

Planning approaches in South Australia

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Planning system

South Australia's [Planning Strategy](#)  sets out the state government's directions for land-use changes and development in South Australia. The directions in the strategy guide the policies in development plans.

There is a development plan for each council area and for some areas outside council areas. The development plans guide the type of development that can occur within that area. Development applications are assessed against the policies in development plans.

The South Australian Government and the state's local councils share jurisdiction over planning and management in the coastal zone. Under the *Development Act 1993 (SA)*, most planning decisions rest with the local councils, with other decisions resting with the state's Development Assessment Commission. Some development applications on 'coastal land' are subject to the direction of the Coast Protection Board (a statutory body established under the *Coast Protection Act 1972*).

The planning system has recently been reviewed and a new *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* is in the process of being implemented.

Climate challenges

South Australia has a population of nearly 1.6 million people and 5,067 kilometres of coastline, including islands.

South Australia has always had a variable climate; however we are now experiencing increased temperatures, sea-level rise, changes to rainfall patterns, and increased occurrences of extreme events such as heatwaves. Average temperatures across the State have warmed almost 1 degree Celsius over the past century. Rainfall records since 1900 show that rainfall across South Australian regions varies seasonally, annually and over decades. Since the 1990s a decline in rainfall, particularly within the agricultural districts of the State between April and October, has been experienced, although trends are less clear than for temperature and sea level rise because of natural rainfall variability. Sea-level rise of between 4.7 mm and 4.9 mm per year has been recorded in South Australia since 1992.

The coastal areas of the State are important for their onshore and marine environmental and landscape values, as well as for developed uses such as towns, holiday settlements, tourism, marinas, commercial farming, fishing, aquaculture and recreation.

Many coastal areas in South Australia are subject to erosion and flooding hazards that will be exacerbated by rising sea levels. Increased coastal erosion has significant implications for South Australia, where coastal development has historically tended to be as close as possible to the coast, or on the coastal dunes themselves, and linear in nature. While current development policies seek to avoid perpetuating this problem, a large number of coastal settlements in South Australia exist in areas of active coastal erosion. In recent years the “sea-change” phenomenon has seen further investment in many of these coastal settlements as shacks are converted into substantial residences. If these coastal settlements are to be retained, investment in coastal protection infrastructure will be required.

As sea levels rise, the frequency of coastal flooding is likely to increase. For example a severe storm surge flood event on the Adelaide coast, with only a 1% chance of occurring in any year, would have a 20% chance of occurring each year after 0.3 m of sea level rise. Sea-level rise will therefore affect not only the extent of flooding, but also greatly increases the frequency of flooding for areas already at risk.

A 2009 study by the federal Department of Climate Change, “Climate Change Risks to Australia’s Coast – A First Pass Vulnerability Assessment”, found that between 25 000 and 43 000 residential buildings in South Australia, valued at between \$4.4 billion and \$7.4 billion, may be at risk of inundation from sea-level rise of 1.1 m. While the study was based on a number of assumptions, it is clear that sea level rise poses a significant threat to development in South Australia.

In addition, providing the space for landward migration of coastal ecosystems in response to future sea level rise is also of critical importance to the ongoing survival of these important

ecosystems.

The state's 1991 *Policy on Coast Protection and New Coastal Development* adopted a sea-level rise allowance of 0.3 metres by 2050 and 1 metre by 2100. Those allowances have been included in Development Plans.

Key planning policies/strategies

Planning Strategy

<http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/property-and-land/planning-and-land-management/about-the-planning-strategy-for-south-australia>

Development Plans

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/property-and-land/planning-and-land-management/development-plans/about-accessing-development-plans>

South Australian Planning Policy Library

<http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/property-and-land/land-and-property-development/planning-professionals/south-australia-s-planning-policies>

Coast Protection Board policies and strategic plans

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/boards-and-committees/Coast_Protection_Board/policies-strategic-plans

Key planning legislation

Development Act 1993

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/DEVELOPMENT%20ACT%201993.aspx>

Development Regulations 2008

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/R/DEVELOPMENT%20REGULATIONS%202008.aspx>

Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (not yet in operation)

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/PLANNING%20DEVELOPMENT%20AND%20INFRASTRUCTURE%20ACT%202016.aspx>

Relevant state-wide coastal datasets

Data.SA

Data.SA is the South Australian Government's Open Data Portal. It provides links to a number of additional datasets across a variety of topics including coasts.

<https://data.sa.gov.au>

SA Climate Ready

SA Climate Ready is the most comprehensive set of downscaled climate projections data available in South Australia. Data is available for six climate variables (rainfall, temperature maximum, temperature minimum, areal potential evapotranspiration, solar radiation and vapour pressure deficit), using two emission scenarios (intermediate and high "representative concentration pathways") through to 2100.

<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Climate/SA-Climate-Ready/Pages/default.aspx>

Coastal Planning Information Package

Information to assist developers, planners, and planning authorities, with the assessment of development applications on coastal land and the preparation of coastal planning policy.

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/our-places/coasts>

NatureMaps

NatureMaps is the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources' online mapping and data access site.

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Science/NatureMaps>

Enviro Data SA

The gateway to data and information relating to the science and monitoring of South Australia's environment and natural resources.

<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Other relevant information

South Australia's Climate Change Strategy:

[South Australia's Climate Change Strategy 2015-2050 – Towards a low carbon economy](#)

South Australia's Climate Change Adaptation Framework:

[Prospering in Changing Climate: A Climate Change Adaptation Framework for South Australia](#)

Local Government Association of South Australia Climate Adaptation Planning Guidelines

<https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/LGA%20CAPG%20Final%20Print%20Version.pdf>

Defining the Sea Level Rise Problem in South Australia (contact Local Government Association of SA [here](#)).

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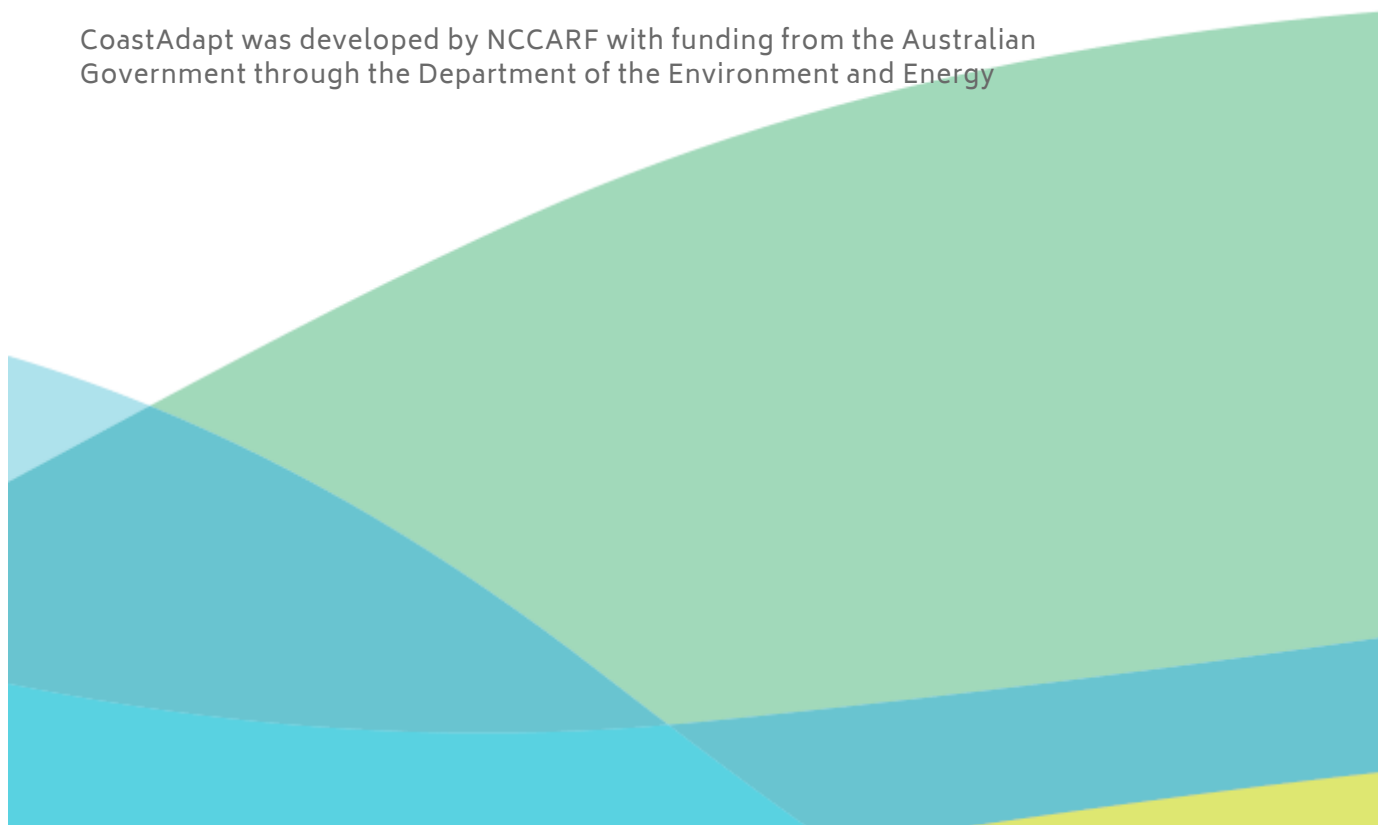
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