

Cape to Cape Resilience Project

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS – Draft Resilience Plan
PROJECT UPDATE #11: June 2025



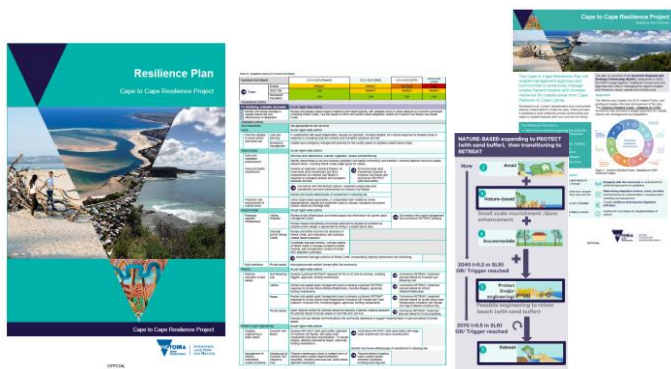
Community Engagement Summary

Following its release in late August 2024, the draft Cape to Cape Resilience Plan has been available for public consultation.

This update provides a snapshot of what we heard during the consultation period. We thank everyone who participated. Community and stakeholder feedback continues to inform the Plan as it moves towards finalisation.

Introduction

Released on 23 August 2024, the draft Resilience Plan is now available on our project webpage and the DEECA Engage Vic platform. Developed over a period of two years, agencies, stakeholders and communities actively collaborated to create the Plan.



Following its release, the public consultation period for the draft Plan ran for seven weeks through to 13 October 2024. We were seeking feedback on the Plan and its strategic approach to long-term regional coastal hazard management from residents, visitors and stakeholders.

Feedback was provided via a tailored online survey and through a formal submission process (via the online portal or direct email to the project team).

In particular, we were gathering perspectives on:

- our **strategic approach** for responding and adapting to changes on our coast, and climate change impacts – this approach has been based on the extensive technical and strategic understanding established through the project
- **specific actions and pathways** identified for different locations in the region, and their suitability / appropriateness in line with our community values
- our approach to working with the Cape to Cape community throughout the project and **how we engaged and communicated**
- **additional actions or feedback** on building coastal resilience in the Cape to Cape communities

We created a supporting document library of the many technical and strategic reports and summaries produced as part of the Cape to Cape Resilience Project

This includes:

- Community Values Study
- Inverloch Region Coastal Hazard Assessment
- Hazard maps
- Risk and Vulnerability Report
- Economic assessments and case studies
- Adaptation framework paper
- Adaptation actions technical assessments
- Tailored coastal hazard factsheets and summaries



The findings from these studies and assessments have been critical to shaping the strategic approach and actions in the draft Resilience Plan.

Head to the **Technical and Strategic Assessment** drop-down on our [website](#) for our full suite of reports.

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Recent storm events

Shortly after the release of the draft Plan, Victoria experienced severe weather conditions. Effects of low-pressure systems and persistent strong winds were felt across the state from 25 August 2024 and lasted for over a week in some areas.

Storm impacts were particularly felt on the Cape to Cape coastlines. Large volumes of sand were moved offshore from the Inverloch Surf Beach, leaving steep erosion scarps and damage to the beach and access points.



While water levels and wave heights were elevated during this period, the conditions experienced were not considered extreme for the Cape to Cape region (equivalent to a ~20% AEP* event). However, the combination of high wave power and energy, and the prolonged storm duration (a week-long event), resulted in significant erosion on Inverloch Surf Beach.

When compared with hazard modelling and extents, the recent erosion experienced was similar to present-day hazard projections for a 10% AEP erosion event.



Impacts seen on the beach

“End effects” of hard protection structures – where wave energy is directed towards the ends of a seawall, eroding and cutting back the beach next to the structure. Both the sandbag wall and the rock revetment at Cape Paterson-Inverloch Road experienced this increased erosion.

New alignment of Wreck Creek mouth – with breakthrough closer to the revetment at Cape Paterson-Inverloch Road bend.

Uncovering of more parts of the *Amazon* shipwreck

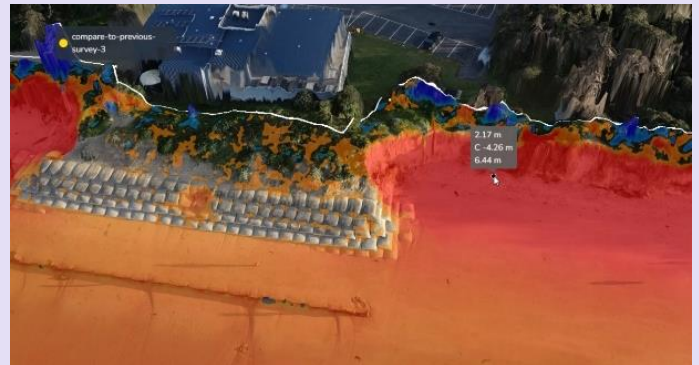
Loss of safe beach access – for people and emergency vehicles.

***AEP** : Annual Exceedance Probability – on average, the probability of an event occurring in any given year

Event response

The Inverloch Coastal Protection Interagency Working Group collaborates on short-term storm event response on Inverloch Surf Beach. Following the storm, sand was moved from Point Norman and placed at Surf Beach - to shore up structures (i.e. the sandbag wall), enhance public safety, reduce asset risks, and reestablish beach access.

Drone monitoring was also undertaken to record changes in sand volumes and understand more about the event.



Elevation survey post storms – where darker red/orange shows greater reduction in sand volumes

Community sentiment

Rapid changes along Inverloch’s coast are confronting and concerning for the community. The storms have reignited hazard resilience as an important local issue, helping to mobilise the Cape to Cape community.

It’s sparked extensive commentary, especially online and in the media. It also prompted a community-led petition with a request for action on Inverloch Surf Beach. With 2,575 hard copy signatures, the report was tabled in Victorian Parliament on 12 September.

We’ve also seen a sharp increase in people visiting our project page, accessing information, reading the Plan and taking part in this recent round of engagement. For many of these people, this was their first involvement in the Cape to Cape Resilience Project to date.

Influence on this engagement

This storm event has significantly influenced the recent engagement period and responses received.

Many respondents provided feedback on recent events, with many responses focussed on immediately protecting the club building and saving the beach. This focus often overshadowed questions on the Plan itself, including details and actions outlined and what has informed decisions made to date.

As we’ve interpreted the feedback, we’ve been mindful of how this may affect the engagement findings. Our synthesis has sought to take on board this important community sentiment, motivated by recent events, and considered how it relates to the draft Plan.

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Approach

How did we engage?

Running from late August to mid-October 2024, the public consultation period for the draft Plan included a range of activities:



An online survey



Formal submissions (via portal and/or email)



Targeted briefing and discussions with a select group of community members on request

We've also been able to learn more about community sentiment and public perceptions through social media, including the Inverloch Community Voice group and local media.

Who did we hear from?

5,896

Page
views

1,790

Unique
visitors

159

Total
contributions

141

Total
contributors

- Almost 1,800 individuals visited our project page during this period, with almost 9% contributing to online activities (survey and/or submission)
- 141 survey responses
- 18 submissions (13 unique individuals / interest group representatives)
- Almost a third of the 141 survey respondents hadn't previously been involved in the project and its engagement.
- More than 70% took the time to read some of the communication material and look at hazard maps.

Visitation numbers compared to previous engagement clearly showed that the storm event and associated community advocacy led to increased participation.

Demographic data gathered through our survey showed:



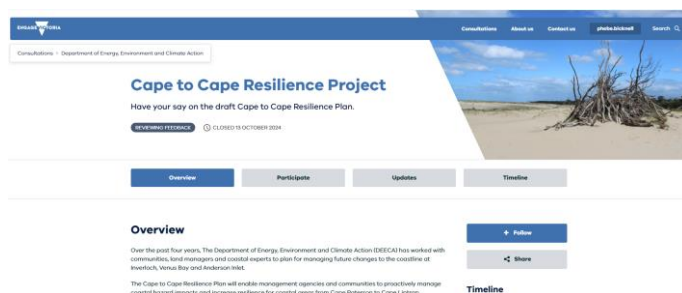
Respondents came from a range of age groups – almost 30% from over 65, and over 20% from 36 – 45 years and 56 – 65 years age groups.



Respondents were predominantly from Inverloch (almost 90%) and lived within 1 km of the coast.



A mix of permanent residents (~70%) and holiday homeowners (~22%), as well as a number of visitors and those with other connections to the region.



What we heard

Findings from the recent engagement have been summarised under the following themes:

- things that were acknowledged / supported
- things requiring further information / clarification
- refinements to the Resilience Plan

Things that were acknowledged / supported

Strong recognition of the importance and value of the Inverloch Surf Beach for the region and its community – from the local economy and tourism, lifestyle, beach and dune ecosystems and habitats through to hazard protection. This reemphasises the need to consider how any adaptation actions may interact with or change the highly valued sandy beach.

The value of this strategic project – improved knowledge, data and understanding at a local level is a positive outcome. This includes tailored models, local monitoring and detailed planning specific for this community and its stakeholders, along with a coordinated approach to the Plan's implementation.

The role of planning in avoiding future hazard risks through updates to local planning schemes and planning controls.

Some appreciation of benefits of nourishment – including retention of the natural aesthetics, the adaptive nature of this action, its benefit to the environment.

Opportunities for the community to play an active role in implementing adaptation actions.

Recognition that there is still more work needed – defining adaptation triggers, retreat approach, detailed designs, funding mechanisms, legal requirements, etc.

The need for clear and simple communication to make this important information accessible to all.

Community feedback and sentiments have a role to play in informing adaptation planning – our approach should reflect the diverse range of views held across the community.

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Things requiring further information / clarification

Further detail on pathways and actions and their technical assessment, including:

- additional information on the various different adaptation pathways and actions considered and how they were assessed
- why the **“Protect”** pathway and large-scale engineering is currently less preferred in the long-term for Inverloch Surf Beach
- what is the **“Retreat”** pathway and how land use transition / retreat could work to benefit the community
- how different actions might change Inverloch Surf Beach and surrounding areas and impact of community values
- what does the long-term look like for the Surf Life Saving Club building, and the Club’s ability to patrol

Engagement approach:

- clarity of the engagement process and how feedback is informing decisions
- greater detail on the engagement reach and diversity of views
- clarity on how we will work with impacted residents

Implementation of actions:

- timing, funding and resourcing for actions

Other feedback

- Frustration in project process, delays in decisions and actions
- Need more urgency in whatever actions are being taken
- Want clear timeframes for next steps where possible

Refinements to the Resilience Plan

- **Inclusion of additional information of an alternate “Protect” pathway at Inverloch Surf Beach**, along with implications (including trade-offs) that come with this pathway.
- **Additional information on the range of adaptation actions considered and how they were assessed**, referencing the technical reporting on action modelling and assessments.
- **Further context on “Retreat” in the Cape to Cape region** including consideration of **alternate terminology (“transition”)** to better convey this response as a well-planned and managed process, and further explanation of **what we can “gain”** from a retreat pathway.
- **Document formatting and editing to enhance readability and navigation of the Resilience Plan document and its accompanying summary.** Including additional summary content, Stage summaries, and intra-document referencing.
- **Further highlight opportunities for community involvement in delivery of pathway actions.** Including refinement of action wording.
- **Extra context of how community feedback has shaped the Plan.**
- **More emphasis that as a long-term plan, review and further work is part of the process outlined within the Plan.** The Plan’s strategic approach is adaptive by design, responsive to monitoring results, cultural, environmental and social changes.

Next steps

We’re now progressing some priority actions in the Plan:

- Progressing **dune enhancement and sand nourishment** at Inverloch Surf Beach:
 - sand sourcing assessment (DONE)
 - detailed design of nourishment (UNDERWAY)
 - funding secured for first stage (DONE)
- Designing and implementing drainage works at Wreck Creek.
- Developing a “planned retreat approach” – this will include more details on triggers, working with community (incl. impacted residents) and local government and funding.

Hearing ideas and perspectives from the Cape to Cape communities remains an important part of this project. We’re incorporating this feedback in the finalisation and continuing refinement of the Resilience Plan.

How can I get involved?

Check out the Plan, technical reports, hazard maps and read our latest updates - Visit the project website at marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastal-programs/cape-to-cape-resilience-project

Ask a question or sign-up to receive updates – email capetocape.project@deeca.vic.gov.au

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We acknowledge Victorian Traditional Owners and their Elders past and present as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters and commit to genuinely partnering with them and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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