



Planned Relocation – Recent Research, Policy & News

The COPRRRA Pulse brings together the latest news, research, policy developments and events relevant to planned relocation, retreat, and community resilience in Australia and globally.

Planned Relocation and Retreat in the News: Australia

NSW Auditor-General finds flaws in Australia's costliest disaster recovery program

Hannah Ross, ABC News, 20 May 2026

A new audit reveals that NSW's \$980 million Resilient Homes and Resilient Lands programs, which were launched after the catastrophic 2022 Northern Rivers floods, haven't delivered a single home or housing lot as of 31st March 2026. The report cites poor planning, shifting targets, and major delays plaguing the scheme, leaving flood affected communities like Lismore stuck in limbo.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-20/resilient-auditor-general-flood-recovery/106699964?utm_source=abc_news_app&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_campaign=abc_news_app&utm_content=link

Councils unite in urgent motion at national assembly to call for fairer funding, NGA2026

Australian Local Government Association, 24 Jun 2026

Australia's 538 local councils convened at the National General Assembly to urge parliament to increase their federal funding. This motion highlights the challenges faced by councils across Australia local councils are often the first point of contact for communities when issues arise (a local road failure, disaster, planning concern, or service disruption). However, they are increasingly expected to handle more responsibilities with less funding certainty, limited revenue capacity, and diminished ability to plan for the long term.

<https://alga.com.au/media-release-councils-unite-in-urgent-motion-at-national-assembly-to-call-for-fairer-funding-nga2026/>

Surfside residents fear homes could be lost to sea in next storm

Jacinta Counihan, ABC News, 14 May 2026

Residents of Surfside Beach on the far south coast of NSW are worried their homes will be destroyed when the singular sand dune barrier protecting their homes has eroded. They claim a formal meeting promised last month, with local and state government representatives, never took place. Leaving the community skeptical about their concerns being taken seriously.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-14/residents-disappointed-no-progress-coastal-erosion/106558466>

After watching devastating floods ravage her Country, Anne is taking legal action to the UN

Emma Kellaway, NITV, 23 June 2026

In 2023, Professor Anne Poelina (PhD) experienced a severe inland flood in Balginjirr, Western Australia, that destroyed her home. Now she, and nine other Australians, have filed a historic legal complaint against the federal government, alleging that its support for coal and gas companies violates their rights to life, family, home, and First Nations culture. This case is the first legal claim against a country for climate harm since the International Court of Justice affirmed countries' legal duty to prevent significant climate damage.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/anne-peolina-watched-devastating-floods-ravage-her-country-in-the-kimberly/m3aljmrzo>

Planned Relocation and Retreat in the News: Global

The Netherlands vs the sea: The race to hold back rising waters

Radina Gigova, Call to Earth CNN, 12 Jun 2026

The Netherlands is racing to upgrade its world renowned Delta Works flood defence system as climate change accelerates sea level rise and extreme weather, with Delta Commissioner Co Verdaas warning the country is "reaching the limits" of purely technical water management. The government plans to double its investment into the system and is increasingly combining hard infrastructure with nature-based solutions to protect cities.

<https://edition.cnn.com/climate/netherlands-vs-the-sea-hold-back-rising-waters-c2e-spc>

Colombia's Climate Displacement Law Can Be a Model for the World

Liliana Gamboa & Kayly Ober, The Carnegie Endowment, 25 June 2026

Colombia's new climate displacement law formally recognises people uprooted by climate change, environmental degradation and disasters, creating one of the world's first binding national frameworks for protection. While this could become a global model, its real impact will depend on how well Colombia turns legal recognition into practical prevention and support.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/emissary/2026/06/colombia-climate-displacement-law-global-model>

Climate, migration and leadership rise to the top of Pacific's 2050 agenda

Viliame Tawanakoro, Islands Business, 18 June 2026

Pacific leaders are turning the Forum's 2050 Strategy into a more practical agenda centred on climate resilience, regional mobility and leadership development, as they confront climate change as the region's defining threat. The plan links stronger investment in adaptation and global climate advocacy with freer movement of people to address labour gaps, while also building a new generation of leaders to carry regional institutions forward.

<https://islandsbusiness.com/news-break/climate-migration-and-leadership-rise-to-the-top-of-pacifics-2050-agenda/>

Video games are helping players imagine the realities of climate migration

Conor Mckeown, The Conversation, 29 June 2026

The article argues that video games can help people better understand climate migration by making the human realities of displacement, choice and survival more immediate and relatable. Rather than treating climate change and migration as separate issues, it shows how interactive storytelling can help players explore the complex decisions people face when environmental pressures force them to move.

<https://theconversation.com/video-games-are-helping-players-imagine-the-realities-of-climate-migration-284225>

Rising seas will swallow New Orleans.

Relocation planning must start now, scientists say

Laura Paddison, CNN, 25 May 2026

Scientists are warning that New Orleans faces an existential threat from sea level rise and land loss, with parts of coastal Louisiana projected to see dramatic increases in water levels over time. The article argues that protecting the city will not be enough on its own, and that serious, long term planning for relocation must begin now.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2026/05/25/climate/new-orleans-sea-level-rise-relocation>

Research and Policy Developments Related to Relocation

'A piece of advice': successfully navigating climate change adaptation practice

Ana Terra Amorim-Maia and Marta Olazabal, Environmental Research: Climate, 22 June 2026.

Drawing on interviews with 50 leading experts, this study offers nine practical lessons for navigating climate adaptation as a complex, uncertain and deeply human field. It argues that effective adaptation depends not just on technical expertise, but also on humility, reflexivity and perseverance in the face of political, emotional and relational challenges. Relevant for adaptation practitioners navigating relocation decisions.

agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2025EF007012

Rethinking Managed Retreat for Wildfire: Key Insights and Research Priorities

Liz Koslov & Kathryn McConnell, UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation, June 2026

The report argues that wildfire related managed retreat should be approached as a coordinated, community led strategy, rather than a piecemeal response, with strong attention to land management, housing pressures and social equity. It also stresses that relocation is deeply shaped by cultural, political and practical realities, making careful planning and local trust essential to reducing risk fairly.

innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Managed-Retreat-Proceedings-Report-vfinal.pdf

Australia's climate risks are interconnected: adaptation governance should reflect this

Sophie Bagot Jewitt, Sarah Boulter and Jon Barnett, The Policy Maker, 19 June 2026

Australia faces overlapping climate risks, but policy still tends to assess them one by one, overlooking how hazards can compound. Drawing on examples like the Dutch Delta Programme, this article calls for a systems-based approach to adaptation, promoting multi-hazard thinking and cross sector coordination. Recommendations for Australian policymakers include shared risk maps, joint planning units and multi-hazard reporting frameworks.

thepolicymaker.appi.org.au/australias-climate-risks-are-interconnected-adaptation-governance-should-reflect-this/

Fire to Flourish – Community-Led Planning and Collaboration for Resilience: A Practice Guide

Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, April 2026.

Fire to Flourish has released a practical guide to collaborative resilience planning, drawing on five years of work with fire affected communities. Designed for local adaptation, it offers a flexible, community led process to strengthen decision making, relationships and long term disaster resilience.

https://firetoflourish.monash/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/4304415/F2F_Community-Led-Planning-and-Collaboration-for-Resilience-A-Practice-Guide.pdf

Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program & Climate Digital Risk Tool

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of Australia (DCCEEW), June 2026

Do you work in the public sector and want to learn about best practice climate adaptation? The Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program supports the public sector in identifying, assessing, and managing climate risks and opportunities. It provides practical tools, guides, and capability building resources for Commonwealth, state, territory, and local governments to embed climate risk into decision making, risk management, and planning.

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/policy/adaptation/climate-risk-opportunity-management-program#step-5--plan-and-take-action>

National Climate Scenario Guidance

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of Australia (DCCEEW), June 2026

Do you need to complete a climate risk assessment? Are you planning climate adaptation strategies? Designing or upgrading infrastructure to suit our future climate? Or navigating mandatory climate related reporting? This guidance helps you assess climate risks, regardless of your level of experience. It explains foundational concepts, recommends structured and practical approaches, and helps your organisation choose.

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/national-climate-scenarios-guidance.pdf>

Victoria's draft Adaptation Action Plans 2027–31

Engage Victoria, Government of Victoria

The Victorian Government is preparing Adaptation Action Plans 2027–31 for eight statewide systems that are vital to building Victoria's climate resilience. These plans cover the built environment, education and training, energy adaptation, health and human services, natural environment, primary production, transport and water cycle. Have your say on these draft adaptation plans by **Wednesday 15 July 2026**.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/adaptation-action-plans>

Webinars and Events

Climate risks for councils: a focus on land use planning

Climate Emergency Australia (CEA), April 2026

CEA hosted a panel discussion covering how our changing climate will affect our approach to land use planning for long term community resilience. Lawyer and climate risk specialist Charlotte Turner addressed climate risk from a legislative viewpoint, while Jane Keddle, Director of Hansen Partnership and vice president of the Planning Institute of Australia (Victoria), outlined the planning reform landscape in Australia. Narelle Poole, Project Coordinator for the relocation of Grantham in Queensland, shared her experiences in assisting councils and communities with relocation planning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYzWZes3lZA>

CBA20: Local solutions inspiring global action

International Institute for Environment and Development Manila, Philippines, 21 May 2026

CBA20 brought practitioners together in Manila to share lessons on community based and locally led climate adaptation, with a focus on turning local experience into wider policy influence. The conference highlighted innovative, community driven responses to climate risk and aimed to amplify grassroots voices in global adaptation debates.

<https://www.iied.org/cba20-local-solutions-inspiring-global-action>

Communities and Councils for Climate

Compensation Climate Emergency Australia

Thursday 23 July, 3–4pm AEST | 2:30–3:30pm ACST | 1–2pm AWST

Join Climate Emergency Australia and Communities for Climate Compensation for a webinar to find out how your council can join the call for a Climate Compensation Fund to help Australian communities cope with climate impacts.

<https://events.humanitix.com/communities-and-councils-for-climate-compensation>

AFAC26 Conference & Exhibition

18–21 August 2026, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) presents AFAC26, bringing together thousands of emergency management professionals, industry leaders, and innovators to share knowledge, showcase technology, and strengthen connections across the sector. The conference includes a COP28 Panel discussion 'Relocation and retreat in practice: What's working, what's hard, what's next' on the **20th of August at 15:30**.

<https://www.afacconference.com.au/>

NESP National Adaptation Climate Conference 2026

26–28 October 2026 | Newcastle NSW

Australians are increasingly experiencing the impacts of a changing climate in their daily lives. It tests our economy, our communities, business, policy, social norms, and our natural environment. The climate conference brings professionals together to build the knowledge and data needed to respond better. The National Climate Adaptation conference series is designed to foster a strong network of adaptation practice. We know that investing in people and connection sustains good adaptation.

<https://www.ivvy.com.au/event/CA26/welcome.html>