

Why did we undertake this study?

The urgency of climate change and its impacts to coastal systems means adaptation is necessary; but there is often tension regarding which adaptation options should be implemented based on social, economic and environmental grounds. Understanding public support for coastal adaptation is critical in addressing barriers faced in transitioning from adaptation planning to implementation. However, there is currently limited knowledge regarding the factors that shape public preferences for different coastal adaptation options.

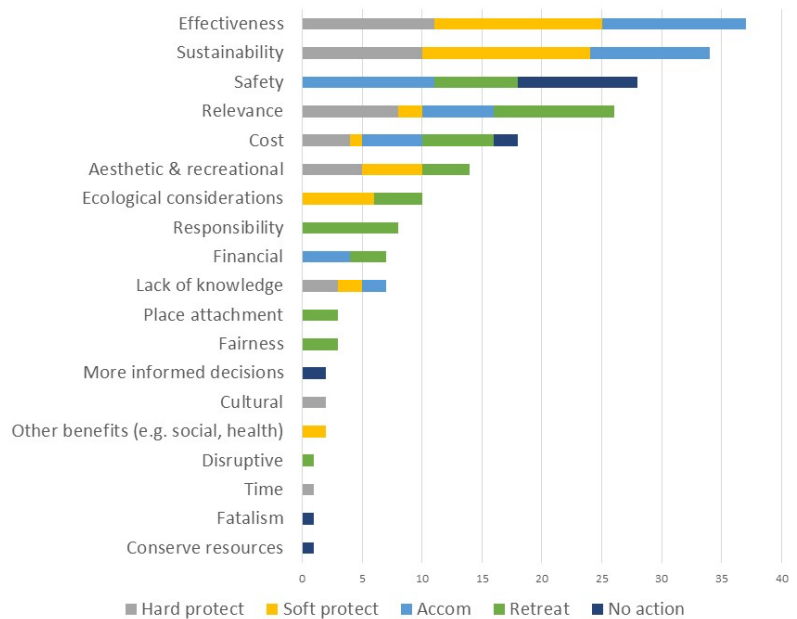
How was it done?

We explored preferences for coastal adaptation and the underlying factors, determinants, and rationales behind those preferences. A questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews in two coastal case study communities (Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia and Shediac, Canada) were undertaken to determine whether the determinants shaping public preferences for coastal adaptation align or differ across contexts.

What did we find?

Soft adaptation measures, specifically soft protection (nature-based solutions) as well as low-impact regulations (e.g. emergency preparation and development restrictions) were highly supported options in both communities.

- There is a decline in public support for hard adaptation options due to concerns regarding their possible maladaptive impacts.
- Residents pragmatically prioritise solutions that are **effective** for their local area with previously reported drivers of adaptation preference such as recreational concerns, costs, political outcomes, and property concerns, less important.
- The ecological impacts of adaptation measures are one of the most important issues for the public when deciding which adaptation measure they will support, on par with efficacy of the adaptation option.



What are the implications?

By examining several drivers for adaptation support simultaneously, this study provide insights into their relative importance. Decision-makers should provide communities with more information on the effectiveness and ecological impacts of different adaptation options to help in their planning. By facilitating community discussion to understand perspectives on effective/sought after outcomes, decision-makers can optimise the advantages and disadvantages of different options in meeting those outcomes.

Want more information?

The full paper is not currently available online. Keep an eye on the project website for updates.

Citation: Mallette, A., Plummer, R., Elrick-Barr, C., Smith, T.F., Blythe, J. (2023). Understanding support for adaptation measures in coastal regions: case studies from Australia and Canada. *Further details forthcoming*

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council Discovery Projects Funding Scheme (Project FT180100652). This work contributes to Future Earth Coasts, a Global Research Project of Future Earth. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Australian Government, Australian Research Council or Future Earth Coasts.



Coastal Governance: Embracing Vulnerability and Change

