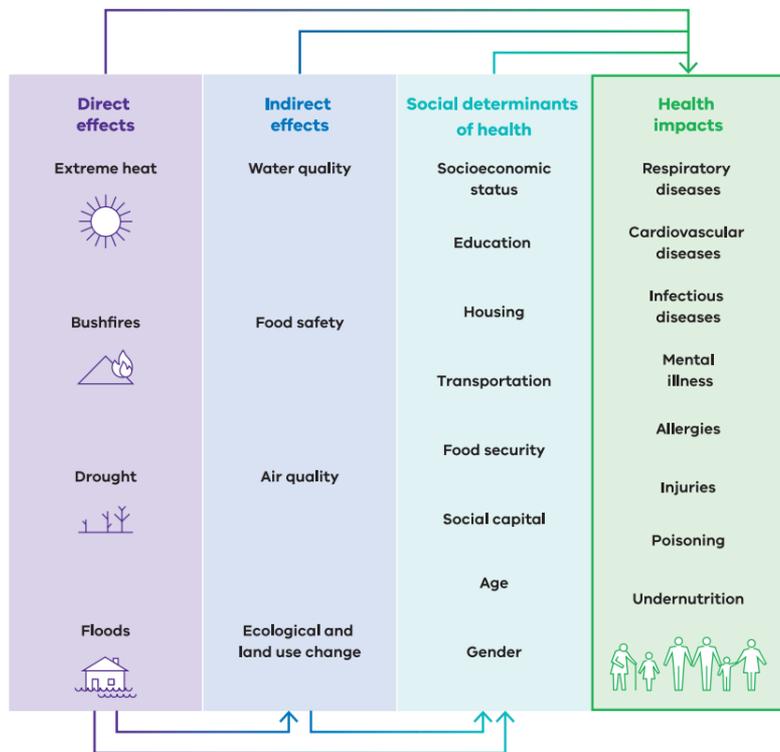


# Equality and health in a changing climate

Victorian context: Government approach to climate change and adaptation action plan

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# Climate change effects on health in a Victorian context



## Examples:

### 2009 and 2014 Victorian heatwave:

- 374 and 167 excess estimated deaths respectively
- 12% and five-fold increase in public hospital emergency department presentations (compared with the 5-year averages)
- Females  $\geq 75$  years of age are more vulnerable to heatwave-related mortality

### 2016–2017 Victorian floods:

- 7.5-fold increase in Ross River virus disease compared with the previous year

### 2019–20 bushfires:

- 125% increase in emergency department presentations with a principal diagnosis of asthma in the week beginning 12 January 2020 for Victoria residents compared to previous bushfire season.
- Strong association between PM2.5 levels from bushfire smoke and female presentations to emergency departments for asthma

# Victorian climate science projections

Victoria is already experiencing the impacts of climate change:



**Decrease**  
in average rainfall



Temperature  
**increase of just  
over 1.0°C**  
since 1910



**Significant  
increase**  
in fire danger  
in spring

Image: [https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0029/442964/Victorias-Climate-Science-Report-2019.pdf](https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/442964/Victorias-Climate-Science-Report-2019.pdf)



## In the future Victoria can expect:

Average annual  
temperature  
increase up to 2.4°C



Double the number of  
very hot days



Longer fire seasons, with  
up to 60% more very high  
fire danger days



Sea levels will rise by  
around 24 cm



More intense  
downpours  
Decline in  
cool season rainfall



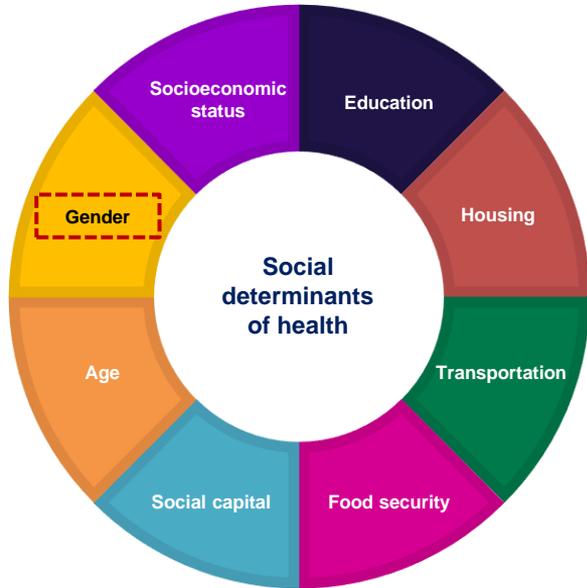
Decline in alpine  
snowfall of 35–75%



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Image: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/tackling-climate-change-and-its-impacts-on-health-through-municipal-public-health-and>

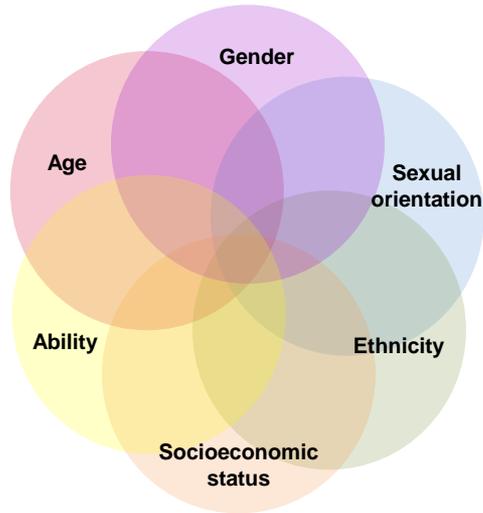
# Gender as a social determinant of health in a changing climate



In addition to biological factors, gender norms, roles and responsibilities also determine one's sensitivity and adaptive capacity to the health impacts of climate change.

The binary conflation of gender and assigned sex can oversimplify the unique health and wellbeing risks that gender diverse populations face in a changing climate.

# Intersectionality in Victorian public health and wellbeing planning



The various layers of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan aligns with:

*Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change*

*Safe and Strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy*

*Korin Korin Balit-Djak: Aboriginal Health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017 - 2021*

*Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32*

# Health and Human Services Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022-2026

Victoria's *Climate Change Act 2017*, provides a legislative foundation for emissions reductions targets.

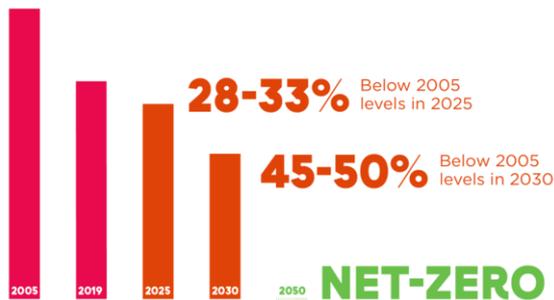


Image: <https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/victorias-climate-change-strategy>

While reducing emissions is critical in limiting the impacts of climate change, it will not prevent it – some degree of climate change is already locked in and Victoria must be prepared to adapt to it.

## Public and stakeholder engagement on climate resilience and health

**H1** Engage the profile and leadership of the Chief Health Officer, and other health professionals and broader trusted voices to deliver a climate change and health engagement program

**H2** Improve the evidence base and monitoring of climate related health impacts now and in the future

## Infrastructure resilience

**H3** Actively manage and reduce climate hazards across the social housing asset base

**H4** Transform the current social housing asset base for improved climate resilience

**H5** Embed climate resilience in new social housing developments

**H6** Transform the health asset base for improved climate resilience

**H7** Develop options to manage the impacts of urban heat on health and social housing infrastructure and health and human services, and reduce health and social housing infrastructure's contribution to urban heat

**H8** Develop options to secure climate-resilient health infrastructure

**H9** Promote cross-portfolio consistency in adaptation processes, assessments, guidance and reporting within the sector

## Sector capability

**H10** Demonstrate organisational leadership in climate change adaptation and risk management actions at all levels and divisions across the departments

**H11** Leverage the Health and Human Services delivery footprint to embed sector-wide climate change adaptation and risk management

**H12** Support embedding of place-based adaptation in Whole of Victorian Government efforts by leveraging the Department of Health and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's roles in precinct and public health and wellbeing planning

**H13** Embed Aboriginal self-determination in our approach to climate change adaptation and seek guidance on Aboriginal adaptation knowledge

**H14** Develop mental health and wellbeing support tailored to climate change impacts

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# Key resources

<b>Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019 – 2023</b>	<a href="https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023">https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023</a>
<b>Health and Human Services Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022-2026</b>	<a href="https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/health-human-services-climate-change-adaptation-action-plan-2022-2026_0.pdf">https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/health-human-services-climate-change-adaptation-action-plan-2022-2026_0.pdf</a>
<b>Victorian Climate Science Report 2019</b>	<a href="https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/442964/Victorias-Climate-Science-Report-2019.pdf">https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/442964/Victorias-Climate-Science-Report-2019.pdf</a>
<b>Victoria's Climate Change Strategy</b>	<a href="https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/victorias-climate-change-strategy">https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/victorias-climate-change-strategy</a>
<b>Sustainability in Healthcare</b>	<a href="https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/environmental-sustainability-strategy-2018-19-to-2022-23">https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/environmental-sustainability-strategy-2018-19-to-2022-23</a>
<b>Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change</b>	<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change">https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change</a>
<b>Safe and Strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy</b>	<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality">https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality</a>
<b>Korin Korin Balit-Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027</b>	<a href="https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-strategies/korin-korin-balit-djak-aboriginal-health-wellbeing-and-safety-strategic-plan-2017">https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-strategies/korin-korin-balit-djak-aboriginal-health-wellbeing-and-safety-strategic-plan-2017</a>
<b>Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32</b>	<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtqi-strategy-2022-32">https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtqi-strategy-2022-32</a>