

Climate Change Adaptation Research Grants Program

- Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions Projects

Project title:

Developing adaptively: The role and capacities of private sector developers and financing in urban climate change adaptation.

Principal investigators: Associate Professor Jago Dodson

Lead organisation: Griffith University

Objectives:

This study seeks to understand the capacity of the private urban development sector – developers and financial institutions – to respond to the task of adapting new urban development to climate change

Project design & methods:

The study poses the following questions to about private urban development & finance sector capacity to respond to climate change adaptation challenges. These include:

1. What is the capacity of the development industry to respond adaptively to climate change, in its broad diversity & complexity?
2. What are the potential impacts of climate change adaptation imperatives on developer operations, including their response to various physical, market, institutional or financial risks?
3. What are the potential impacts of climate change policy options on development financing operations, in particular their in particular their exposure to various development sector or financial risks?
4. How do those involved in developing & financing projects understand climate change & how do these institutional actors view their role to play in climate change adaptation?
5. How can climate adaptation policy improve development industry's capacity to deliver climate adaptive urban development and, conversely, not impede this capacity?

The project will be conducted in four sequential Phases:

Phase 1 - Start-up Phase

- (a) Comprehensive review of the scientific literature as well as the 'grey' literature plus current policy documents, to develop a baseline social scientific understanding of:
 - (i) the institutional capacity of the development industry to undertake change processes.
 - (ii) the likely dimensions of climate change impacts on the development sector.
 - (iii) the potential forms that policy options & regulation may take, and
 - (iv) the potential development industry responses & impacts of policy options.
- (b) Establishment of a Project Reference Committee to support the project. The PRC will comprise the project team plus the Queensland CEO of the Urban Development Institute of Australia plus two further representatives selected from the sector as well as a Queensland Government planning agency representative. The PRC will be an advisory, not steering body, & will have the following role:
 - (i) advising on project direction via 8 meetings (1 inception meeting, 6 management meetings during Phases 2 & 3, & 1 final project meeting).
 - (ii) assisting with project activities particularly identifying potential respondents.
 - (iii) supporting the fieldwork program including where appropriate acting as broker for contact with respondents.
- (c) Preparation of a Griffith University Research Ethics Committee application to enable the conduct of qualitative research fieldwork in Phases 2 & 3.

The Key Deliverable in Phase 1 will be: a project *background & inception report*

Phase 2 - Background fieldwork.

This phase will commence in August 2011 & will involve initial contact with key institutions & bodies in the private urban development sector to map the institutional terrain of the development & development finance sectors by categories that include institutional type, scale & locational focus. Initial scoping of climate adaptive capacity relative to these variables will be undertaken. This contact & scoping will ensure appropriate conduct of the main fieldwork phase. This phase will also identify the operators & generate a depiction of the potential structure of the industry & will inform our selective sampling by category & respondent institutional type for interviews for Phase 2 & Phase 3 of the project. This activity includes:

- (i) Desk-based description & categorisation of the development & financial sectors by institutional type & climate adaptation capacity based on existing research & initial fieldwork contact.
- (ii) Desk-based & telephone based research to identify key informants such as developers & financiers for subsequent qualitative research involvement. This phase will also work with the UDIA to identify development sector respondents as part of that agency's in-kind contribution to the study.
- (iii) Select contact & fieldwork method *pilot testing* with a small sample group of development sector respondents that will then be used to verify and, if required, adjust the fieldwork approach.

The Key Deliverable in Phase 2 will be: a brief *fieldwork scoping report*

Phase 3 – Main Fieldwork Phase

This phase will commence in November 2011 & will undertake qualitative research with development sector & financial sector respondents in South East Queensland & Melbourne via:

- (i) surveys to gather basic development sector information
- (ii) in-depth, semi-structured interviews, within the urban development & financial institutional sectors to test understanding & climate adaptation capacity & offer early conclusions. Approximately 40 interviews will be conducted over the course of the study, 20 per each city & sufficient for good sampling of the sector by institutional type. A triangulation dimension will also seek respondents views on how their operations & climate change adaptation challenges differ to those of other developers. Interviews will be transcribed for analysis.
- (iii) up to 6 focus groups with select groups of development & financial sector respondents, calibrated to the institutional typology prepared in Phase 2 & structured around sector-wide (rather than individual institution) capacity to support climate change adaptation. Four development sector & two financial sector focus-groups are planned. Focus group activities will be recorded & transcribed for analysis.

The Key Deliverable for Phase 3 will be: a *fieldwork report*

Phase 4 – Project write-up & reporting

This phase will involve analysis & write-up of the fieldwork including identification of key findings from the project. This will also include the following activities:

- (i) Provision of a draft project report to the Project Reference Committee & thereon to key respondents, including the UDIA, for feedback & comment.
- (ii) Hosting of project workshops in South East Queensland & Melbourne to report draft findings to the development sector
- (iii) Revising of the draft into a final project report on basis of workshop & respondent feedback.
- (iv) Translation of project report findings into a brief summary project policy bulletin for distribution to respondents, development sector representatives & policy makers.
- (v) conversion of project results into at least 3 research papers targeting highly ranked refereed journals in the urban studies & climate adaptation areas,
- (vi) consultation with development & finance sector & government representatives, plus the NCCARF, regarding opportunities for continuation or extension of the project.

The Key Deliverable in Phase 4 of the projects will be: a *draft project report* which will be revised into a *final project report*, followed by 3 *peer reviewed publications*.