

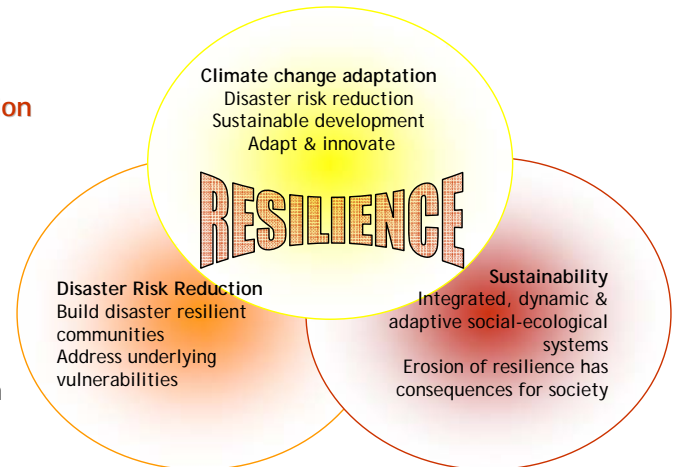
# Supporting community resilience to climate change - the role of policy networks

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## Background

- Fire management draws on principles of **disaster risk reduction & sustainability** and now also, the need for **climate change adaptation & mitigation**
- Central to these 3 drivers is the concept of **social-ecological resilience** - capacity to cope with change, and the ability to build and increase learning and adaptation capacity (transformation)
- Using Victoria as our case study, we are examining how fire management might realise a policy framework that is based in the concept of social-ecological resilience



## Research so far...

**Theoretical attributes** for governance of policy frameworks aimed at supporting resilience in a time of climate change have been identified. Primary is the **need for integration and adaptability** (not new concepts for fire management) **enabled by policy and institutional participation and learning**.

Most research on adaptive and/or integrated fire management has tended to focus on formal arrangements, or on community participation, or on adaptive ecological management. Yet, socio-politics was identified in **our first round of interviews**, as one of the sector's main challenges. In particular, the socio-politics within and between the various agencies involved in the co-production and implementation of policies relevant to fire management.

Even from a public policy perspective, participation and learning is a social process. It therefore depends not only on scientific research but also [to a large degree] on social-relations between the public policy actors within the multitude of organisations involved - the sector's socio-politics.

Hence we are interested in examining the formal *and* informal connections between public policy actors and the sector's socio-politics.

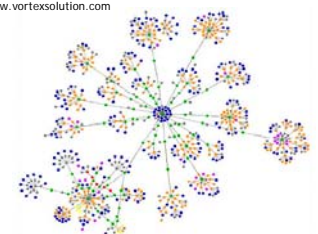
We are currently **gathering data regarding those formal and informal policy networks via a survey**.

## Ongoing & future direction.....

**A second, and larger round of interviews** will aid in exploring how those networks interact with formal institutions and the sector's socio-politics. We will then reflect on how those **interactions may foster or hinder public policy actor participation and, policy and institutional learning**.

We will consider ways in which formal arrangements might support (rather than control) informal networks role in encouraging **participation & learning: key attributes of a sector's adaptive capacity**.

Ultimately, we seek to explore the role of policy networks in helping to realise adaptive governance of a resilience-based policy framework. A framework that aims to support community resilience to climate change.



5,000 particles, each in pursuit of one another.  
Photo by Jared. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/generated/416812/in/photostream/>

If you are involved in or concerned with fire policy in Victoria, and would like to participate, please contact Karyn via [k.bosomworth@student.rmit.edu.au](mailto:k.bosomworth@student.rmit.edu.au)