

31 May 2013

Cassy O'Connor MP
Minister for Climate Change

Damon Thomas
Chair of the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority

Southern Tasmanian Councils adapting to climate change

The Southern Tasmania Councils Authority (STCA) today released its Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Southern Tasmania as part of the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Project, funded by the Australian Government and the Hobart City Council.

The Minister for Climate Change, Cassy O'Connor MP, commended the Strategy as a new approach to climate change adaptation and an example of successful collaboration between Commonwealth, State and local governments.

The Strategy was released in conjunction with an adaptation workshop for southern Tasmania council staff, one of several conducted across the State by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) in partnership with the State Government.

“Together with local government, the State Government is committed to assisting Tasmanian communities adapt to a changing climate,” Ms O'Connor said.

“The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy of the Southern Tasmania Councils Authority will improve the capacity and resilience of councils in the region to manage the risks and impacts of climate change, as well as provide an ongoing pathway for adaptation planning.

“By collaborating at the regional level, or with groups of councils, economies of scale are enhanced and opportunities to leverage shared resources are created.

“Climate change is unavoidable, but with strategies like this in place, our communities are much better placed to address both the risks and opportunities presented by changes in our climate.”

The Chair of the STCA, Damon Thomas, said that while the Strategy was the cornerstone of the project, councils are also implementing their own complimentary adaptation plans and an online portal is being created to share adaptation planning resources amongst councils.

“Local government, as the level of government closest to our communities, has a crucial role to play in assisting them adapt to local climate change impacts,” Mr Thomas said.

“The STCA’s Regional Climate Change Adaptation Project, with the support of the Tasmanian Climate Change Office and LGAT, has put a lot of time and effort into delivering this strategy, as well as twelve individual adaptation plans at a council level.

The 12 individual councils that make up the STCA have already contributed significant resources to this project and the development of the Strategy. They are well and truly committed to working together to achieve some positive shared outcomes.

“Importantly, while the Strategy provides a coordinated approach, councils also have the flexibility to identify climate impacts and adaptation actions that are relevant to the social, economic and environmental circumstances of their local communities.

“This flexibility is essential as the adaptation needs of the Southern Midlands Council will be quite different to those experienced in the coastal councils of say Glamorgan Spring Bay or the Huon Valley.”

The Australian Government has provided \$400 000 through the Local Government Reform Fund to support the State Government, STCA and LGAT undertake this project. The Hobart City Council contributed an additional \$60,000 to the project.

The Strategy is available from STCA's Authority's website at www.stca.tas.gov.au.

Contact:

<http://www.tas.gov.au>