

Victorian Local Government Climate Change Adaptation Governance Assessment



Background

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (Climate Change Policy Branch) engaged the consulting firm Climate Planning to undertake a scoping assessment of Victorian local government climate change adaptation governance. The project aims to assist State Government in building the capacity of Victorian local governments to deal with climate change risks through embedding climate change adaptation considerations in local government organisational governance. The project provides information that will support the implementation of Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020. The project outcomes are also created in a way to also help Victorian local governments better understand how climate change is being considered within their organisation. By identifying councils that are progressing in different areas of adaptation governance it is possible to enhance peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

Why Adaptation Governance?

Climate change is a pressing issue for local government that is already manifesting as a legal, social, economic and environmental risk. Local governments make decisions that span and as such need to be actively assessing and responding to the direct and indirect risks that climate change presents. However, since climate change presents a plethora of direct and indirect challenges that are likely to change over time, it will be impossible to effectively manage the issue in an ad hoc and reactive manner.

Measuring and monitoring indicators for climate change adaptation governance provide a platform for a consistent approach. This allows local governments the ability to monitor and improve their performance over time. Embedding adaptation in Council governance results in formalised and whole-of-organisation approach.

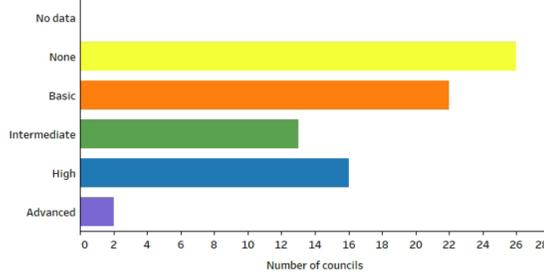
Methodology

The focus of the governance assessment was to identify Council's key publicly available corporate documents and undertake a deeper exploration into how climate change is considered in those governance documents. These corporate governance documents are the key documents that either drive the organisational decision-making or report on the effectiveness of those processes. Climate Planning reviewed the key corporate documents which were publicly available from each of the 79 Victorian local governments. These key documents were assessed against ten core indicators for climate change adaptation governance.

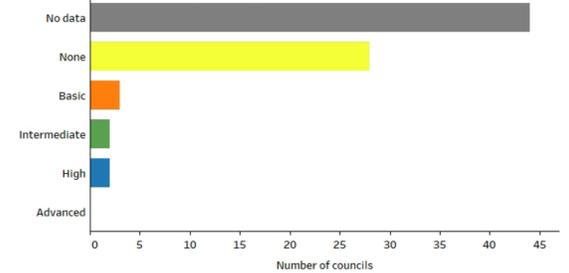
The key corporate documents relevant for each governance indicator were reviewed for words associated with managing climate change (e.g. 'climate change', 'sea level rise', 'adaptation', 'resilience', 'mitigation', 'greenhouse gas emissions', and 'carbon emissions'). If any of these words were identified a closer analysis of the context was undertaken to assess the extent of how they were considered in the document. The documents were then scored using a five-point scale, which has been tailored to each governance indicator.

Distribution of governance scores for Victorian Councils

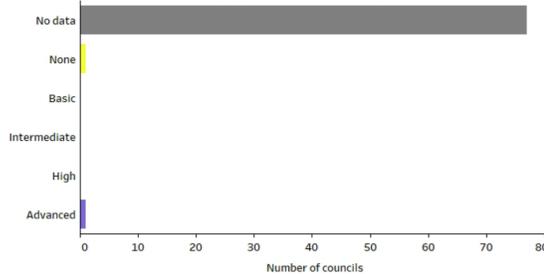
Distribution of Corporate/ Strategic/ Council Plan (#1) scores for Victoria (All) councils



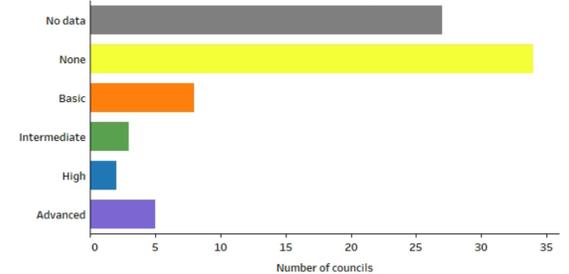
Distribution of Financial Management (#2) scores for Victoria (All) councils



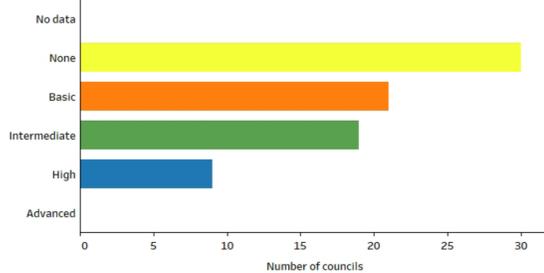
Distribution of Public Risk Register (#3) scores for Victoria (All) councils



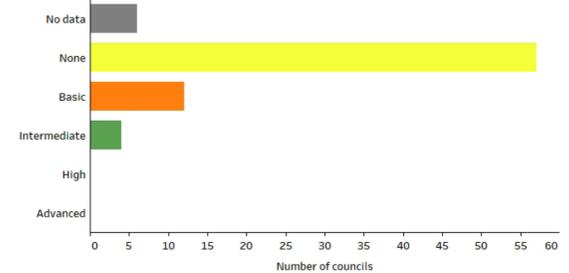
Distribution of Asset Management (#4) scores for Victoria (All) councils



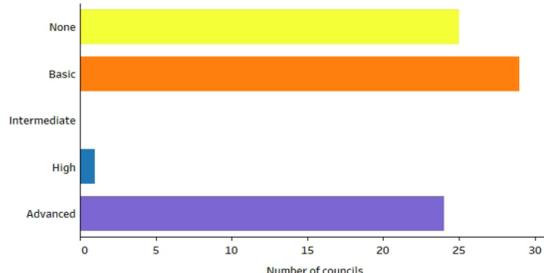
Distribution of Land Use Planning (#5) scores for Victoria (All) councils



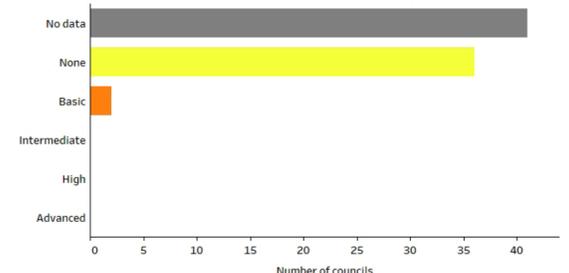
Distribution of Emergency/ Disaster Management (#6) scores for Victoria (All) councils



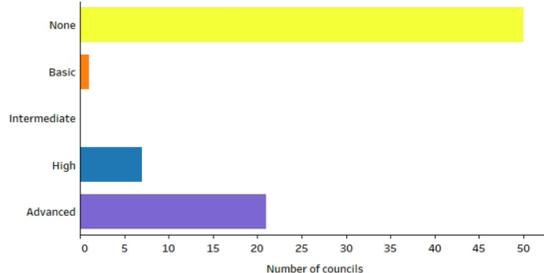
Distribution of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (#7) scores for Victoria (All) councils



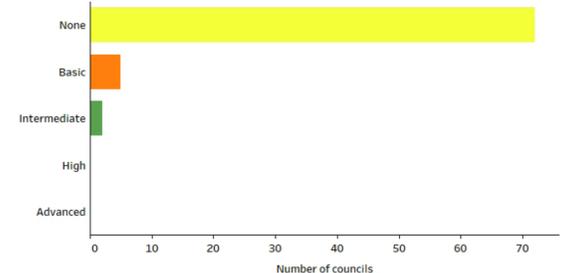
Distribution of Climate Risk Management (#8) scores for Victoria (All) councils



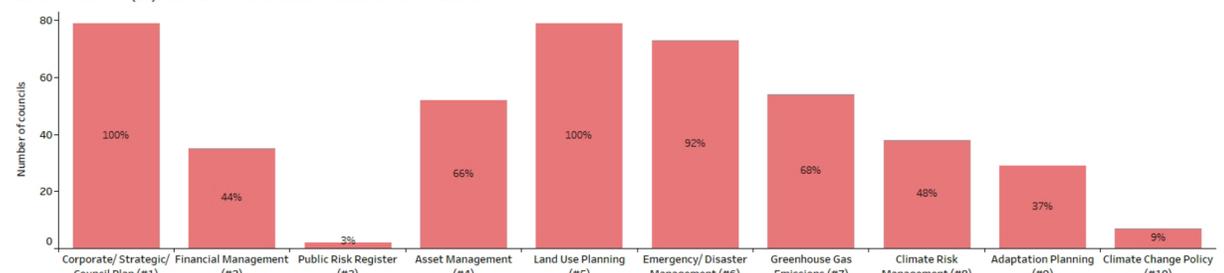
Distribution of Adaptation Planning (#9) scores for Victoria (All) councils



Distribution of Climate Change Policy (#10) scores for Victoria (All) councils



Number of Victoria (All) councils with documents to assess for each indicator



Transparency and clarity of what the council is doing to adapt to climate change improves community trust and enables a whole-of-organisation approach.

Informed.City™

Climate Planning has created the innovative Informed.City™ platform which links big data analytics with climate change adaptation governance. This tool is used to assess the extent of climate change adaptation governance at the National and State level as well as for local governments, State Agencies and the private sector. The visualisations allow for state-wide, regional and local government insights into how climate change adaptation is being mainstreamed into an organisation. Results can be filtered in thousands of ways allowing for informed policy making across a range of scales.