

Community Resilience Mapping Report

Community Resilience Mapping with the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland | June 2026

Effective climate resilience initiatives are essential for keeping communities safe. These can take many forms, such as preparing for and adapting to the changing climate and its impacts.

In June, the Act on Climate collective, part of Friends of the Earth Melbourne, facilitated a Community Resilience Mapping Workshop for **the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland**. The proactive session held in **Sale and involving about 20 Anglicans from across Gippsland**, produced many valuable ideas for community members and clergy to start working in their respective communities, parishes and across the Gippsland Diocese.

This event took place on the lands of the Gunaikurnai people. Act on Climate respects Gunaikurnai Elders, past present and emerging, and acknowledges that sovereignty was never ceded. First Nations justice and climate justice go hand in hand, and we join First People's calls for Truth, Treaties and Justice.

What is Community Resilience Mapping?

Community Resilience Mapping helps communities understand **their unique challenges and strengths**, which climate impacts they're **most at risk** from and **who is most at risk**, so that they can implement **appropriate adaptive solutions**.

Through facilitated brainstorming, these workshops help inform adaptation and emergency response plans and the prioritisation of time and resources.

They aim to distill practical community-led solutions and knowledge of how members can stay safe while navigating these new challenges.

It centres the expertise and skills of communities and builds upon existing networks.

The mapping identifies:

Exposures: various localised climate impacts.

Sensitivities: who and which areas are most at risk.

Strengths/Assets: what already is in place to reduce or prepare for impacts.

Adaptive Capacities/Gaps: where gaps in impact preparedness are and how they may be addressed.

The following outlines the discussion of the day. Please add anything we have missed or misrepresented. This is a living document and supposed to work for you!

Identified Exposures

The main exposures brought up and causing concern in/for Gippsland are:

- **Bush-/ grassfires**
- **Extreme heat**
- **Biodiversity/ eco-systems → ecological health**
- **Sea-level rise/ flooding**

Other climate impacts and exposures included coastal erosion, extreme weather events, floods as well as drought and subsequent food insecurity, uncertainty/under preparedness of governance and overdevelopment. Acknowledging that all of these climate impacts compound with other impacts and are part of a greater polycrisis, a breadth of impacts on the community (social, economic, health) and biodiversity and compounding scenarios such as pandemics were discussed.

After identifying the climate impacts participants were most concerned about (bullet points above), we formed four small working groups (three off- and one online), each focused on one impact to discuss the strengths, sensitivities and adaptive capacities of the community. We report these per impact.

Bushfires/Grassfires

Identified Strengths

The identified adaptive strengths for fire safety:

- **Communication** → good communication networks in the parishes
- **Local knowledge**
- **Emphasis on preparedness/preparation** → community wants to prepare
- **Lived experience** → but not necessarily skill
- **Places of last resort** → should be expanded
- **Improved building codes**
- **Improved community education about needs** → can be expanded on
- **UCC chaplains**
- **First Nations cultural burns** → huge asset to heal Country and reduce risk
- **High levels of volunteerism** → across different organisations and causes

Identified Sensitivities

The identified sensitivities for fire safety:

- **Loss of life** (humans and animals)
- **Ecosystems and native flora at risk**
- **Mental health impacts** → trauma and long-term

- **Infrastructure deficits**
 - Maintenance of escape routes
- **Unequitable distribution of funding**
- **Access to safety in the regions** → access to shelters is limited
- **Economic impacts**

Extreme Heat

Identified Strengths

The identified adaptive strengths for (extreme) heat resilience:

- **Community within the church** → skill sharing opportunities
- **Regular meeting times** → check-in opportunities
- **Church buildings as heat shelters/refuges** → great infrastructure
- **Potential installment of batteries; water collection**
- **Care for Creation** → providing for wildlife/ecosystems
- **Communications** → Phonetrees can be utilised

Identified Sensitivities

The identified sensitivities for heat safety:

- **Isolation due to heat** → exasperating existing barriers to community access
- **Inadequate housing; inadequate insulation**
- **Lack of heat resilient infrastructure** → Infrastructure under stress
- **Lack of information** → Where to seek shelter, who to contact, how can we improve the situation
- **Health issues arising from extreme heat** → Heatstroke, death, disproportionate impact on people with disabilities
- **Biodiversity and ecosystems at risk**

Rising Sea Levels/Flooding

This group also discussed coastal erosion and other related issues.

Identified Strengths

The identified adaptive strengths for rising sea levels:

- **The Church has a strong inbuilt community network**
- **The Anglican Church is a voice on social justice and politics**
- **Members have an understanding of environmental theology**
- **The Church can provide insurance help to the community**

- **High levels of volunteerism**
- **Strong connections throughout Gippsland**

Identified Sensitivities

The identified sensitivities of due to rising sea levels and flooding are:

- **Impacts on industry, including tourism, fishing, dairy, farming/food, employment sectors**
- **Spiritual and Indigenous connections to Country, including sacred sites at risk**
- **Trauma and grief risk** → disaster experiences and loss of place
- **Risk of acute injury**
- **Compounding risks of fires and floods**
- **Churches and communities in coastal regions particularly at risk**

Ecological Health

This group discussed a broad range of climate impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity and health.

Identified Strengths

The identified adaptive strengths for ecological health:

- **Church members have prayer, purpose and hope**
- **Church members uphold a culture of service and advocacy**
- **An understanding that we are all equal**
- **Local knowledge of Traditional Owners and farmers**
- **Seed savers** (group that preserves heirloom plant varieties) **and community gardens**
- **Gippsland has a lot of fertile land**
- **Easy access to water**

Identified Sensitivities

The identified sensitivities due to rising sea levels:

- **Health issues exacerbated, proliferation of diseases from mosquitoes**
- **Stress on the health sector and health service providers**
- **Changing weather patterns and landscape affects animals**

Community members most at risk

Across all groups, community members identified as most at risk (in no particular order):

- **Outdoor workers including farmers**
- **Geographically isolated people**
- **People with disabilities and people living with (mental) health conditions**
- **Climate refugees**
- **Unhoused people**
- **Aged people/aged care facilities**
- **People with less access to financial resources**
- **Young children**
- **Uninsured people**

Gaps and Adaptive Capacities

In the final brainstorm, **we discussed gaps in climate and disaster preparedness across the key impacts** (fire, heat, ecological health, sea level rise). Building on these gaps, **adaptive capacities** (the ability to address and overcome these gaps while building on existing strengths) were identified and some key actions were derived.

Gaps

Discussions highlighted a perceived gap in community members' **knowledge, education and experience** of how to address and prepare for certain climate impacts, which are often new or intensified. **Skill and knowledge sharing among the Anglican Diocese and beyond** was identified as a pathway to addressing this gap, as well as **valuing the breadth of local First Nations knowledge**.

A general issue addressed was the **short-term view** that is often prevalent in politics, which results in a **lack of adequate and ongoing funding**, among other things. The Church can counteract this, as it can adopt long-term strategies and engage with consistency and continuity.

Adaptive Capacities

'Do what we can - the best we can! Our biggest asset is community!' was a motto brought forward by one of the working groups.

- **Spirituality can be seen as a resilience dimension within the community**
 - Strengthen spiritual preparedness and coping
- **Consistent strategic intent** → prevent the siloing of resilience and individualising vulnerability, instead strategically and consistently engage on resilience and adaptation
 - Monitoring and evaluating response outcomes
 - Advocacy role as representatives of the Anglican Church (for instance making submissions to inquiries and consultations).

- **Connections to wider religious network can be harnessed**
 - Including pathways for shared buildings
- **Preparing networks for coordinated responses** → strengthening support networks, distributing responsibilities
 - (Systematic) checking-in on people during extreme weather events
- **Skillshare/practical information** within the community can address adaptation and resilience specifically → strengthen and retain expertise
 - Combat mis and disinformation (e.g. on renewables)
- **Use existing platforms (service, schools, events)** to engage and involve community members in preparedness conversations and actions
- **Mutual aid and community care** can be better prepared to support communities before during and after crisis
- **Churches physical assets can be strengthened**
 - Churches as disaster relief centres → more preparedness required, including first aid training of community members
 - **Churches as cool places** → Solar is a huge asset, yet a battery and disconnecting from the grid is required to run air conditioning through a blackout
 - Does the wider community have access to this asset? How can they be made welcome? What activities will be offered during extreme heat?
- **Valuing local knowledge for localised solutions**
 - Supporting First Nations leadership
- **ACTing is a huge asset that can be used and shared more widely**

'Encouraging work that is already being done'
'Learning to speak other people's language'

Next Steps?

Several **key actions** emerged from the last brainstorm, which represent great starting points to strengthen resilience, adaptation and disaster preparedness and response.

- **Determine how physical assets can be strengthened** (Disaster relief shelters, cool places - churches and schools)
- **Creating and updating phone/communication trees** for disaster preparedness/response
- **Advocacy for climate adaptation in existing networks**
 - **Climate and disaster consistently on meeting agendas**
 - **Hold town hall meetings for community response**
- **Encouraging local knowledge sharing and strengthening**

- **Intergenerational exchange:** listening to young people and respecting their priorities
- **Backing First Nations-led** adaptation and preparedness initiatives
- **Creating a faculty for spiritual resilience**

Conclusion

The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland's christian values were central to how resilience and climate adaptations were discussed. Community and looking after each other within the Church was identified as a key strength, and foundational to keeping each other safe. This is a huge asset that can be drawn on to strengthen resilience to climate impacts specifically. The Church has physical assets that can be used more strategically to support the wider community during disasters, like opening church buildings during extreme heat. The importance of local and Indigenous knowledge in preparing for and mitigating disasters was identified, and the value of inter-generational knowledge sharing. The attendants of the workshop held much knowledge and experience and are well positioned to continue the conversation and realise the key actions identified.

Did we miss something? Probably! Therefore, we encourage you to view this workshop as a starting point. You can build on it and deepen your understanding of who is at risk, what strengths you can build on, and who your allies are to make this happen. Keep the conversation and work going and check in with each other! Below, we listed some further resources to support you on this journey.

Further Engagement, Resources and Ideas

- **[Frontline Climate Alliance Victoria](#)** - an alliance of community organisations and individuals driving place-based climate adaptation across Victoria, coordinated by Act on Climate, meeting online once a month. Everyone is welcome, whether you are starting your adaptation journey or in the thick of it. This monthly Zoom meeting is focused on skill-sharing and peer-learning with other community members who are driving place-based climate adaptation. FCAV calls will cover things like community organising skills, project design and development, and case studies of other successful community-driven projects. [Next call is July 13th, 7-8.30pm.](#)
- **[Climate Adaptation Map](#)** - a **map of** community-led climate adaptation initiatives across Australia to inspire and connect community organisations.

Some highlights:

- [Climate Safe Rooms](#) | Geelong Sustainability
- [East Gippsland Climate Action Network](#) → We highly recommend getting in touch them to learn and collaborate

- [The Climate Resilience Project](#) - has many helpful resources and inspired our Community Resilience Mapping workshop. We also highly recommend the [book](#).
- [Inspiring example](#) of a church becoming a cool centre.
- **Learn more about First Nations leadership in disaster resilience.** Read [our blog](#) on the recent National Indigenous Disaster Resilience gathering, which was hosted by GLaWAC in East Gippsland.
- [Toolkit](#) for engagement on renewables and combatting mis and disinformation by Friends of the Earth collective 'Yes 2 Renewables'. They will soon announce [the date](#) for their visit to Gippsland, where they will discuss the toolkit. We would also highly appreciate your input into their community survey.
- [ACTing](#) - your very own Acting for Creation Together in Gippsland. We really enjoyed the bulletin!
- [Climate Justice Research Pack](#) by the Jesuit Social Services

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

Please be kind to yourself at this time and be aware of the impact of this on your mental health and wellbeing. Talking about, remembering and experiencing climate impacts and disasters can take a toll on your health and well-being.

If you need support, please visit the [Climate Feelings Space](#), use Ecomind's [How are you feeling?](#) tool, or attend an upcoming [Climate Cafe](#).

About us

Act on Climate is a collective of Friends of the Earth Melbourne. We support and advocate for community-led climate adaptation across Victoria.

Get in touch with us via kimmi.bebendorf@foe.org.au and [subscribe to our newsletter](#) for updates on our work and community-led adaptation.

Want to map your community's resilience?

We're offering support to anyone who wants to facilitate Resilience Mapping in their own community.

Check out our [Community Resilience Mapping Facilitation Guide](#), which you can use to guide the running of your own event, and read until the end for more information.

[This activity was adapted from the Climate Resilience Project.](#)

A huge thank you for your enthusiasm and trust! We hope the mapping and this report are helpful on your adaptation and resilience journey.

In solidarity,
Kimmi, Skye, Tian and Anna

July 2nd, 2026 | Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Country, Naarm, Melbourne