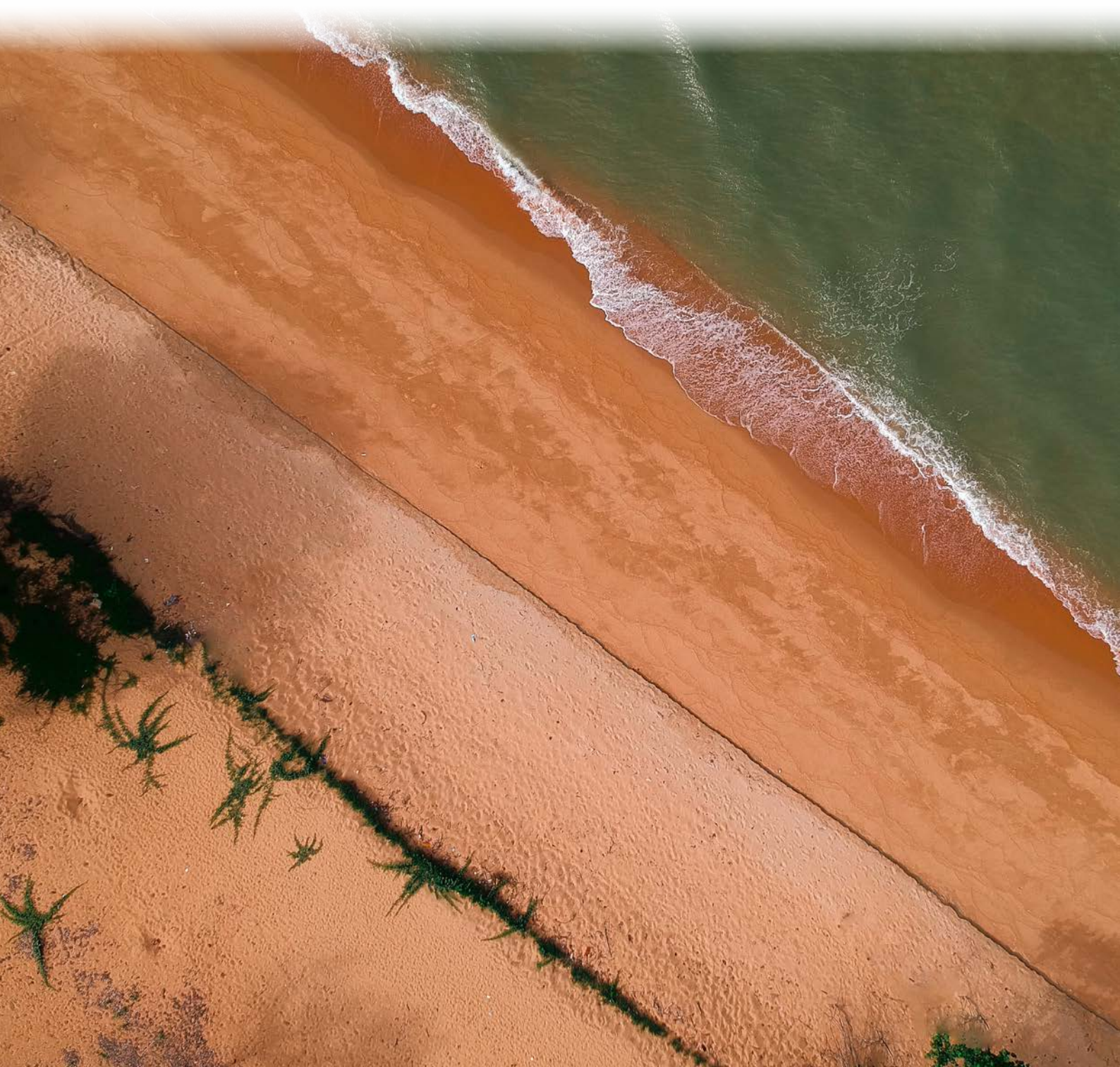




Climate Adaptation Strategy

Two-year progress report 2025





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Minister's foreword

Western Australia stands at a pivotal moment. Our economy is rapidly evolving, driven by innovation, diversification and a focus on *Made in WA* to strengthen our state's future with a commitment to harnessing local talent, resources and ingenuity.

At the same time, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly visible across our vast and varied landscapes. From the drying climate of the South West to the unprecedented marine heatwaves along our coastline; to the Kimberley and the Great Southern, the signs are unmistakable. Climate change is no longer a distant concern, but a present and pressing reality.

This *Climate Adaptation Strategy* is our roadmap for navigating these challenges. It is helping to safeguard the future of Western Australia – our communities, our environment, and our economy – by building our resilience so we can adapt and thrive in the future.

Our strength lies not only in science and innovation but also in the deep, enduring knowledge of Indigenous Australians, who have cared for Country for tens of thousands of years. Their understanding of seasonal change and sustainable land management offers valuable insights into climate adaptation. Their wisdom, grounded in lived experience and spiritual connection to land and sea, must be central in shaping our approach to climate adaptation going forward.

The establishment of a dedicated Climate Resilience portfolio, alongside my responsibilities for Water and Aboriginal Affairs, reflects the Government's commitment to meaningful, coordinated action. It recognises the interconnectedness of our natural systems, cultural heritage, and economic future.

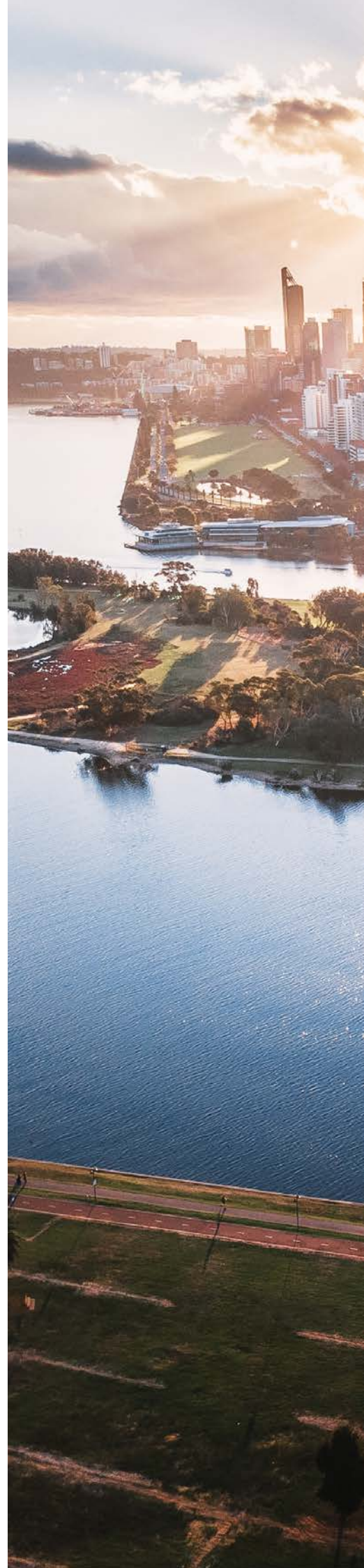
Country is more than land – it is identity, memory, and legacy. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have shaped resilient ecosystems through spiritual and ecological stewardship. Their leadership provides a powerful blueprint for restoring balance and adapting to disruption.

Incorporating Aboriginal traditional knowledge with contemporary science is not just beneficial – it is essential. Through collaboration, respect, and shared purpose, we can craft solutions that are locally relevant, culturally inclusive, and significant.

As part of building our resilience, the Government is also committed to securing our state's water future and is investigating supply options for every region to meet our population's drinking water needs, support community growth and enable economic development.

I commend this progress report to all who are committed to securing a healthier, more equitable future for Western Australia. Our actions today will define the legacy we leave for generations to come.

Hon Don Punch MLA
Minister for Water and Climate Resilience



An aerial photograph of a multi-lane bridge spanning a wide river. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow over the city skyline in the background and reflecting off the water. The bridge is filled with cars, and a dedicated bus lane is visible on the right side. Lush green trees line the riverbanks.

Background

Climate Adaptation Strategy

The Western Australian Government recognises climate change as one of the most significant challenges facing Western Australia, and is committed to a proactive, collaborative approach to climate adaptation.

The *Climate Adaptation Strategy*, released in 2023, sets out the government's priority commitments for building climate resilience within our communities, economy and ecosystems. The strategy was developed in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, local governments, businesses, community groups and researchers and includes 37 priority actions across four key directions.

The actions are set out in the Climate Adaptation Action Plan and will enhance existing adaptation and support future responses to climate change. This includes approximately \$40 million allocated in the 2023–24 State Budget to deliver the strategy.

Climate Adaptation Strategy Actions

Vision

Western Australia's communities, environment and economy are resilient and continuously adapting to climate change in a forward-looking, fair and collaborative manner.

Principles

The State Government will adopt the following principles to ensure climate adaptation actions are proactive, equitable, collaborative and promote resilience now and for future generations.



Collaborate

Work together across all levels of government, business, academia and the community to prepare for, and adapt to, a changing climate.



Adjust as we go

Design actions and make decisions in a flexible and iterative way, to adjust as circumstances change and new information emerges.



Make well-informed decisions

Use the best available evidence, including Aboriginal and local knowledge, to anticipate change and develop effective adaptation responses.



Mainstream adaptation

Develop policy, systems and processes that make climate change adaptation part of everyday decision making and planning.



Think long term

Take an intergenerational perspective that extends beyond political, planning and financial cycles.



Adapt locally

Enable communities to prepare for the risks and opportunities they face, and tailor adaptation actions to the local situation.



Promote equity

Help the people, places and infrastructure most vulnerable to climate impacts, while building adaptive capacity for all. Address equity implications for affected stakeholders.



Maximise co-benefits

Take action that achieves complementary outcomes including reducing greenhouse gases while avoiding adaptive responses that reduce resilience.

Directions

Key directions to enhance the resilience of our communities, regions, economic sectors and environment:



1. Produce and communicate credible climate information and resources



2. Build public sector climate capability and strengthen accountability



3. Enhance sector-wide and community partnerships to unite and coordinate action

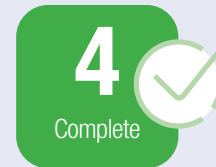
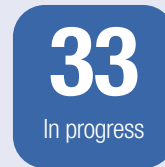


4. Empower and support the climate resilience of Aboriginal people

Key highlights

Action Plan status

Over the past twelve months, a range of actions have been taken to build statewide climate resilience and help Western Australia adapt to climate change. These include actions to improve our understanding of climate risks, increase the climate resilience of infrastructure, support vulnerable communities, and enhance communication about climate science and adaptation responses.



There has been significant progress implementing the Climate Adaptation Strategy since its release in 2023, with four actions now complete, the remaining thirty-three actions in progress and several key milestones achieved in the past 12 months.

A further four actions on track to be completed by the end of 2025.

Highlights

Incorporating adaptation into the State Planning Framework

– Action 16 led by the Western Australian Planning Commission, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage State Planning Policy 3.7 Bushfire and Planning for Bushfire Guidelines.

Were published in November 2024 with the objective of ensuring development is resilient to increasingly severe and frequent bushfires due to climate change. An Urban Greening Strategy for Perth and Peel is in development to support the government's urban greening commitments that will deliver a cooler and more climate-resilient capital city.

A review of state planning framework is in progress, providing the opportunity to incorporate climate change considerations into land use planning decisions.

Enhancing Western Australian Government's capability to manage climate risk – Action 18 led by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Key tools, training and workshops have been delivered to Western Australian Government agencies, strengthening climate risk capability across the Western Australian public sector. A draft Climate Risk Maturity Model to measure the maturity of an organisation's climate risk capability has been piloted within government. An updated and expanded risk assessment guide, covering quantitative risk assessments, is in development to support agency adaptation planning. More than 100 staff have participated in knowledge-sharing sessions, with over 50 presentations now available and additional workshops scheduled for 2025.

Supporting WaterSmart farms and climate-resilient agriculture – Action 27 led by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Twelve demonstration sites for WaterSmart dams are showcasing leading on-farm drought resilience techniques. Supported by the Water Evaluation Platform (WEP) app, these sites highlight practical approaches to managing surface water, evaporation and water economics. The initiative strengthens access to high-quality water for farmers, rural agribusinesses and small communities.

Supporting Aboriginal-led climate action through the Aboriginal Ranger Program – Action 30 led by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

Round 8 of the Aboriginal Ranger Program (ARP) is complete, with \$16.5 million awarded to Aboriginal Organisations to undertake projects linked to ranger activities within the youth, climate action and/or cultural tourism. Seven climate action projects under this program had commenced by July 2024.

Collaborating on climate-related health measures for Aboriginal communities – Action 33 led by the Department of Health.

Three Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services were supported through the Supporting Climate Health Adaptation Planning and Initiatives Community Services Grant Agreement. The funding enabled these organisations to undertake community engagement and consultation, develop a range of communication and education resources, and increase community awareness and understanding of climate health. This work will inform similar work in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services throughout the state and will be built upon through climate change adaptation initiatives embedded in the new Aboriginal Environmental Health Co-Designed Model of Care.

Improving the climate resilience of remote communities – Action 35 led by the Department of Communities.

The Remote Housing Review and Guide, recommending strategies to provide for responsive housing typologies, is complete. Refurbishment works have commenced in two communities, with many others soon to follow. Works include installation/replacement of ceiling and wall insulation, draughtproofing, and installation of efficient electrical appliances.

Case studies in building Western Australia's climate resilience



Museum of the Goldfields, Kalgoorlie. © the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport.

Improving the climate resilience of state-owned cultural and heritage assets

Under action #5 of the Climate Adaptation Strategy, the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS), has undertaken comprehensive climate adaptation modelling for key state-owned cultural and heritage assets to provide a comprehensive understanding of climate change hazards, risks, impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptive measures.

In 2024, a Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment was completed for 38 sites, with subsequent detailed analysis for six sites including the Art Gallery of WA and His Majesty's Theatre in Perth, Old Customs House, Fremantle, the Museum of the Goldfields, Kalgoorlie, and Museum of Geraldton.

For each site, detailed assessments were conducted, with Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) applied to prioritise the adaptation options, and to support decision making and investment prioritisation. The approach and methodology will be publicly released to support other government agencies looking to increase the resilience of their assets and operations to climate change.

Building the climate resilience of West Kimberley Traditional Owners

A three-year Aboriginal-led initiative is underway in partnership with the Nulungu Research Institute and Martuwarra Fitzroy River Council to identify climate change risks and opportunities for West Kimberley indigenous communities and develop strategies to future-proof them.

Key activities include the Kimberley Traditional Owner Climate Forum, held in May 2025, which brought together Aboriginal leaders, youth, government, and scientists to discuss climate resilience. Two community-based projects are engaging rangers and researchers to monitor climate impacts on fire patterns, food and energy security and deliver training to strengthen local workforce capacity.

Insights from these activities will inform the West Kimberley Climate Adaptation Strategy, due in 2025-26, which will guide future investments in sustainable, liveable Indigenous communities while supporting the protection of the Martuwarra Fitzroy River and surrounding ecosystems.



Recreation Camp – Quaranup, Albany. Image courtesy of the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport.

Ensuring state planning policies are climate responsive

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is updating its suite of planning policies and strategies to incorporate climate change considerations and ensure land use planning decisions are more climate responsive.

State Planning Policies (SPPs) are essential to delivering integrated land use planning and development in a sustainable manner, for example through passive solar design outcomes, support for tree planting/landscape requirements, consideration of water-related impacts of climate change, and ensuring development is resilient to more severe and frequent bushfires.

SPP 2.6 (State Coastal Planning Policy) guides decision making in coastal areas and ensures planning proposals provide an adequate public coastal foreshore reserve, where possible avoid development on land at risk of coastal hazards, or include a plan for adaptation and/or retreat when necessary.

SPP 2.6 is supported by the CoastWA program which provides a strategic response to plan for, manage and protect the Western Australian coast from the impacts of coastal hazards to ensure long-term sustainable land use and development on the coast. Key achievements to date include delivery of 173 grant projects, adoption of 32 Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plans, a reduction in the number of coastal erosion hotspots and completion of a Statewide Coastal Inundation Assessment and advances in coastal hazard mapping and data acquisition including LiDAR. CoastWA Achievements reports are published annually on the wa.gov.au website.

Enhancing the capability of the public sector

The Climate Risk Capability Initiative (CRCI) is a government initiative to assist the Western Australian public sector agencies assess and manage climate risk and promote adaptation planning.

To date, over 700 individuals from government agencies and government trading enterprises have attended workshops, covering from the basics of understanding climate risk to advanced adaptation planning.

The Initiative is delivering key climate risk training, tools and guidance, including a climate risk management guide, covering quantitative methods of climate risk assessments, to support public sector agencies in their climate adaptation planning. A Climate Risk Maturity Model has been provided to government agencies to support self-assessment tool of their organisational maturity in effectively managing climate risks.

The climate risk eighth workshop in the series is planned to take place later in 2025, aiming to focus on the pathway from climate risk assessment to managing transition and litigation risks.

Delivering climate-resilient water sources for Perth

The Western Australian Government is investing \$2.8 billion in the Alkimos Seawater Desalination Plant (SDP) to provide secure, sustainable drinking water and reduce our dependence on rainfall and groundwater. The Alkimos SDP Stage 1 plant will supply 50 billion litres of drinking water a year - enough to fill Optus Stadium 50 times.

Enabling earthworks to prepare the site for construction commenced in late 2023 following State and Australian Government environmental approvals. In early 2024, the Alkimos SeaWater Alliance – a partnership between the Water Corporation, Acciona Construction, Acciona Agua, and Jacobs – was formed to progress the design, construction and operation of Stage 1 of the Alkimos SDP. Construction activities began in mid-2024, with the first water production planned for 2028.

Water Corporation is considering options for the next water source after Alkimos SDP Stage 1. The selection of the next source and the timing of its delivery will be affected by water demand, rainfall, and streamflow over the next few years.



The panel discussion featuring key agencies from WA public sector was a popular segment at 6th Climate Risk workshop organised by CRCI in November 2024



The 7th Climate Risk workshop organised by CRCI in March 2025 was attended by over 100 participants, both in-person and online

Climate Adaptation action plan

Action	Lead agency	Planned completion date and current status
Direction 1: Produce and communicate credible climate information and resources		
Understand how our climate may change		
1. Expand the Climate Science Initiative to produce detailed climate projections for the north-west of Western Australia	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 <i>In progress</i>
2. Model the urban heat island effect of Perth's future climate to provide better data for local adaptation planning	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2026 <i>In progress</i>
3. Investigate the impacts of marine heatwaves on fisheries and the marine environment	Department of Energy and Economic Diversification*	2027 <i>In progress</i>
4. Upgrade weather stations to better support pastoralists' preparedness and response to extreme weather events in the Southern Rangelands	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	2027 <i>In progress</i>
5. Model the impact of climate change on selected state-owned cultural buildings and recreational camps, and prioritise responses	Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport**	2024 <i>In progress</i>
Communicate science and adaptation knowledge to improve how we respond		
6. Produce climate science communication materials, including visualisation tools, to make climate projections more accessible for communities, non-profit organisations and businesses.	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 <i>In progress</i>
7. Develop and promote climate change communications products to build community awareness of climate risks and practical options for responding	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 <i>In progress</i>
8. Collaborate with the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO to understand and communicate the impact of climate change on Western Australia's water resources	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2025 <i>In progress</i>
Strengthen adaptation research to drive innovation		
9. Collaborate with researchers, community organisations and the private sector to establish a Climate Adaptation Research Hub that identifies priority research needs and funding requirements	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 <i>In progress</i>
10. Support climate adaptation research on Western Australia's biodiversity, including threatened species and ecological communities, and identify on-ground actions to enhance climate resilience	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	2028 <i>In progress</i>
11. Evaluate the climate risk for rivers in the south-west to inform priority actions to enhance resilience	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2027 <i>In progress</i>
12. Collaborate with universities, other research institutions and stakeholders to develop a prioritised and targeted research program to address key climate change challenges for the Western Australian water sector	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2027 <i>In progress</i>
13. Manage the south-west native forests through an adaptive, evidence-based approach that prioritises biodiversity, forest health and resilience	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	2033 <i>In progress</i>
Direction 2: Build public sector climate capability and strengthen accountability		
Set the right policies to enhance decision-making and encourage action		
14. Develop climate legislation, including statutory requirements for adaptation strategies and plans to enhance climate resilience	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2023 <i>In progress</i>
15. Implement a Climate Risk Framework to monitor, assess and report on the implications of climate change on the state's finances, physical assets and service delivery	Department of Treasury and Finance*** Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2026 <i>In progress</i>
16. Incorporate climate adaptation into the State Planning Framework and policies to inform land use planning and management decisions.	Western Australian Planning Commissions, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	Ongoing <i>In progress</i>
17. Implement new approaches to identification of future bushfire hotspots and improve fuel management strategies	Department of Fire and Emergency Services	Ongoing <i>In progress</i>

Action	Lead agency	Planned completion date and current status
Drive transformation through State Government leadership		
18. Strengthen the capability of the public sector to assess and manage climate risk through training programs and tools	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2026 In progress
19. Deliver a program of new water sources for Perth, with the immediate priority being the finalisation of planning and design for Perth's newest water source, the proposed Alkimos Seawater Desalination Plant	Water Corporation	2028 In progress
20. Explore regional water supply options for key towns to address the impact of climate change	Water Corporation	2025 In progress
21. Invest in a more climate-resilient water supply for the wider Busselton area	Busselton Water	2029 In progress
22. Seek to secure Infrastructure Australia's support for future coastal and estuary adaptation initiatives	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	Complete
Develop appropriate metrics to measure progress		
23. Establish robust metrics to measure progress towards building climate resilience and adaptation across Western Australia's communities and sectors	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2025 In progress
Direction 3: Enhance sector-wide and community partnerships to unite and coordinate action		
Support local communities to create their own adaptation pathways		
24. Evaluate outcomes of the Regional Climate Alliance pilot program and consider options to strengthen local government capacity	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Complete
25. Support small-to-medium enterprises to better anticipate, manage and adapt to the impacts of climate change through delivery of a Climate Adaptation Toolkit, a training program, and science and innovation funding	Department of Energy and Economic Diversification*	2025 In progress
26. Expand the Rangelands Revitalisation Project to build capability of pastoralists to enhance resilience and ecological outcomes	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	2027 In progress
27. Support WaterSmart farms – enhancing resilience of farmers, rural agribusiness and small communities by ensuring access to high-quality water	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	2027 In progress
Develop and deliver adaptation action plans together		
28. Deliver a Sector Adaptation Plan Program for Western Australia to identify sector-specific climate impacts and priority adaptation actions. Deliver the following sector adaptation plans:	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 In progress
Health and human services	Department of Health	2024 – In progress
Emergency management	State Emergency Management Committee	2024 – In progress
Primary industries	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	2026 – In progress
Small-to-medium enterprises	Department of Energy and Economic Diversification	2025 – In progress
Natural environment	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	2026 – In progress
Further consideration will be given to the timeframe for delivery of adaptation plans for Built Environment and Water	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2024 – In progress

Action	Lead agency	Planned completion date and current status
Direction 4: Empower and support the climate resilience of Aboriginal people		
Enhance adaptive capacity of communities and create opportunities for involving and empowering Aboriginal people		
29. Engage with Aboriginal organisations and academics on the Adaptation Research Hub to ensure existing Aboriginal research and future research priorities of Aboriginal people are incorporated	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2028 In progress
30. Investigate climate adaptation practices currently being delivered through groups funded by the DBCA's Aboriginal Ranger Program, and identify future opportunities	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	2026 In progress
Empower Aboriginal-led climate adaptation action		
31. Engage with Aboriginal leaders and regional communities on a First Nations Climate Resilience Fund to build trust, share knowledge and design a dedicated fund for Aboriginal-led adaptation projects	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2025 In progress
32. Develop an Aboriginal-led West Kimberley Climate Adaptation Strategy through a community-led and collaborative design approach, informed by Traditional Owner knowledge and Western science	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2026 In progress
33. Collaborate with the Aboriginal Health Council of WA to support Aboriginal communities develop place-based climate-related health adaptation measures	Department of Health	Complete
34. Deliver improved and more climate-resilient water and power services to remote Aboriginal communities through the Transfer of Essential Services program	Water Corporation and Horizon Power	Ongoing In progress
35. Deliver the Remote Communities Fund to support improved and more climate resilience, and co-designed sustainable, culturally appropriate housing in remote communities	Department of Communities	2026 In progress
36. Evaluate climate risk to airport infrastructure in remote Aboriginal communities and identify investments to enhance resilience	Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure****	Complete
Tracking progress of the Climate Adaptation Strategy		
37. Develop a framework for monitoring, evaluation and reporting to track implementation progress	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	2025 In progress

Agency names prior to implementation of Machinery of Government changes on 1 July 2025.

*Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation at 30 June 2025.

**Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries at 30 June 2025

***Department of Treasury at 30 June 2025

****Department of Transport at 30 June 2025



Looking ahead: Priorities for the next 12 months

Over the coming year, the Western Australian Government will continue to deliver the Climate Adaptation Strategy, with a focus on:

- Advancing Aboriginal-led climate adaptation through the First Nations Climate Resilience Project and the West Kimberley Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Delivering high-resolution climate projections in an accessible format to improve awareness and support decision making
- Enhancing investment in urban greening and water security infrastructure
- Supporting local governments to improve their climate resilience
- Increasing cross-sector collaboration through engagement and partnerships, including development of sector adaptation plans
- Strengthening monitoring programs to assess climate impacts and inform responsive policy

The Climate Adaptation Strategy can be viewed or downloaded via the [WA.gov.au](https://www.wa.gov.au) website.

Implementation progress is tracked annually to monitor the implementation status of the 37 actions of the Strategy.

The Western Australian Government thanks all contributors—across science, community, government and industry—for their vital role in ensuring our state remains resilient, liveable and sustainable for generations to come.

