



TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE STRATHBOGIE RANGES

We cannot predict what the future will be ...

In 1894 the Times of London reported on the impending 'horse manure crisis' stating that "in 50 years every street in London will be buried under nine feet of manure." Of course that didn't happen because of the then unforeseen creation of the motor car. This story highlights that many resources can be wasted if planning for the future is based on things always staying the same, because things change in unpredictable ways.

We need to plan for change, but this means that plans will have to be more complex to deal with a range of possible futures. This is particularly true when planning for climate change, because scientists are predicting a range of potential future scenarios. For example, it may be hotter and drier, or warmer and wetter in summer, and may result in more extreme (unpredictable) events.

But what will those changes mean for the Strathbogies Ranges?

How can we plan for change? What actions do we take now?

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority has received funding from the Victorian Government's Our Catchments Our Communities strategy to work with the Strathbogies Ranges community to develop a natural resource management plan that considers possible future climate change scenarios, and prioritises a range of actions that will make sure the natural features the community values can be improved.

To develop the plan, 25 members of the local community were involved in a series of four workshops. The workshop group included farmers, weekenders, Landcare and Conservation Management Network representatives, a bee keeper, scientists from The University of Melbourne, industry representatives, and researchers from RMIT who will be analysing outcomes from the workshops.

This is what the workshop group came up with:

VISION

A sustainable future for the Strathbogies Ranges balancing compatible economic development with maintaining important environmental and social values.

WE VALUE

- Indigenous and European cultural heritage
- Sense of place
- Open spaces
- Proximity
- Natural beauty
- Climate
- Diversity of landscapes
- Unique remnant natural landscape especially its geology and biodiversity
- Community spirit
- Diverse productive agriculture
- Clean water, clean air



To maintain the things that we value, five critical attributes and objectives were identified, these were:

1. Water - surface and groundwater; quantity and quality

- Ensure that demand does not exceed supply.
- No native fish loss from the 'Bogies.
- Improve landholder education on groundwater.
- Springs flow all year around.

2. Native vegetation– extent and quality

- Prioritise/build from/focus efforts on high-quality remnants.
- Embrace species shifts.
- Plan for net gain to the whole system.
- Develop & re-form a vegetation system which is robust & adaptable to climate change.

3. Land/soil and economic productivity

- Maintain and improve topsoil for a productive landscape.
- Protect and enhance paddock trees.
- Maintain diverse productive agriculture in the 'Bogies.

4. Belonging (under construction)

- Maintain healthy lifestyles and resilient communities and landscapes that support the community physically and psychologically.
- Constructive balance of traditional and progressive residents and values.

5. Diversity of Landscapes (under construction)

- Maintain our unique landscape that encapsulates the essence of Australia, a unique environment, a natural resource region of significance for biodiversity conservation, custodians of a small piece of land, where we can work to maintain a balanced, biodiverse environment.

The group discussed what is known about these attributes, how different climate change scenarios may affect them, and the 'tipping points' at which the systems are likely to transform (positively or negatively) into a different state to the one they are in currently.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Working groups:

Working groups were established to deliver two projects:

1. The Tree Storey: Growback or Dieback
2. B3 - Bores of the Bogies & Beyond.

These are citizen science projects, where the community can measure change in tree health and groundwater depth over time.

RMIT:

Information will be used to prepare academic papers and presentations.

You can get involved in a variety of ways:

- Join a working group.
- Participate in citizen science projects.
- Contribute to the on-line plan.
- Find out how by phoning or emailing Dr Jen Wilson (contacts below).

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Jen Wilson, Strategic Landscape Planner, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority,
168 Welsford Street, PO Box 1752, Shepparton 3632 | **w.** www.gbcma.vic.gov.au
t. (03) 5822 7715 | **f.** (03) 5831 6254 | **m.** 0459 023 690 | **e.** jennyw@gbcma.vic.gov.au