

Urgent need for climate change adaptation in Lake Eyre region

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Lake Eyre. Photo from Flickr.

(Phys.org) -- The first stage of University of Adelaide research released today shows that South Australia's Arabunna country, which includes Lake Eyre in the far north, is likely to get both drier and hotter in decades to come.

"Temperatures could increase up to four degrees Celsius in Arabunna country in the next century, threatening the survival of many [plants and animals](#)," says the author of the report, Dr John Tibby from the University of Adelaide's Discipline of Geography, Environment and Population.

"My report suggests that the climate may change in a series of 'jumps' rather than in a gradual manner, hence the need to make plans to adapt to

this risk," Dr Tibby says.

"If the climate does change as predicted it will have major impacts on Arabunna country, its people and culture, meaning they will have to adapt to these changes," says Dr Melissa Nursey-Bray, lead researcher with the University of Adelaide's Arabunna Country Community-Based Adaptation to [Climate Change](#) project.

"To work out how to adapt, a collaboration between traditional owners and university researchers has been established to identify culturally appropriate adaptation options, allowing both Indigenous and Western expertise to help inform the plan."

Mr Aaron Stuart, Chairman of the Arabunna Ularaka Association, says: "Arabunna people live in a vast area and we expect to find a wide range of [climate change impacts](#), such as damage to culturally significant sites from an increase in [bushfires](#) and [dust storms](#), and changes to rainfall could impact upon the supply of bush foods and medicines.

"This process will help my people identify risks to our country and culture whilst helping Western researchers learn from our experience of adapting to change over time," he says.

The initiative is funded by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and will help set standards for climate change adaptation plans that are relevant to Australia's [Indigenous communities](#).

The full Arabunna Ularaka Association has travelled to Adelaide to take part in the formal launch of the research report, Climate Change Projections for Arabunna Population Centres.

The final report will be published in February 2013.

Provided by University of Adelaide

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