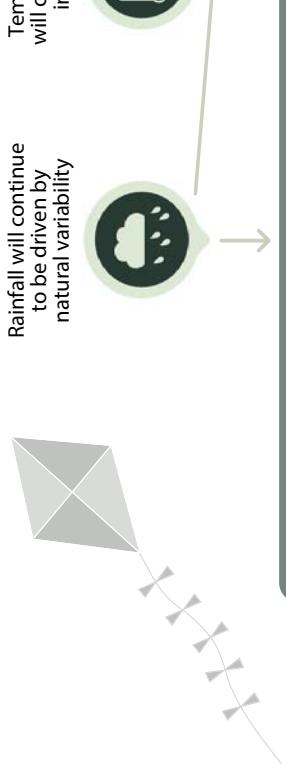
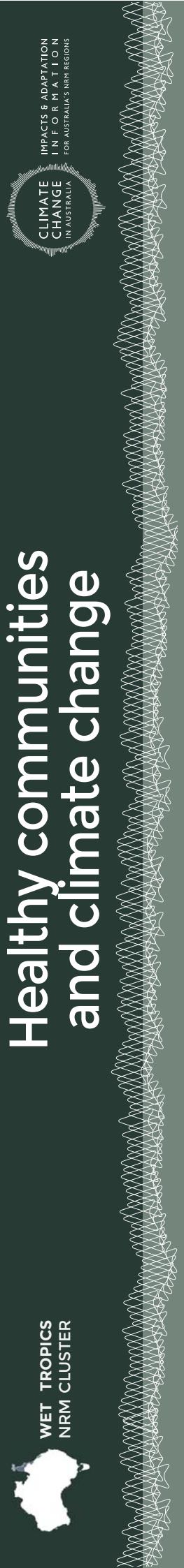
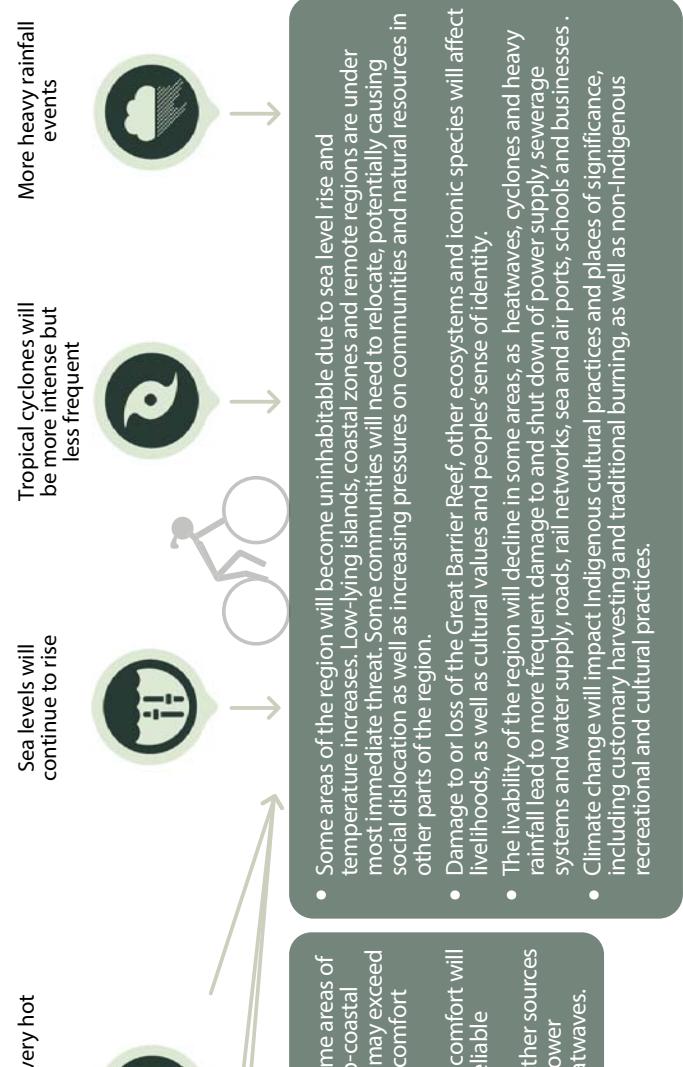


Healthy communities and climate change



**What changes
are likely?**

- Rainfall will continue to be driven by natural variability
- Temperatures will continue to increase
- More frequent very hot days



Plan

- Plan for climate change adaptation within the context of other key pressures on communities, such as the severe economic disadvantage of some Indigenous communities.
- Develop buildings and infrastructure in areas that will not be affected by sea level rise, storm surge and heavy rainfall.
- Anticipate the more frequent need for disaster response and recovery.
- Consider implications for communities of being isolated from healthcare and other services more often.
- Develop strategies for providing backup power and water supplies.

Research

- Develop clear understanding of the areas threatened by sea level rise, storm surge, flash flooding, excessive heat and bushfires.
- Monitor impacts of climate change on Indigenous land practices such as burning.
- Document places of cultural significance so they can be included in adaptation plans.
- Develop understanding of the cultural, social and economic consequences of relocating people from vulnerable areas.

Implement

- Promote building design that reduces exposure to heat and disease vectors such as mosquitoes.
- Promote rainwater storage and power generation by households or local networks
- Construct more cyclone shelters in vulnerable areas such as the Cape. Ensure residents can get there.
- Work with industry and community service groups to provide training, skills, and emotional support for industry transition.
- Strengthen local markets and distribution networks for regional products and services to reduce the reliance on long-distance transport.
- Work together across community sectors to promote community-based adaptation to climate change.

Educate

- Increase awareness of the impacts of climate change on communities .
- Promote understanding of the need to make changes (adapt) in response to climate change.
- Communicate about the opportunities to get involved in planning for adaptation.



Healthy communities and climate change

Adaptation to the changes brought about by climate change will involve all of society. The type and extent of action required will depend on how much we are able to reduce emissions of global greenhouse gases. Some adaptation actions may require relatively small, continuous improvements in current practices, whereas others will involve fundamental changes to our ways of doing things, including what we do and where we do it.

The Wet Tropics cluster region will continue to attract new people to live in the area, leading to ongoing population growth. Climate change will exacerbate the consequences of this for competing pressure on land and water use, cultural practices and environmental protection. Furthermore, some communities in the Wet Tropics cluster region are particularly vulnerable to impacts of climate change and may need to relocate to less impacted parts of the region.

Different communities will need to develop different specific strategies to adapt to the effects of climate change. The formation of local climate change adaptation groups is one way that different groups within a community can discuss ways to adapt to impacts that have benefit as many groups as possible. Developing and implementing suitable adaptation strategies will require strong links between researchers, government, NRM groups, industry bodies and farmers, Traditional Owners, conservation groups and other community members. Community-based development of adaptation pathways will have the advantages of:

- being based on a realistic understanding of the community,
- planning actions, rather than reacting after a catastrophe,
- anticipating and making the most of new opportunities; and
- building community capacity to change

Additional information

Hilbert, D. et al. (2014) Climate change issues and impacts in the Wet Tropics NRM region.
<https://terranova.org.au/repository/climate-change-issues-and-impacts-in-the-wet-tropics-nrm-cluster-region-1>

Moran C. et al. Eds. (2015) Adaptation pathways and opportunities in the Wet Tropics NRM cluster region.
<https://terranova.org.au/repository/adaptation-pathways-and-opportunities-for-the-wet-tropics-nrm-cluster-region-volume-1-introduction-biodiversity-and-ecosystem-services>

What's happening in your region

Projected changes in climate (and degree of confidence)

	Substantial increases in average, maximum and minimum temperatures	Very high confidence
	Substantial increases in the temperature, frequency and duration of hot days	Very high confidence
	Average sea level and height of extreme sea-level events will continue to rise	Very high confidence
	Increases in evapotranspiration in all seasons	High confidence
	Increased intensity of extreme rainfall	High confidence
	Less frequent but more intense tropical cyclones	Medium confidence
	Changes to rainfall are possible but unclear	Low confidence

This project was funded by the Australian Government.

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REEF CATCHMENTS

