across the research/policy divide, and that is interdisciplinary in its outlook. The network will fund the participation of 14 people in this college: that is, their costs to attend each workshop, and the costs of a subsequent 2 day event for people in the College. Two awards will be reserved for indigenous participants to take part in the College; 7 for early career researchers; 2 for local government and 3 civil society group participants.

Milestones:

- completion of annual workshop and adaptation college meeting in each of 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012
- on-line publication of the briefing paper for each workshop 2 months prior to each workshop
- on-line publication of the synthesis report from each workshop within 3 months of the end of each workshop
- Adaptation College Awards presented in 2012

3. Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in Indigenous Communities Program

We propose a four-year program on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Indigenous Australia, hosted by the Australian Indigenous Studies Program at Melbourne University, which is directed by Professor Marcia Langton, and with input from Joe Morrison (NAILSMA) and Jon Barnett. This program will have three key functions.

1. establish and maintain a national network of researchers and decision makers interested in the issue of climate change vulnerability and adaptation in Indigenous communities
2. conduct ongoing reviews and synthesis of information about the processes that structure vulnerability and may enhance adaptation in Indigenous communities
3. provide information to potential researchers about appropriate protocols and processes for conducting research with Indigenous Australians.

It is critical that there be a program such as this that can influence the discourse about climate impacts in Indigenous Australia, which in the absence of purposeful and strong Indigenous input will likely misrepresent Indigenous concerns and interests, and in turn lead to poorly informed policy processes and outcomes. This program will run for four years.

Milestones:

- a draft set of priority issues and questions after 6 months, for input into the first conference (vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in indigenous Australia), and to help formulate a detailed plan of work (see last milestone)
- a set of protocols and information about processes for conducting research with Indigenous Australians after one year, with ongoing development
- a mailing list of decision makers and researchers interested in research on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Indigenous Australia after one year, with ongoing additions;
- a detailed plan of work for the period 2009-2012, to be completed one month after the first national conference (in order to be informed by that conference)
- a comprehensive report on vulnerability and adaptation in Indigenous Australia, with policy suggestions, to be completed by mid 2012.

4. National Adaptation Research Plan for Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions of climate change

Support in the implementation of the National Adaptation Research Plan for Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions of climate change, including promoting of NARP research priorities, and of research funding opportunities

Network links

The network is supported by four of Australia's leading research Universities, NAILSMA, and the CSIRO Adaptation Flagship. The ANU, Melbourne University, Monash University and UNSW respectively Australia's first, second, fifth and sixth ranked Universities according to the Times Higher Education ranking method. All are comprehensive, research-intensive Universities with established strengths across a range of social science disciplines relevant to climate adaptation, including anthropology, economics, geography, law, political science, public administration, public policy, science and technology studies, and sociology. Researchers across these diverse fields are

closely connected to relevant disciplinary and professional networks.

NAILSMA has an unprecedented ability to work with indigenous groups across Northern Australia. It consists of a partnership between the peak Indigenous natural resource agencies across northern Australia, including the Kimberley, Northern and Carpentaria Land Councils and the Balkanu Cape York Development Association. It is a partner agency of the Tropical Savannas CRC and has links with the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) and the Central land Council.

The CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship is actively collaborating with several federal and state agencies, city councils and local governments in several regions (especially in Sydney and South East Queensland), several universities, and non-government organisations, and has engagement with Indigenous groups in northern Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. CSIRO has around 120 social science and economics staff members, who are increasingly engaged in CAF work.

However, a network based on these six institutions alone would not serve the public interest in the way that we envisage. As convenors our role is to use the capacity of researchers in our institutions, and the networks they each have, to develop a much larger network comprised of all relevant and interested researchers and decision makers from across universities, governments, private enterprises and communities in Australia. Thus, the significance of the partnership hosting this network is the size of the initial platform and the extensive networks from which the network will subsequently develop.

To this end we will initially mobilise the networks and groups that the convenors themselves are already extensively involved with to reach out to people who may be interested in this network on adaptation. These networks and groups include (but are not restricted to):

- the Academy of Social Sciences Australia
- the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics (ABARE),
- the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
- the Australian Oceanic Network for rural social research and community development
- the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute
- the Ecological Society of Australia
- the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand
- the Institute of Australian Geographers
- the Institute of Public Administration (Australia)
- the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)
- the International Society for Ecological Economics
- the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change
- the Federal and State Treasuries
- the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP)
- the Productivity Commission,
- the Office of Climate Change
- the Garnaut Climate Change Review
- various state level agencies, for example the NSW Dept of Environment and Water Resources, the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment, the Parks and Wildlife Service of the Northern Territory
- various local government organisations

Key researchers and institutions across Australia have expressed a willingness to utilise their networks to advertise the existence of this one on adaptation, to help recruit early career

researchers who might be suitable to participate in the network, and to participate in the network and its events. In the spirit of inclusiveness, we have made it clear that these expressions of interest are non-exclusive commitments that in no way preclude these people and groups from supporting other proposals for this and other networks. These researchers and institutions that we will include as initial members of the network are:

- Hartmut Fuenfgeld, Adaptation Initiative Manager, Cities for Climate Protection Australia, ICLEI Oceania
- Professor Stephen Garnett, Director School of Environmental Research at Charles Darwin University.
- Professor Rolf Gerritsen, Research Leader Central Australia, Charles Darwin University, and convenor of the Central Australian Research Network
- Professor Brian Head, Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland
- Sue Jackson from the CSIRO Tropical Ecosystems Research Centre
- Dr. Roger Jones and Dr. Benjamin Preston of the Risk, Adaptation and Policy Team from CSIRO Marine & Atmospheric Research
- Professor John Martin and Dr. Bradley Jorgenson, from the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities at La Trobe University Bendigo
- Dr. Melissa Nursey-Bray, Department of Marine Conservation and Resource Sustainability, the Australian Maritime College
- A./Prof. Tim Smith, Director of the Regional Sustainability Research Group at the University of the Sunshine Coast