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# COMMUNITY- LED ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE STRATEGY FOR SHOALHAVEN

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Initial Scoping & Visioning Online Workshop



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VIA ZOOM

## Community- led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy for Shoalhaven

### Project Background

The Recovery into Resilience Project (RRP), initiated following the Currowan Bushfire (2019-2020) and the COVID-19 pandemic, focuses on enhancing community-led resilience to plan, prepare, respond, and recover from emergency and disaster situations. The project consists of three working streams, namely:

1. Long Term Community-led Resilience;
2. Short Term Community Readiness; and
3. Highest Risk/ Most Urgent Needs.

This report relates to the work undertaken by Stream 1.

The primary goal of Stream 1 is to enhance the Shoalhaven communities' long-term resilience to future disruptive events (for example: extreme weather events, pandemics, bushfires, floods, landslides, and other disasters). It is directed at the development of a long-term community-led Adaptation and Resilience Strategy that will help improve the community's ability to withstand, respond to and recover from these future disruptive events. The strategy will be developed as a collaborative effort involving a working group, consisting of community members and Council staff, through a series of workshops facilitated by a research team of experts from Griffith University.

### Introduction

This report summarises the outcomes of the first *Community-led Adaptation and Resilience Strategy* workshop that was held online, via Zoom, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022. The workshop was attended by 29 participants, of which 20 were community members and 9 Shoalhaven City Council's staff. The workshop was facilitated by 5 research team members affiliated with Griffith University. The aim of the workshop was to initiate the process of developing a long-term community-led adaptation and resilience strategy for the Shoalhaven.

Workshop objectives included:

1. Complete a SWOT analysis for Shoalhaven; and
2. Identify key community priority issues in relation to Community Led Adaptation & Resilience.

Workshop participants were given a short 10 minutes briefing on the workshop and were then allocated into four breakout rooms, where the SWOT analysis was conducted in small groups of 6-8 participants. Following the breakout sessions, all workshop participants reconvened to discuss the 3 most important priority issues identified by each of the breakout groups.

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### Key Workshop Outputs

#### SWOT Analysis

Workshop participants undertook a SWOT analysis on the case study area. The SWOT analysis was guided by the following questions:

1. **Strengths** (What positive Shoalhaven’s attributes could be built upon in order to improve its ability to withstand and recover from disruptive events\* and achieve a higher degree of community resilience?)
2. **Weaknesses** (What negative Shoalhaven’s attributes will need to be countered in order to improve its ability to withstand and recover from disruptive events\* and achieve a higher degree of community resilience?)
3. **Opportunities** (What future external events or circumstances could present Shoalhaven with opportunities to better withstand and recover from disruptive events\* and improve its community resilience?)
4. **Threats** (What future external events and circumstances could pose a threat to Shoalhaven improving its ability to withstand and recover from disruptive events\* and achieve a higher degree of community resilience?)

\*Examples: extreme weather event, pandemic, bushfire, flood, landslide

The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Results of the SWOT analysis**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong sense of community and identity</li> <li>• Positive and open community attitude, willing to learn new skills for future adaptation efforts and actions</li> <li>• Active volunteer community</li> <li>• Significant proportion of skilled, experienced and creative community members</li> <li>• Well connected communities</li> <li>• Extensive local networks that access and utilise local skills and knowledge bases.</li> <li>• Diverse population- ages, indigenous, professionals, visitors (contribute to experience, knowledge and expertise)</li> <li>• Depth of local knowledge and community awareness of issues acquired through many years of experience with disruptive events</li> <li>• Village configuration helps with communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major supply and access route to villages (e.g. Princess Highway) is vulnerable to accidents, fire and floods.</li> <li>• Inadequate mass transport system and poor local road network</li> <li>• Isolation of some communities during and after disruptive events</li> <li>• Heavy dependency on electricity and poor power resilience</li> <li>• Over reliance on major fixed infrastructure</li> <li>• Patchy telecommunication cover in many areas</li> <li>• Low level of collaborations within and between community networks and groups (very few forums where ideas are shared and developed rather than argued). Some degree of mistrust between groups.</li> <li>• Too much focus on Council created CCBs which capture very little of the community knowledge, creating misunderstandings.</li> </ul>

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- Supportive councillors with high aspirations to “make a difference”
- strong connection and communication with State based agencies looking for best practice activities
- Tourism industry provides employment opportunities & economic benefits to the Shoalhaven region
- Capable, well-organised and well equipped emergency management team and systems (Emergency Operation Centre, AIIMS, evacuation/recovery centres)
- Ample natural resources (wind, sun, ocean, land) that can be utilised to improve community self-sufficiency
- Diverse natural ecosystems which support human health/wellbeing as well as biodiversity.
- Small scale communities provide a fine grain detail and response possibilities and diverse range of attitudes to particular events
- Strong interest in protecting the natural environment
- Potential for self-organising groups – activation of networks in anticipation of significant events
- Community passionate about the environment

- Parochialism between north and south & lack of established linkages between disparate communities.
- Influx of people from urban areas (tourists and new residents) with lack of experience of local hazards.
- Inadequate housing and challenging conditions for tenants
- Lack of strong coordination between community service organisations
- Conflict between advocates for tourism and advocates for residential peace
- Limited access to mental health and wellbeing programs
- Senior cohort may not be proficient on digital communication
- Lack of interest in Community-led resilience from NSW government departments and agencies.
- High turnover of council staff impact Council’s ability to maintain programs
- Focus is on emergency response, less ongoing planning and education
- Council Disaster Management Plan has NO detail on the management of the social component.
- Limited understanding in the community of natural hazards (e.g. fires, floods) and how to prepare, respond and recover from disruptive events.
- Large population increases during tourist season, stresses infrastructure
- Negative, dismissive, unconstructive attitude from the community.
- Learned helplessness... looking beyond community to meet every need rather than actively pursuing community solutions.
- High costs to provide services to the 49 scattered villages.
- Inadequate land management (e.g. bushfire hazard reduction)
- Resistance to accepting future scenarios and adjusting policy accordingly
- Ultra dense new development undermining many of the incumbent strengths of the area & many new developments occurring

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	in isolation of bigger picture (e.g. access to services)
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness by Federal and State Governments to advance policy to reduce environmental impacts and address climate change.</li> <li>• Adoption of a National Framework for Community resilience, for sharing ideas/successes/learning for what's working</li> <li>• Development and adoption of a National policy on how to deal with properties affected by Sea Level Rise (who pays, what's the legal recourse?, etc.)</li> <li>• Long-term government funding for resilience building (Federal, State &amp; Local)</li> <li>• Improved funding for emergency management infrastructure</li> <li>• Acquiring heritage status for some of Shoalhaven's environmental and historical icons</li> <li>• Review of current government legislations around evacuation centres, flood and fire mitigation programs (using the lessons learned from recent events and emerging science)</li> <li>• Upgrading of highways and feeder roads</li> <li>• More resilient telecommunication system (improves communication before, during and after disruptive events)</li> <li>• Growing awareness across society around current and future challenges means engagement is easier</li> <li>• Improved links and collaboration with universities (knowledge sharing, student placement programs, expert knowledge)</li> <li>• Improved technology making it easier to be informed</li> <li>• Funding for regional place-based regenerative frameworks</li> <li>• Increased support for localisation of resources (energy, food, water, etc.)</li> <li>• Roll out of batteries and associated software to store and distribute electricity generated from solar</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War/hostility and associated loss of trade in key materials</li> <li>• Overexploitation of resources leading to resource scarcity</li> <li>• Increased environmental pressure and degradation due to human related activities (development, logging, tourism, etc) and lack of appropriate state planning laws that protect the natural environment.</li> <li>• Inaction on climate change and increased occurrence of extreme weather events as warming progresses</li> <li>• Rising sea levels impacting the coast line</li> <li>• Pressure for growth/development in hazardous areas</li> <li>• Economic collapse or downturn</li> <li>• Autocratic countries pursuing individual interests which may go against global interests (financial and environmental)</li> <li>• Cyber-attacks to key network infrastructures</li> <li>• Future governments refusing to invest in resilience building or failing to develop policies as required to enable higher degree of community resilience</li> <li>• Government attention and funding drift away as extreme events recede in time or after an election, or replaced by other government priorities.</li> <li>• Defunding of critical people support services</li> <li>• Capitalism: failing to recognise that the market can't solve everything</li> <li>• Competition and misdirected funding</li> <li>• Duplication of activities and overlap of funding</li> <li>• National Cabinets-political disorganisation</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of green hydrogen to decarbonise manufacturing</li> <li>• Changed community and government attitudes towards supporting novel ideas (e.g. water reuse initiatives)</li> <li>• Adverse events improve communities' awareness, experience, preparedness, creativity and self-sufficiency</li> <li>• Embracing/funding Indigenous land management practices including cool burning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of social and affordable housing</li> <li>• Poor inclusion of available technology in preference of commercial contracted agreements.</li> <li>• Covid-19 and possible future pandemics</li> <li>• Milton –Ulladulla bypass impacting small communities</li> <li>• Continued reliance on central infrastructure (fuel supply, electricity supply, transport networks)- gov policy re: reserve and emergency allocation</li> <li>• Collapse of current agricultural model resulting in food shortages</li> <li>• Breakdown of social fabric undermining community support /engagement</li> <li>• Community apathy and lack of self-education</li> <li>• Non-inclusion of local Aboriginal communities in decision making and activities</li> <li>• No succession plan for retiring volunteers</li> <li>• Regulations, like need for insurance, limit spontaneous volunteerism.</li> <li>• Government legislations hamper the development of initiatives to support community based preparedness</li> <li>• Inadequate community engagement and consultation</li> <li>• Expansion of Naval/military presence that alienates local areas.</li> </ul>
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The results of the SWOT analysis reveal some interesting insight for the project. For example, Figure 1 shows the most frequently used words to describe the strengths of the Shoalhaven in withstanding and recovering from disruptive events. As can be seen in the Word Cloud, the words “community”, “communities”, “strong” and “people” were the most frequently used words by the participants. This is also consistent with the results from the earlier community survey.

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**Figure 1. Most Frequently Used Words describing the Strengths of the Shoalhaven**

The picture in relation to weaknesses was less clear. However, certain words such as “isolated communities”, “lack of”, “limited” or “inadequate” (services, infrastructure, preparedness) were repeated in high frequency.

When asked about opportunities, participants identified a broad range of issues that can be grouped into four key areas, including :

1. **Federal, State and Local Government funding and policies** (funding and support for social and environmental initiatives, infrastructure, favourable policies around climate action and resilience building);
2. **Improved Infrastructure** (roads, emergency management, social services);
3. **Community** (self-sufficiency, community empowerment); and
4. **Technological Innovations** (adoption of advanced technology for communication, awareness raising, and transition to low-carbon economy)

Comments related to threats were diverse and were harder to group into themes. A full list of the threats can be found Appendix 1.

### Key Priority Issues

Following the SWOT analysis, workshop participants were asked to list key issues that should be addressed in the Shoalhaven *Community-led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy*.

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As can be expected, the responses to this question were numerous and diverse (see Figure 2 for some examples). A summary of all responses is provided in Appendix 2.

Key Priority Issues (15 mins):

List in priority order the key issues that should be addressed in the Shoalhaven Community Led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy.

The grid contains the following issues:

- Bringing road network to a safe and reliable basis for all transport needs
- Ongoing funding for communities' physical and social resilience that isn't reliant on elections or election cycles
- Multi format communications that get information and actions needed out to residents and visitors in a timely manner
- Getting NSW Government departments and agencies on board so that they support this council project
- Safety of people and property in a crisis situation
- Focus on the gaps, the vulnerabilities, the things we don't have
- Identify and understand vulnerabilities e.g. power, communications, response times, lack of resources, limitations of innovative technology,
- Also knowing the vulnerabilities related to population and the capacity of accommodating future changes
- Establish an understanding of the relationship between visitors and permanent residents
- Determine what the next threats might be e.g. flood, fires, coastal storms, employment, economic risks
- Create a database of community resilience best practices
- Learn to understand and address our collective/community vulnerabilities so that the threats can largely look after themselves
- Funding available to resilience planning - for roads, communication, support systems
- Audit of all the resilience programs currently operating in the Shoalhaven
- Building a local Shoalhaven 'army' of resilient workers
- Focus on the gaps
- Communication, power, identify and prioritise vulnerabilities,
- understand the essential nature of inclusion - not all are familiar and comfortable with digital/mobile phones/technology
- Developing coherence in the relationships between essential services and community wellbeing
- Understanding and preparing resources when crisis arrives
- Research and engage activities of Resilience NSW
- Need to map what is happening now - widening the highway, focus on what is not being included - avoid duplication
- Start with the vision and then finding the funding for it
- Look at the situation holistically so we can identify gaps and duplication and whats happening now

**Figure 2. Example of Key Priority Issues (captured by participants in Breakout room # 1)**

A list of the top two key priorities from each group is provided in the Table 2.

**Table 2. Summary of Top Key Priority Issues**

<p><b>Group 1- Vision, funding, identifying gaps</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start with a Vision and then source the funding to achieve it.</li> <li>2. Identification of the Gaps- mapping what has already been done by different agencies and identify key vulnerabilities and issues that need to be addressed.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Group 2- Communication during disasters, distribution of community and isolation of some groups</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Address communication needs in the lead-up, during and after disruptive events (develop an emergency response plan and identify the appropriate network of appropriate communication channels).</li> <li>2. Conduct scenario planning for different communities to identify the different types of impacts in different times (e.g. high and low tourism season), while taking into consideration cumulative impacts (e.g. pandemic + bushfires+ supply chain disruptions)</li> </ol>
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### Group 3- **Strong community engagement, and increase education**

1. Develop a community engagement strategy
2. Improve community and visitors' awareness and knowledge around disruptive events through better communication channels and infrastructure

### Group 4- **Self preparedness, self-sufficiency, capacity building, low tech communication, localised infrastructure.**

1. Self-preparedness & self-sufficiency through capacity building (e.g. facilitate education and training in areas such as food production & localised energy and communication)
2. Return to low tech solutions in relation to communications and overcoming the misinformation spread through social media

### Proposed Draft Vision

The draft vision was developed by the research team using the feedback from the last Workshop and the earlier Community Survey results. The final Vision Statement will guide the process of developing the Shoalhaven *Community-led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy*. The draft vision for consideration by the Working Group is set out in the textbox below.

#### **Draft Vision**

A future Shoalhaven community will have the necessary resources, infrastructure and services to better withstand, adapt and recover from disruptive events. It will be strong, well connected, engaged, diverse and safe and will promote self-sufficiency and care for its vulnerable members. It will respect, protect, and restore the natural heritage and ecosystems that support biodiversity for the wellbeing and enjoyment of future generations.

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### Appendix 1- Results from SWOT Analysis (Jamboard transcript)

#### **Strengths**

##### **Group 1**

- personal strength of Shoalhaven people
- Village configurations help with communication
- A strong village culture in many of the independent settlements
- depth of local knowledge and community awareness of issues.
- maturity and experience of residents
- Strong community sense and involvement
- A huge resource of experiential learnings acquired during recent events
- Sense and appreciation of natural "place" and environment
- willingness to be involved
- Recent events have highlighted the need to be informed and involved
- A fresh group of Councillors with high aspirations to make a difference
- Strong community communication through community forums - work can still be done to strengthen and maximise these avenues
- Strong connections and communication with State based agencies looking for best practice activities
- Strong Aboriginal communities
- Extensive community groups
- Community groups stretch way beyond the CCB network and all can contribute

##### **Group 2**

- Distributed villages & potentially distributed response centres
- Strong community networks in each sub-community, village, etc (eg CCBs, FB Notice Boards, Community agencies)
- Professional skillsets within the retired population.
- Large / long LGA offers opportunity to move people out of harms way. Safe havens during emergency events.
- Expansion of Recovery/Evacuation Centres
- Well-organised emergency management team, demonstrated capability and well-equipped
- Contribution by volunteers to community wellbeing
- Lots of community members happy to volunteer when needed
- Learning from recent experiences - fires, floods etc

##### **Group 3**

- Close knit communities
- Strong networks of community volunteers
- Readily available emergency information, such as flooding, bushfire etc.

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- strong economy driven by tourism
- Broad community awareness of natural hazards in Shoalhaven
- Emergency operations Centre
- AllIMS - Management Structure for Emergency Services
- Tourism as an essential economic factor in the Shoalhaven
- Communities passionate for the Shoalhaven area

### **Group 4**

- Skilled community
- Range of skills & experience within our communities
- The experience and expertise of residents
- depth of knowledge and maturity of people
- Diverse natural ecosystems - nature can be your friend! - urban canopy cover etc.
- Lived experience responding to disruptive events
- Past experiences in catastrophic events
- Most people are used to being self reliant
- Community groups supporting people and businesses
- Strong positive community attitude
- strength of the people within the community
- Strong Community attitude
- Sense of community - strong within community experience via fires, floods and tragedy.  
Supportive communities
- strong connections with people in the community
- strong interest in preserving the environment
- Potential for self-organising groups - activation of networks in anticipation of significant events
- Some areas of fertile land
- Natural resources wind, rain, land - can be self-sufficient, using what is naturally available
- Many people have large house blocks - resources can be grown in the peri urban area - if there was a shock with transport missing, we could feed ourselves etc.
- Openness to learn new skills for future adaption
- Good potential for renewables - major issues with loss of power and communications. we have sunshine, ocean, wind - potential for micro-grids etc.
- people passionate about environment
- Small scale communities provide fine grain detail and response possibilities (small towns & villages) and diverse range of attitudes to particular events
- Small scale communities that can be linked

### **Weaknesses**

#### **Group 1**

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- Poor power resilience due to inadequate investments and no use of more modern/ innovative systems, micro grids etc
- The quality of the road network which is critical to confident movement around the Shoalhaven
- Senior cohorts may not be proficient on digital communications
- Very few forums where ideas are shared and developed rather than argued. Low level of collaboration
- Isolation and some mistrust between groups
- The absence of place and environment characteristic visions
- Lack of interest in Community Led Resilience from government NSW Government departments and agencies
- Conflict between advocates for tourism and advocates for residential peace
- very transient population in holiday periods
- access to mental health and wellbeing programs
- The central role of dollars rather than values
- isolation and mistrust of some groups
- Poor power resilience - lack of diverse power supply. can make us vulnerable in different environmental threats
- Learned helplessness...looking beyond community to meet every need rather than actively pursuing community solutions
- Too much focus on the Council created CCB's which captures very little of the community knowledge, creating misunderstandings
- Lack of resources in time of crisis, eg need a diverse power supply, communication points/poles,
- negative, dismissive, unconstructive attitude from the community
- some community forums needs greater participation and engagement of residents
- Power supply subject to wind storms

### **Group 2**

- Parochialism between north and south & lack of established linkages between disparate communities.
- Sometimes people in the south feel isolated or not included
- Isolation of specific communities during and after some events
- Single in / out access and egress points to distributed communities
- Education programs by Council not maintained to raise awareness of dangers, community need to seek help, face-to-face has more impact
- Turnover of Council staff to maintain programs
- Tourist impacts - access to info, using roads, knowing where to go
- Influx of people from urban areas, with lack of experience with local dangers
- Lack of understanding of risks - tourists and new residents. Communication of risks - info available.
- Not enough planning ahead

### **Group 3**

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- Isolated communities - especially those with 1 road in/out
- patchy telecommunications cover in many areas
- large areas of bushland & natural area
- Urban spread in isolated communities
- Large LGA area to manage with spread out communities
- Lack of general understanding of fire management needs, risks and ways of dealing with fire
- large number of visitors lacking knowledge of local hazards
- Large population increases during tourist season, stresses infrastructure.
- Tourists may not be as aware as local people in regards to risks
- limited water management in villages for flooding
- Inadequate transport systems - rail and roads
- need for better communication and education
- Only one crossing of the Shoalhaven River on the coast
- Council's Disaster management plan has NO detail on the management of the social component
- focus is on emergency response, less ongoing planning/education
- Lack of strong coordination between community service organisations
- inadequate housing - challenging conditions for tenants
- inadequate land management eg bushfire hazard reduction

### **Group 4**

- Power outs
- Easy to break communication lines
- medical care / staff scarcity?
- people put at risk when interruptions happen - eg medical supplies
- distribution of investment in resources and services not sufficiently equitable
- No good public or mass transport
- Resistance to accepting future scenarios and adjusting policy accordingly
- lack of preparation- shelter, food, water
- Lack of microgrids to ensure locally generated electricity can be shared
- over-reliance on major fixed infrastructure
- Elderly residents relying on outside support networks or services
- infrastructure in the shoalhaven not able to recover quickly - e.g. electricity, treatment works
- dependency on electricity
- supply routes easily cut off
- too much dependency on supplies arriving on time
- Ongoing and accelerating loss of trees/vegetation
- low socio-economic status of some villages
- not prepared enough to sustain small groups for prolonged time
- HQ is in the north of a long narrow corridor between Mountains and Water
- too much dependency on high tech (internet etc)
- Poor transport networks
- Inability to affect macro settings (migration, health care, house prices)

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- Small scale communities provide fine grain detail and response possibilities
- Attitude of some discriminate against marginalised communities
- lack of community spaces to nurture even deeper social connection
- Lack of awareness of the full potential & capability of the area
- lots of small communities that are easily separated
- Towns isolated (one road in and out)
- Isolated towns and villages
- Risk of community break up due to locals being priced out
- housing crisis
- Lots of housing close to the coast and at risk from Sea Level Rise
- Ultra-dense new developments undermining many of the incumbent strengths of the area
- Developer led development
- Development occurring in isolation of bigger picture (transport, doctors, education etc)

### Opportunities

#### **Group 1**

- State Federal policies that address climate change
- Being a marginal seat in both State and Federal politics - funding and good will
- Acquiring heritage status for some of our environmental and historical icons
- Growing awareness across society means engagement is easier
- Election cycle - opportunity to change things to a more positive setting
- Government funding and initiatives
- The ability to adapt to any situation
- An opportunity for constructive leadership and community empowerment
- Recent events mean disaster issues are upmost in people's and government minds
- Upgrading of highwys and feeder roads
- An opportunity to grow community pride
- Links to Universities interested in investing their knowledge in Shoalhaven
- Good activism and advocates
- Technology is making it easier to be informed
- Support people during times of crisis through different methods

#### **Group 2**

- Build a sense of one Shoalhaven
- Federal and state funding to local groups through grants programs if council could auspice and develop through a proactive community development plan.
- Expansion of Incident control beyond Nowra
- Reduce fuel loads, reduce duration of flood (mitigation action permitted) - improve/review govt policy
- Re-uniting families of Sydney and Melbourne over Christmas - better understanding of needs and impacts

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- Better planning to ensure emergency/evac centres are identified in all isolated communities, recognising how quickly things can change
- Student placement programs and projects by Unis could supplement Council and community org based program expression.
- Govt review of legislation of evac centres
- Inclusion of all peoples, cultures and communities

#### **Group 3**

- more government funding (State, federal & local)
- Education Programs to increase awareness.
- Willingness by Federal and State Govts to advance policy to reduce environmental impacts
- More resilient telecommunications & internet.
- Community becoming more resilient & self sufficient (less reliant on government help)
- Better resourcing of fire services - eg aircraft & others that can be distributed
- Improved economic and social development
- Federal interesting in tackling climate change
- improved communication (in times of crisis) and available emergency information for the community
- Embracing/ funding Indigenous land management practices including cool burning

#### **Group 4**

- Shift to small-scale farming/ag in response to loss of soils and reduced availability of fertilisers
- local water harvesting
- Major events of which we are just a small part
- Development of green hydrogen to decarbonise manufacturing
- Changed attitudes in regards water re-use (being open to, and supporting, novel ideas)
- Funding for regional place-based regenerative frameworks
- increased support for localisation of resources - energy, food etc
- Roll out of batteries and associated software to store and distribute electricity generated from solar
- National policy on how to deal with properties affected by Sea Level Rise (who pays? what's the legal recourse - is SCC and thus residents on the hook for compensation?)
- Increased rainfall lowering bushfire risk - Climate Change projections for Shoalhaven to be a met more tropical
- National Framework for Community Resilience, for sharing ideas/successes/learnings for what's working
- Longterm funding for resilience building - not just Fed/State funding in response to disaster -e.g. bushfire recovery fund
- victory gardens and teaching people how to be self reliant
- implementation of microgrids
- large scale community events to strengthen sense of community - building on sense of community and bring community together

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- more external events will make us more experienced and prepared- hopefully
- more lockdowns etc give us the incentive to be more self sufficient
- increased transport lines
- Funding for infrastructure
- Lack of money
- Multiple Events

### **Threats**

#### ***Group 1***

- Property owned by non-resident people
- Tourist dollar generating creeping environmental destruction
- Lack of follow through from government commitments after previous events
- Defunding of critical people support services
- Cyber attacks to key network infrastructures
- Volunteering is a strength but retiring volunteers may not be replenished
- competition for funding and attention between communities
- misdirected funding - fundings do not end up being allocated and used to implement projects
- Shortage of social and affordable housing
- Exploitation of the environment for external intentions like Cruise Ships in Jervis Bay
- Too many holiday homes and not enough locals
- Proper funding to maintain the RFS in the area
- poor inclusion of available technology in preference of commercial contracted arrangements
- Top down decisions not considering what the communities wanted - without consultation
- Some initiatives not widely known in the community
- Competition between needs of Shoalhaven areas and also in relation to other parts of the State
- duplication of activities and overlap of funding
- Poor development decisions at the NSW Government level
- Expansion of Naval/military presence that alienates local areas
- Regulations, like need for insurance, limit spontaneous volunteerism

#### ***Group 2***

- Government attention and funding could drift away as extreme events (eg fires) recede in time, or after an election, or replaced by other govt priorities.
- Transport deciding on Milton Ulladulla bypass impacting on small communities - Burrill Lake, Lake Tabourie - rather than providing separate western route to take main traffic inland
- COVID and COVID response is still a threat
- Reliance on centralised infrastructure (fuel supply, electricity supply, transport networks) - govt policy re: reserves and emergency allocation
- Apathy of individuals, lack of self-education
- Communication Towers have limited battery life - communication is important for connection - threat in storms, fires...



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### **Group 3**

- climate change refugees
- increased occurrence of extreme weather events as warming progresses
- pressure for growth/development in hazardous areas
- A new GFC
- inappropriate logging and other activities which contribute to environmental degradation
- State planning laws make it hard to protect our environment and community
- Rising Sea Levels impacting the coast line.
- autocratic countries pursuing individual interests which may go against global interests (financial and environmental)
- high population growth and migration from metro areas to Shoalhaven - limited land for new development
- High house prices make it difficult for younger people to get into the market. Decreases diversity in the community.
- failure of federal and state government to develop policies as required to enable higher degree of community resilience
- current planning permits development in inappropriate areas subject to hazards
- Potential to lose our young people to emigration if we can't provide opportunities

### **Group 4**

- Resource scarcity
- lockdowns
- international events
- politics
- Ongoing ownership of politicians by large corporations and rich individuals
- Initiatives like this being 'once-off's, without on-going development, training and up-skilling
- Sea level rise reaching or exceeding worst-case scenarios
- economic collapse or downturn
- War / hostility and associated loss of trade in key materials
- National Cabinets-Political disorganisation
- Collapse of current agricultural model resulting in food shortages
- Breakdown of social fabric undermining community support/engagement
- ongoing development of the shoalhaven, increased housing (unaffordable housing) and little to no infrastructure to support growth
- Inability to halt global heating and hold warming to 1.5 or less
- Capitalism failing to recognise that the market can't solve everything
- Future government (Fed/State/Local) refusing to invest in resilience building
- govt legislation preventing us from doing things to be prepared
- Non-inclusion of local Aboriginal communities
- inaction of preparing for future disruptive events

## Community- led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy for Shoalhaven

- Loss of peri-urban vegetation through development resulting in warmer and more vulnerable villages and towns
- Inaction on climate change
- bankruptcy - national, federal, council, personal

## Appendix 2- Key Priority Issues

### **Group 1**

- Bringing road network to a safe and reliable basis for all transport needs
- Ongoing funding for communities' physical and social resilience that isn't reliant on elections or election cycles
- Multi format communications that get information and actions needed out to residents and visitors in a timely manner
- Getting NSW Government departments and agencies on board so that they support this council project
- Safety of people and property in a crisis situation
- Focus on the gaps, the vulnerabilities, the things we don't have
- Identify and understand vulnerabilities e.g. power, communications, response times, lack of resources, limitations of innovative technology,
- Also knowing the vulnerabilities related to population and the capacity of accommodating future changes
- Establish an understanding of the relationship between visitors and permanent residents
- Determine what the next threats might be e.g. flood, fires, coastal storms, employment, economic risks
- Create a database of community resilience best practices
- Learn to understand and address our collective/community vulnerabilities so that the threats can largely look after themselves
- Funding available to resilience planning - for roads, communication, support systems
- Audit of all the resilience programs currently operating in the Shoalhaven
- Building a local Shoalhaven 'army' of resilient workers
- Focus on the gaps
- Communication, power, identify and prioritise vulnerabilities,
- understand the essential nature of inclusion - not all are familiar and comfortable with digital/mobile phones/technology
- Developing coherence in the relationships between essential services and community wellbeing
- Understanding and preparing resources when crisis arrives
- Research and engage activities of Resilience NSW
- Need to map what is happening now - widening the highway, focus on what is not being included - avoid duplication
- Start with the vision and then finding the funding for it
- Look at the situation wholistically so we can identify gaps and duplication and whats happening now

## Community- led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy for Shoalhaven

### **Group 2**

- Communication system for the area: Community Information Sharing - central way that community members can know what is happening and what they can do about it
- Scenario planning for access and egress of isolated communities with both low and high season populations considered.
- Retailers supply chains are threatened by Global demand at the moment. If road access is also denied during an emergency then the Community Panics ! Look at simple toilet paper. Recommend Disaster / Emergency Supply planning and resourcing information and education.
- Hardening of utilities (local power, comms, sewerage, food distribution) so that they don't fail during an extreme event.
- Government agencies need to be told to consider strategic links with other agencies when making decisions that could impact on resilience (eg utilities should be run down the centre of new divided highways to facilitate access during events and to protect them from extremes (eg fire)
- Communication of plans for emergency responses - a lot exist and are exercised but usually within the emergency service network not wider community - maybe broaden experience
- Community needs a sense of safety at the group level, otherwise during extreme events people will tend to look after themselves & family first rather than look to the group (eg the disappearance of toilet paper early in the pandemic).
- Building a long-term sense of community

### **Group 3**

- Build on strong community engagement
- Improve reliable communications across the LGA (often fails during natural disasters)
- providing services/supplies to communities that have been cut off
- Increasing awareness and education - both tourists & residents
- Develop a fully fleshed-out Social component of the disaster management plan
- improve coordination between community service organisations
- Adopting better land management practices that balance people and the environment e.g. indigenous fire management
- consider climate change impacts in all adaptation and resilience planning
- Managing development - types and locations so we don't increase danger
- Additional crossing of Shoalhaven River west of Nowra - facilitate better emergency access
- Improving Accessibility for settlements with only 1 road in/out
- Strategy needs to consider impact posed by tourism and the increased risk they pose should a natural disaster occur in high-season

### **Group 4**

- Self-preparedness & self-sufficiency through capacity Building - short term for the long term
- Establish localised infrastructure for power, communication and food production
- "Centralised" and reliable official Command Control and Messaging

## Community- led Adaptation & Resilience Strategy for Shoalhaven

- return to low tech solutions in relation to communications
- Overcoming Social Media Dominance and Misinformation in Disaster Situations
- Connectivity of coastal villages in case of catastrophe
- Active transport networks (resilience to loss of connectivity)
- local systems and resources in place
- linking like-minded groups of interest
- emphasis on everyone needing to be prepared-
- Development and loss / replacement of trees / vegetation
- Ensuring policies explicitly refer to resilience in the face of future uncertainty
- Connectivity of coastal villages in case of catastrophe
- Active transport networks (resilience to loss of connectivity)
- local systems and resources in place
- prepare self, then neighbourhood, then broader community
- Practical advice and help on what to do and how to start.
- Creating a Community Alert Mode
- Ensuring policies explicitly refer to resilience in the face of future uncertainty
- utilising local natural resources
- Community energy grids
- education - formal, informal, cultural
- Training in community self-organisation
- learning events where we learn to do things that help us be resilient and prepared
- Encouraging industries we need for resilience (e.g. plastic recycling, green hydrogen) to set up in Shoalhaven
- Increased density of community gardens and upskilling to grow and preserve food
- sharing experiences of people who are doing it already
- upskilling communities to help foster self-sustainability