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Media Release

Marine ecosystems get a climate form guide

Reference: 09/213

The first-ever Australian benchmark of climate change impacts on marine ecosystems and options for adaptation is being released in Brisbane today.

27 November 2009

The Marine Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Report Card for Australia, and an accompanying website, will provide a biennial guide for scientists, government and the community on observed and projected impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems.

"The objective of compiling this information is to consider options available to environmental and resource managers in their response to changes in ecosystem balance," says project leader, CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship scientist Dr Elvira Poloczanska.

"On both sides of the continent there is clear evidence of ocean warming and this is already bringing sub-tropical species south into temperate waters, and in the case of the giant kelp forests in Tasmania, appears to be having a severe impact in just a few years.

"This research is relevant for anyone with a recreational interest or financial investment in our coasts and oceans," Dr Poloczanska says.

The Report Card highlights observations over the past decade, projects forward to 2030 and 2100 with assessments of likely status and confidence ratings, and offers adaptation responses that can also inform policy makers.

Key concerns include; waters around Australia becoming warmer and more acidic, increases in strengths of major warm-water currents such as the East Australian Current, changes in the productivity of marine ecosystems and shifts in the distribution and abundance of species. The Report Card identifies where change is already occurring, likely trends and confidence levels in those trends depending on the state of knowledge.

66 "The objective of compiling this information is to consider options available to environmental and resource managers in their response to changes in ecosystem balance." Dr Elvira Poloczanska, CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship

The research team comprises scientists from CSIRO, Australian universities, State and territory environmental agencies, the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the Bureau of Meteorology.

Marine Climate Change in Australia







The 'Marine Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Report Card' for Australia. (CSIRO)

Media Resources

- Download the Marine Climate Change **Impacts & Adaptation Report Card** [external link]
- Images available at: Marine ecosystems get a climate form guide

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The Director of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF), Professor Jean Palutikof, says the Report Card reflects both the increased bank of knowledge about impacts, and the responses of government, industry and the community.

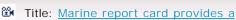
"Australia needs a guide to likely changes in the marine environment and we feel well-positioned now to bring together the science and the latest climate projections to consider options for adaptation," Professor Palutikof says.

Funded by the Australian Climate Change Science Program, NCCARF and CSIRO's Climate Adaptation Flagship, the project is an early outcome of a broader national response to climate change being conducted through the NCCARF.

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benchmark for climate impacts

(Vodcast 27 Nov 09)

Media: Video Size: 10630 KB

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Climate Adaptation Flagship

CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric

Research

Climate Change

Marine Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation Report Card Australia 2009 [external link]

National Climate Adaptation Research Facility [external link]



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