

## Comparing local government adaptation responses to climate change in Australia and Sweden

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In the first major review of the social dimensions of climate change adaptation, “Adaptation to Climate Change” Pelling (2011) distinguishes between measures that are: a) resilient, b) transitional, and c) transformational. He makes the point that adaptation has been largely concerned identifying “what is to be preserved and what is expendable, rather than what can be reformed or gained” (2011, page 3) and makes a case for seeking social transformation. We take this insight as our starting point. This paper compares the urban local government responses to the challenges of climate change impacts through a comparative study of Australia and Sweden. We consider this comparison to be valid partly because there has been a rich history in Australian public policy studies of inquiries into Swedish policy processes and implementation, notably in social and environmental policy. Such studies have offered insights informed by both the similarities between the nations and as illuminated by their differences. In this case, it is offered that there are a number of Swedish initiatives in this field that are of particular interest in the context of transformational climate change adaptation policy. Local government is of particular importance in climate change adaptation in Australia and Sweden because of the governance responsibilities for planning in this sphere of government, as identified by the IPCC and others. This study will draw on selected case studies from both nations and will extend research by the authors on climate change adaptation in cities in Australia and Sweden.