



## **Adaptation of Sea Level Rise to Coastal Urban Planning in Australia**

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**Abstract:** Mitigation of greenhouse gases and adaptation to the possible impacts of climate change have gradually increased in importance in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process in WA since the late 1990s. This paper traces the history of assessment of climate change mitigation and adaptation in EIA in WA, provides case studies of climate change EIA, and describes the constraints that limit the nature and scope of climate change EIA policy. Mitigation rather than adaptation has been the main focus in EIAs in WA, although consideration of mitigation measures has largely been as conditions of approval rather than as central to the assessment of the proposal. The almost complete absence of consideration of adaptation measures is of concern given the large number of projects that have coastal components. This relatively weak EIA policy position on climate change must be seen within the broader context of very weak National and State governments climate change policy context. EIAs in WA are largely project EIAs with few strategic environmental assessments (SEAs), although those SEAs that have been carried out will be covered.

**Summary:** This paper describes and traces the history of assessment of climate change in EIA in WA. Mitigation has been the main focus, with an almost complete absence of consideration of adaptation measures. EIA's policy position must be seen within the broader context of very weak national and state climate change policy context.