

Climate Resilience Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting No.	06
Meeting	Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC)
Date	Friday, October 18, 2024
Time	10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Venue	Tablelands Regional Council Coordination Centre, 15 Vernon Street, Atherton

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of Country presented by Mayor of Tablelands Regional Council, Rodney Donald Marti.

2. Attendance & Apologies

Name	Organisation	Attendance
Annalise Varghese	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Christine wolf	Tablelands Regional Council	Present
Crystal Baker	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Isaac Dufficy	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Dr. Jessie Gray	Bureau of Meteorology	Present
Karen Bettink	Terrain Natural Resource Management	Present
Karla Vaughan	Local Government Authority Queensland	Present
Ken Timms	Etheridge Shire Council	Present
Councillor Maree Baade	Tablelands Regional Council	Present
Maria-Helena Anselmo	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils	Present
Melissa Mitchell	Douglas Shire Council	Present
Michael Anderson	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Present
Michael Nash	Hinchinbrook Shire Council	Present
Niel James	Cairns Regional Council	Present
Mayor Rodney Donald Marti	Tablelands Regional Council	Present
Sarah Dean	Tablelands Regional Council	Present
Sophie Barrett	Cairns Regional Council	Present

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Brett Carlsson	Cape York Natural Resource Management
Damon Sydes	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Darlene Irvine	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
Jamie Kleinhans	Douglas Shire Council
Keely Macmillan	Mareeba Shire Council
Lucy Graham	Cairns and Far North Environmental Centre
Pip Schroor	Cape York Natural Resource Management
Sarah Frew	Cook Shire Council
Scott Buchanan	Wet Tropics Management Authority

Name	Organisation
Stephen Frost	Croydon Shire Council
Travis Sydes	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

3. Previous Minutes

Accepted.

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

MINUTE NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	STATUS
5.1	Develop an FNQROC Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Profile.	FNQROC	On-going
5.2	Notify CSIRO of CRTC support to participate and request interview questions prior to the interview.	FNQROC	Actioned
5.3	Share LGAQ Facilitated Information Session on GHG Emission Guidelines for EA Applications to CRTC Members.	Attendees to the information session.	Pending
5.4	Update CRTC on the LGAQ Request for Quotation to assess the impact of environmental compliance for landfills and waste management in Rural and Remote QLD outcomes.	FNQROC	Pending
5.5	Share the following Cairns Regional Council documents with CRTC members: Flood Resilience Guidelines, Procurement and climate-related policies.	Cairns Regional Council	Actioned
5.6	Share Council Climate & Sustainability Policies with CRTC Council Members.	FNQROC	Actioned
5.7.1	Research the current demand and supply of EV charging stations to understand current gaps in the region. Include information on types of chargers currently available, processes in place for installing residential chargers, and private investors installing infrastructure on council-owned land.	FNQROC	Actioned
5.8	Develop a progress report on the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan.	FNQROC	Actioned
5.9	Develop CRTC Report Card: (i) Council Members update the template with relevant data (ii) draft design of the report card for approval (iii) final report card developed (iv) Investigate options for a reporting dashboard.	FNQROC, CRTC Members	On-going

5. Presentations

5.1 The Bureau of Meteorology – Seasonal Outlook Presentation

Dr Jessie Gray - Climatologist/Climate Risk Officer Hazard Preparedness and Response, The Bureau of Meteorology presented the *FNQROC Climate Update*.

Key Messages

- 50-65% chance of rainfall exceeding the historical average (Nov 2024 - Jan 2025).
- Over 60% chance of maximum temperatures exceeding the historical average (Nov 2024 - Jan 2025).

- Medium chance of extreme heat events in the Far North (Nov 2024 - Jan 2025).
- The likelihood of severe (Cat 3 +) tropical cyclones is higher than average, because of the warmer-than-average ocean temperatures forecast for the Australian region in the coming months.
- Fire authorities warn of increased fire danger as temperatures increase due to unseasonal winter rainfall increasing fire loads.
- The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is currently neutral. The Bureau's ENSO Outlook is at La Niña Watch due to early signs that an event may form in the Pacific Ocean later in 2024.
- Madden Julian Oscillation is currently in phase 4. Most models suggest a moderately strong MJO pulse will develop over the Maritime Continent in the coming days and move eastwards in the coming week.

Additional Updates

- First year of extreme heatwaves recorded in Gulf Country, North Tropical Coast, and Tablelands (Oct 2023 - Apr 2024).
- Major flood warnings issued (Nov 2023 and Apr 2024).
- High-season weather briefings available to councils, health professionals, and emergency stakeholders upon request.
- Weekly weather updates for Northern Queensland return in late October 2024.

Discussion Notes on Heatwave Information

- The Bureau provides generic information and refers to Queensland Health's Heat Safety website which provides information on vulnerable cohorts and actions to reduce heat-related health risks ([How to stay safe in a heatwave](#)).
- Queensland Health advises a human heat threshold of 35°C, but this may not account for humidity. Recommend referring to the apparent temperature charts/maps. The Bureau of Meteorology has average daily indoor apparent temperature maps for annual and monthly periods online: [Apparent temperature climatology maps, Bureau of Meteorology](#).
- Cairns Regional Council installed 80 heat and humidity sensors, finding city temperatures 7°C higher than those recorded at Cairns Airport.

Key Resources

- [The Bureau of Meteorology Apparent temperature](#)
- [Queensland Health Heat Safe Factsheet](#).

6. Local Government Authority Queensland (LGAQ) Updates

6.1 Climate Policy

Analise Varghese - Senior Policy Officer - Planning, Development and Sustainability from LGAQ presenting Climate Policy updates, upcoming webinars, training and consultations and project updates.

Local Government Climate Risk & Resilience Network

- Currently, there are no climate-related LGAQ advisory groups.
- To maintain collaboration and sharing of resources and learning opportunities, LGAQ has created a Local Government Climate Risk & Resilience Network via Workplace.
- The Climate and Energy congruent webpage has been updated and can be accessed by local councils via the following link: [Climate and Energy - Congruent by LGAQ](#)

Griffith University Becoming Climate Ready

- Course opening February 2025.
- Offers Micro-credential courses on Climate Risk Management.
- Enquiry from members on credentials offered for individuals or Council organisations.
- Technical Committee members expressed interest in participating in the course.
- Discount offered for group enrolment.

6.2 Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program

Karla Vaughan from the LGAQ presented on the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program (Q CRC) and opened discussions to understand Councils needs and barriers to achieving climate resilience.

Discussion Points

The Q CRC reached a conclusion in 2023. At the latest budget, \$2 million in funding allocated to reinstate the program. Our focus is on how to position ourselves for the next ten years. The program components are outlined as follows.

1. **Q CRC Alliances** - Continue to support two (2) existing Alliances (FNQ and SEQ) and establish three (3) new Alliances, with funding to support dedicated coordinators who will identify regional priorities and support councils in coordinating the development of regional plans and adaptation strategies.
2. **Climate Risk Management Framework for Queensland Local Government** - Undertake a review and mapping process to identify the opportunities for local government in the newly announced Commonwealth Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program (CROMP). Findings to be incorporated into the Q CRC Climate Risk Management Framework to allow this to be the key resource for Queensland Councils looking to mitigate climate risk and build resilience.
3. **Climate Expert Panel** - An LGAQ established Climate Resilience Expert Panel across key themes relevant to the Q CRC program (e.g. Cost benefits, Planning etc.) This will allow councils to seek much needed advice including how to incorporate it into Corporate Plans and Planning Scheme amendments.
4. **Climate Risk and Resilience Funding Pool**- As each council and regional alliance is unique, the LGAQ proposes the development of a 'Climate Risk and Resilience Funding Pool' where councils and regional alliances can apply for funding to support key activities across the following key themes:
 - Strategic Climate Risk Profiling | Funding support for councils to identify, map, and understand their climate risks.
 - Climate Risk Planning | Identifying opportunities and potential actions that can support improved governance, mitigate climate risk and build climate resilience. This could take the form of Climate Risk and Resilience Action Strategies or Plans.
 - Implementing Climate Actions | Funding support for councils and regional alliances to undertake relevant climate resilience and emission reduction activities depending on their level of maturity. For example, undertaking corporate baseline emissions inventory.
5. **First Nations Climate Risk and Resilience Strategy** - First Nations councils are unique in their needs on how best to address climate change within their communities. Bespoke support for these councils would include scoping their needs and identifying gaps where support would have the most beneficial impact to increase their climate resilience.

Regional Events:

- Planning two regional events (May–June 2025).

- Discussion on securing advocacy for further funding for a 2026 event.

Next Steps

- Awaiting funding to be released, particularly for ongoing initiatives.
- Start planning projects that can be funded from the program.

Participants were invited to discuss the needs and challenges experienced in their local government organisation. Below is a summary of key points discussed.

Council Needs

- Engage experts (lawyers, economists, etc.) to discuss climate-related risks and opportunities with Councillors and the executive team.
- Establish a link between state and federal governments to bridge knowledge gaps.
- Secure resources to implement actions.
- Strengthen disaster management.
- Integrate climate risk into council operations and services.
- Conduct Climate Risk Assessments and assess the impact on Council assets.
- Clarify legal responsibilities.
- Arrange external presentations on risk and industry advocacy.

Council Challenges

- High staff turnover, with training being a valuable resource, but the need to retrain due to staff changes.
- Acknowledging climate change impacts on council services and the community.
- Limited local council resources hinder climate resilience efforts, such as completing the Climate Risk Management Framework.

6.3 LGAQ Capacity Building Programs

Welcome Isaac (Zac) Dufficy, Workforce Development Project Officer from LGAQ to present on Indigenous & Rural and Remote Capacity Building Programs.

Five of the FNQROC Council members are eligible. They include Aboriginal shire councils and Cook Shire and Croydon Shire Councils are eligible for support.

The **Indigenous Capacity Building Project** facilitates the delivery of targeted and tailored skills development and training for council staff and supply chain organisations. Through the project, skilling and training pathways are opening opportunities for employment to meet local, community and regional job needs. Training includes accredited and non-accredited courses, part qualifications, tickets and micro-credentials delivered by Registered Training Organisations.

For further information,
Isaac Dufficy Phone: 07 3000 2229
Email: workforce@lgaq.asn.au

The **Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project** facilitates the delivery of targeted and tailored skills development and training for council staff and supply chain organisations. Through the project, skilling and training pathways are opening opportunities for employment to meet local, community and regional job needs. Training includes accredited and non-accredited courses, part qualifications, tickets and micro-credentials delivered by Registered Training Organisations.

For further information,
Lauren Barty Phone: 07 3000 2263
Email: workforce@lgaq.asn.au

6.1 ACTION *Determine whether micro-credentials from Griffith University Becoming Climate Ready short course are for individuals or can be awarded to Council organisations.*

7. Terms of Reference

The Climate Resilience Technical Committee Terms of Reference ended on 1 September 2024. Members reviewed suggested changes and discussed further amendments. A summary of the discussion is below.

Discussion Points:

- Amend Scope to:
 - Include, *implement and report on Rivers to Reef Climate Resilient Action Plan.*
 - Remove shared learnings to inform development of Regional Drought Resilience plans and replace with *Implement and report on RDRP (Wet Tropics and Gulf Hinterland) where required.*
 - Include participation in the Q CRC program.
- Queensland Health and health practitioners can add valuable insights, particularly in discussions on heat-related health issues. The committee recommends inviting them to join as advisory members to enhance regional resilience.
- Voluntary representation from Councillors is encouraged. An invitation will be extended to all Councillors for participation.
- Noting staff changes since the CRTC's inception 18 months ago, the committee suggests extending invitations to councils not currently represented.

6.2 ACTION: *Strengthen FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee: 6.2a: Invite Queensland Health and health practitioners to join as advisory members. 6.2b: Extend an invitation to Councillors for voluntary nomination to the committee. 6.2c: Request Council CEOs to nominate a Council representative for the committee.*

6.3 ACTION: *Email amended Terms of Reference to Climate Resilience Technical Committee members.*

8. Project Updates

8.1 Regional Drought Resilience Plans

The FNQROC Board endorsed the Regional Drought Resilience Plans (RDRP) at the 167th Board meeting on 1st August 2024. We are awaiting final plans from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Funding is now available through the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Scheme via the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority, comprising two pools:

- Activity Grant: Up to \$300K (plus GST) for implementing plan actions.
- Remuneration Grant: Up to \$150K (plus GST) for salaries, wages, or fees, available for each RDRP.

We are collaborating with NRMS Gulf Savannah and Terrain to implement RDRP actions. FNQROC will facilitate the delivery of a cross-regional water leak detection program. NRMS will deliver region-specific projects and apply for an activity grant to contract FNQROC for the program, allocating \$200K (\$100K from each plan). They will also seek a remuneration grant for FNQROC to oversee and develop an implementation plan.

We are working with the Water Alliance and Procurement Committee to develop a regional tender for water leak detection. A copy of the project plan will be shared with CRTC members.

8.2 Rivers to Reef Climate Resilient Action Plan

8.2.1 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory Project

- Waiting on GHG emissions from Yarrabah, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Councils and final reports from Tablelands Regional Council and Douglas Shire Council.
- Upon gathering all information, we will begin formulating a regional profile.
- Data collection challenges highlight the need for a streamlined process for collating and reporting emissions data.
- Options include subscriptions to external platforms, though integration with existing Council systems and costs may pose barriers.
- Cairns Regional Council can provide insights on methods and systems for capturing and reporting GHG emissions.
- LGAQ Lab offers solutions to technical issues related to data and dashboards, presenting an opportunity to discuss potential solutions for GHG emission monitoring.

8.2.2 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

Due to time constraints for a presentation, council members have agreed to host a webinar to share findings on EV charging stations and discuss the Council's role in facilitating public EV infrastructure.

8.3 Queensland Reconstruction Authority

Funding Updates:

- **QRRRF:** Application for Regional Resilience and Risk Strategy was unsuccessful.
- **NEMA:** Application for Regional Disaster Management was also unsuccessful.

Northern Resilience Program: Douglas Shire, Etheridge Shire, and Hinchinbrook Shire Councils will receive over \$4 million for disaster resilience projects aligned with regional strategies and local action plans.

Recommendations:

- Update local and regional action plans to reflect recent disasters.
- Seek external funding to support these updates.

Additional Updates:

Events Attended:

- *Adapt Land & Sea Climate Adaptation Workshop* (Cairns, 9th August 2024): Provided insights on developing an information tool for decision-makers, with a focus on consolidating existing resources, though accessibility concerns were noted.

- *QCoast2100 Coastal Leaders Workshop*: Highlighted the value of engaging Councillors and Mayors alongside technical staff to promote climate resilience through expert discussions and networking.
- *Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2024*: Showcased the Blue Mountains' community-led resilience initiatives where remote communities collaborated to drive the development of resilience plans. A potential model for remote communities in FNQ, though engagement challenges remain.
- *Climate Systems Hub Webinars*: Topics covered include future impacts of extreme wind and rainfall events.

Upcoming Events & Grants:

1. *Community Energy Upgrades Fund Program (Round 2)* – Opening early 2025, offering co-funding for energy upgrades at local government facilities.
2. *Renewable Energy Purchasing Training* – Hosted by Business Renewables Centre Australia, 14th November 12-2 pm. Council members' support confirmed Action M.6 in the Climate Action Plan, which focused on investigating the potential for regional PPAs.
3. *Disaster Management Scenarios* – For NAMAC and Animal Management Tech Committees, scheduled for November 2025.

6.4 ACTION: *Update Climate Resilience Technical Committee about the implementation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. 6.4a Send a copy of the FNQROC Water Leak Detection Project Plan to CRTC Members.*

6.5 ACTION: *Invite a representative from LGAQ Lab to present their offerings and discuss solutions for streamlining data collection for GHG emission monitoring and developing a regional dashboard.*

6.6 ACTION: *Deliver a webinar on the role of local councils in supporting residents' transition to electric vehicle charging stations.*

6.7 ACTION: *Investigate Regional Power Purchasing Agreements. 6.7a Explore examples of revolving funds where savings from Power Purchasing Agreements and other renewable energy projects finance future mitigation projects.*

9. Round Table Updates

In addition to the below member updates, the following points summarise key discussions throughout roundtable updates.

Discussion Points

- Power Purchasing Agreements (PPAs): Exploring the setup of a revolving energy fund, where savings from PPAs and solar panel initiatives can finance future renewable projects. Inquiry into similar examples from LGAQ.
- Council Electric Vehicle Fleet: Potential to connect fleet staff across Councils. Noted significant costs for substation capacity upgrades. Discussion on Council's role in providing home facilities for staff with company vehicles.

Organisation	Current and upcoming project/s
Cairns Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns Regional Council welcomes a new CEO. • Launch of Cairns and Far North Queensland smart green economy to brand the region: launched website with case studies. There is a working group that meets to progress projects and create opportunities for carbon markets.

Organisation	Current and upcoming project/s
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working on Net Zero Project workshops internally to identify reductions. Looking at what is realistic and investment appetite for net zero by 2050 PPA with clean coast starting in July saving 1.4m over the ten-year agreement. \$600,000 first year in Large Scale Generation Certificates. Making a business case for rolling funds from LSGCs into future renewable energy projects. Reef funding for 5 EVs got 3 so far and 3 charging stations, including capacity building of fleet staff Testing the Electric Vehicles in Councils Fleet. Currently unable to utilise the vehicles due to issues with accessing the Vehicle Manuals. CAFNEC, Terrain NRM, WTMA and FNQROC CRTC presented to Council. The presentations were a success and offered the opportunity for Councillors to hear from external organisations and understand the current climate situation, challenges, opportunities and the leadership role Council plays in the region. Community Liveability survey results highlight top three values: liveability, health care and the environment. Post Jasper - seeking funding to cover new flood modelling and LIDAR for a pilot catchment plan, flooding and coastal hazards.
Hinchinbrook Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate plan under review. New CEO and changes in the executive team. Liveability survey completed; environment ranked lower in priority. Reef Guardian funding secured for solar installations on Council buildings; EV proposal rejected by Council. Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy and Sand Erosion Management Plan endorsed, with funding received, delivery details under negotiation.
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal Council Adaptation Taskforce (C-CAT) is back up and running with Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Townsville, Gladstone, Whitsundays and potentially Hinchinbrook Shire Council. Currently advertising for a C-CAT officer to coordinate the implementation of Coastal Adaptation Actions. The Corporate Plan is up for renewal and there looks to be a pillar for Climate Change actions. Community Liveability survey had Environment coming in around 4th place. Climate mitigation: abatement plan and GHG emission inventory completed. Currently producing 1mW of solar. Investigating other opportunities including using farmland next to water intake solar panels. Fleet: looking at a plugin hybrid first step of the budget process. Also talking to Cairns for direction on the installation of two electric vehicle charging stations. Carbon offset project 1HA + community + first nations kicking off in February 2025. 1HA to be part of the Cassowary Credits pilot. Looking into Reef Credit. Going to local government in November. Investigating options for Power Purchasing Agreements. Adaption and Mitigation: Investigating nature-based solutions to climate resilience.
Tablelands Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate adaptation and environmental priorities integrated into the new corporate plan. Liveability Survey: environment and climate ranked among the top three reasons for residing in the Tablelands. Strategic framework under review; exploring options for quantitative climate change assessment. Climate mitigation: GHG emissions data collected and under review.

Organisation	Current and upcoming project/s
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy management plan in stage 2, with on-site visits to assess water pump efficiency and setup. • Project Reef Guardian: solar panel installations are underway. • Reviewing Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) policy.
Terrain Natural Resource Management	<p>Recently attended the Global Nature Positive Summit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and community resilience: green infrastructure and using nature for resilience if you don't invest in nature, nature will be destroyed. • Piloting nature-led resilience projects <p>Cassowary Credits Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme launched last week after five years in development • Public consultation is now open. • Globally unique biodiversity initiative allowing investors to earn credits for rainforest restoration. • Now investigating investment options to launch pilot projects. • Phase two the focus is on brand alignment.
Douglas Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting a new four-year corporate plan. • New CEO appointment confirmed. • First greenhouse gas emissions reporting round completed; preparing for second-year reporting. • Transitioning to hybrid vehicles, including a hybrid truck; vehicle usage data needed. • Tesla proposed public EV charging installations to Council • Commercial organisation acquiring an electric bus fleet. • Reef Guardian solar project to provide 280kW systems until 2026. • Continuing Cyclone Jasper recovery efforts; awaiting Category D funding. • A new team was established in Disaster Management.

10. Points for noting to the FNQROC Board

- Appreciation to FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee for the support and network.

11. Next meeting

Following dates for CRTC meetings:

- Friday 31st January 2025
- Friday 4th April 2025
- Friday 18th July 2025

12. Meeting Closed

The meeting closed at 2.36 pm.

Minutes prepared by FNQOC Climate Resilience Coordinator – Maria-Helena Anselmo.

ACTION ITEMS

No.	ACTION	Responsible Person(s)
5.1	Develop an FNQROC Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Profile.	FNQROC
5.3	Share LGAQ Facilitated Information Session on GHG Emission Guidelines for EA Applications to CRTC Members.	Attendees to the information session.
5.4	Update CRTC on the LGAQ Request for Quotation to assess the impact of environmental compliance for landfills and waste management in Rural and Remote QLD outcomes.	FNQROC
5.8	Develop a progress report on the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan.	FNQROC
5.9	Develop CRTC Report Card: (i) Council Members update the template with relevant data (ii) draft design of the report card for approval (iii) final report card developed (iv) Investigate options for a reporting dashboard.	FNQROC, CRTC Members
6.1	Determine whether micro-credentials from Griffith University Becoming Climate Ready short course are for individuals or can be awarded to Council organisations.	LGAQ
6.2	Strengthen FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.2a: Invite Queensland Health and health practitioners to join as advisory members. 6.2b: Extend an invitation to Councillors for voluntary nomination to the committee. 6.2c: Request Council CEOs to nominate a Council representative for the committee. 	FNQROC
6.3	Email amended Terms of Reference to Climate Resilience Technical Committee members.	FNQROC
6.4	Update Climate Resilience Technical Committee about the implementation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.4a Send a copy of the FNQROC Water Leak Detection Project Plan to CRTC Members. 	FNQROC
6.5	Invite a representative from LGAQ Lab to present their offerings and discuss solutions for streamlining data collection for GHG emission monitoring and developing a regional dashboard.	FNQROC
6.6	Deliver a webinar on the role of local councils in supporting residents' transition to electric vehicle charging stations.	FNQROC
6.7	Investigate Regional Power Purchasing Agreements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.7a Explore examples of revolving funds where savings from Power Purchasing Agreements and other renewable energy projects finance future mitigation projects. 	FNQROC & LGAQ