

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast

Several South East regional organisations have partnered together to develop a plan that will help the region be better prepared for the environmental, social and economic implications of climate change.

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast (RDALC), the South East Local Government Association (SELGA) and the South East Natural Resources Management Board (SENRM Board) will be working together in developing a Regional Climate Change Integrated Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan. The Project will develop a comprehensive vulnerability assessment for the region and will focus on adaptation and response to the impacts, risks and opportunities of climate change.

Regional Development Australia Chief Executive, Mr Mike Ryan, said an integrated approach across agencies will be more beneficial than looking at the issue of potential climate change impacts in isolation to one another.

“The project will raise awareness and understanding of the potential effects of climate change and the ability of the region to meet those challenges. Importantly it will provide a coordinated approach to planning across a range of sectors in managing climate change across the region” said Mr Ryan.

Some of the areas to be investigated include the impacts of climate change on economics and finances, social and community networks, the environment and physical assets such as infrastructure.

SENRM Board Presiding Member, Mr Brennan said when highly vulnerable areas have been identified and prioritised, the next stage of the project would be developing a plan to mitigate the risk or build the capacity to deal with changes.

“An example might be if higher temperatures or less rainfall are identified as a high probable risk, then action plans need to be put into place. This may include investigations into alternative farming practices or water management methods to ameliorate against the risk”.

The project is being funded from a variety of sources including RDALC’s successful application to the 2013-14 Natural Disaster Resilience Program resulting in \$68,800. This funding complements the \$50,000 of funding allocated earlier this year by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation under the *Prospering in a Changing Climate* grants programme, together with cash and in-kind support from SELGA, RDALC the SENRM Board and the Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

The Project is due to commence in October once the project preliminaries are in place. It will be completed in two phases. The integrated vulnerability assessment is planned for completion in April 2015 and the Regional Adaptation Plan is expected to be completed in July 2016. The project will involve considerable consultations with a wide range of stakeholders across a range of sectors in the South East.



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Mr Ryan said the project is very important for the region and without this support the project could not go ahead which could place the region poorly prepared for the future.

“We need to use the best possible science of the day and that is currently telling us climate change is a genuine concern. We will now use the best science available to determine how this may impact our region, livelihoods and the places we enjoy”, he said.

Further information on this project will be made available on the RDA website in the near future.

For further information contact:-

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List of RDALC Board Members

Dr Ruth Schubert, Chair

Ms Gwenda Lawlor, Deputy Chair

Mr Rob Foggo – Community representative

Ms Ann Aldersey – Community representative

Mr Alan Richardson – Community representative

Mr Lew Parsons – Community representative

Ms Karen Glover – Community representative

Mayor Richard Vickery – SELGA representative

Mayor Erika Vickery – SELGA representative

Cr Harvey Nolan – SELGA representative

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