



THE ADAPTATION GAME

**simulating the next 10 years of climate change in your town,
to help community play, connect, imagine and adapt.**

Acknowledging Country

Today I'm here in Naarm (Melbourne) on the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

I pay respect to elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

I acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded.



Around the world in the last few years

TAG

**Kenya
Flash Floods**



**Brazil
Floods**



**Bangladesh
Heatwave**



**LA
Winter Wildfires**



And just this year...



UK - Heat waves



France and Spain - Wildfires



Nepal - Glacial Collapse



Bangkok - Flooding



The Australian Experience

TAG



Mallacoota 2019



Lismore 2020

Townsville



Second once in a century storm in 6 years



The Gap

“Only 1 in 20 Australians have thought about being prepared and much less have actually done something about it...

...despite almost 80% of Australians thinking being prepared is important”

Jacqui Pringle, Australian Red Cross emergency services division, 2018

TAG



The Gap

“As climate impacts intensify, adaptation action continues to fall behind needs.”

Climate adaptation can no longer be considered a future option but must be seen as one of the greatest priorities for nations and communities worldwide today.”

Adaptation Gap Report 2024: Come hell and high water
UNEP

TAG



Our response: a place based story-telling game

TAAG



Our response: The Adaptation Game

The Adaptation Game is a narrative table-top game simulating climate change where you live.

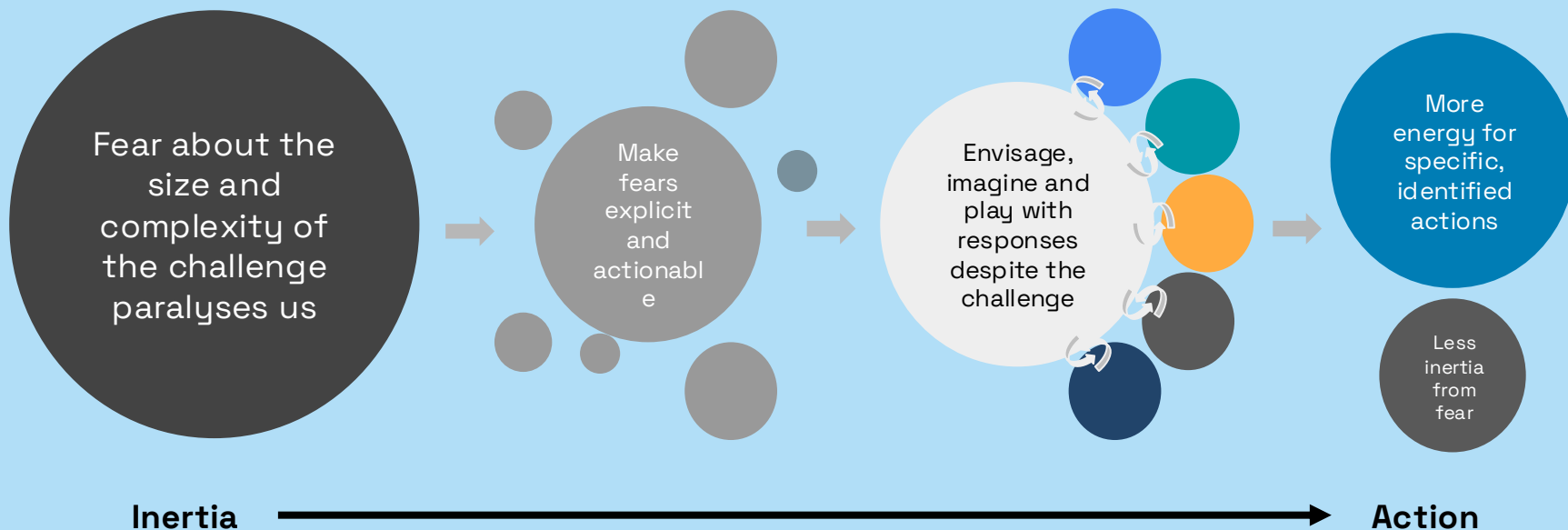
TAG grows knowledge, agency, and connection in those who play.

- TAG uses storyful scenarios that merge local experience with climate science.
- Tables of 4 players engage in guided storytelling, no one needs to be a “gamer” to play.
- Narrative game play increases awareness of local climate risks, resilience strategies and local council programs.
- Community storytelling and shared sense-making increases agency, both individually and in connection with others.



Imagination as preparation

TAG seeks to mobilise the **persuadables**: people who know climate change is real but feel a lack of agency. **TAG** deals with individual and community scale adaptation, helping people imagine and build the world we need now. **TAG** is designed for ongoing community-led impact through repeat play.



Maps



TAG players create stories worth sharing



TAG aims to support social storytelling to mobilise communities to build climate resilient futures. Playing **TAG** creates narrative knowledge that travels, as data, or as media to increase its impact and reach.



Our short documentary, *TAG: The First Game*, shows you how players feel during and after play.



Our friends at City of Whittlesea made this sharp 2-minute explainer video about TAG.

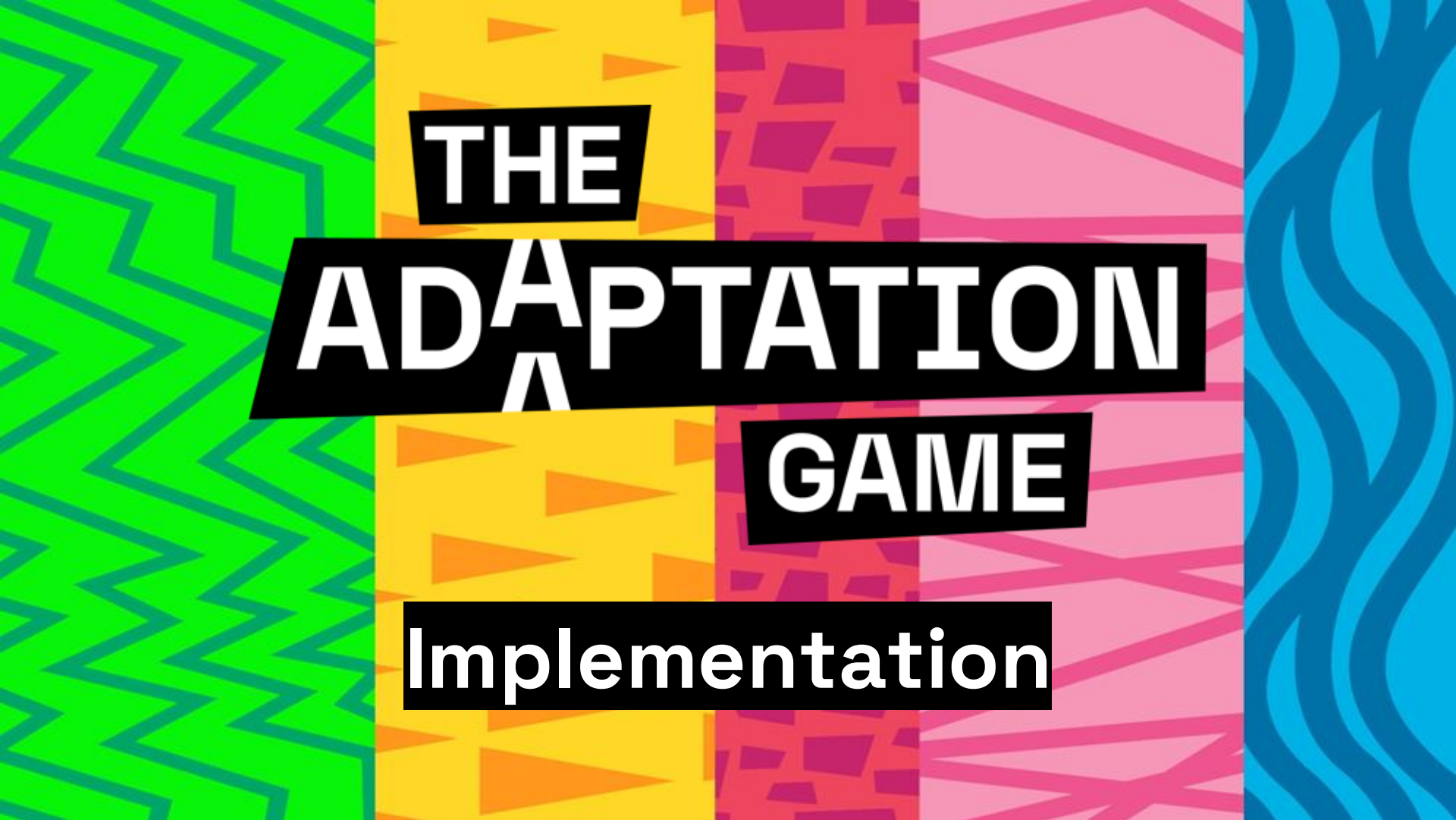
Click on an image to watch the video

Continued growth and learning



We are working with a diverse group of local governments (40+ and counting), across various stages of the TAG lifecycle, learning valuable lessons along the way.





THE ADAPTATION GAME

Implementation

The lifecycle of TAG in your community

How local governments build towards sustainable impact from TAG



Phase 1: Design

- Create your localised TAG game kit
- Bring in your key stakeholders and community partners
- Train your people to run TAG
- Plan your Pilot and Launch



Phase 2: Pilot

- Run one or more community events
- Document the events to create reusable media and data
- Evaluate what works when using TAG in your area



Phase 3: Launch

- Communicate broadly that TAG is ready to play
- Create a hub where people can find games or borrow kits
- Run regular sessions, and support community-led games



Phase 1

TAG works with councils and stakeholders to **adapt and embed TAG** as an ongoing capability.



Localisation

You give us your best knowledge about resilience and emergency preparedness in your area, and we create a version of TAG that's **tailored for your community**.



Play, Test & Training

We run your unique version of TAG for your team and selected stakeholders, gather feedback, and **train your people** to become TAG facilitators.



Pilot & Launch Planning

We support you to **plan your first community events** and launch, ensuring TAG makes a strong debut in your area.

After Phase 1, you're ready to go! **We're available to support** your pilot and launch as needed.

Phase 1 - Timeline



Localisation

TAG team localise TAG

Short remote consultations (zoom and email):

- Gather key climate and resilience data to be used to customise the game for the local council area.
- Identify and recruit internal stakeholder team and discuss aims and design for Play & Plan, Training, and beyond.



Play & Plan Workshop

TAG team leads half day workshop

- Play TAG with with 1-2 tables (4-8 people, 4 per table)
- Facilitated debrief to refine the game, and begin pilot & launch planning
- This game experience prepares players for facilitator training.

Workshop Agenda (Indicative)

10:00 : Start
 10:15: Intro + Round 0
 11:00 : Flexible break
 11:15 : Round 1 and 2
 12:30 : Flexible lunch
 13:15 Round 3 and 4
 14:30 Debrief
 15:00 : Close



Pilot & Launch Planning

TAG team supports engagement planning

- Opportunities for internal engagement and additional facilitator training
- Preparing for a sustainable community rollout
- Using media and communications to amplify the reach of TAG game sessions



THE ADAPTATION GAME

Site experiments and early impact

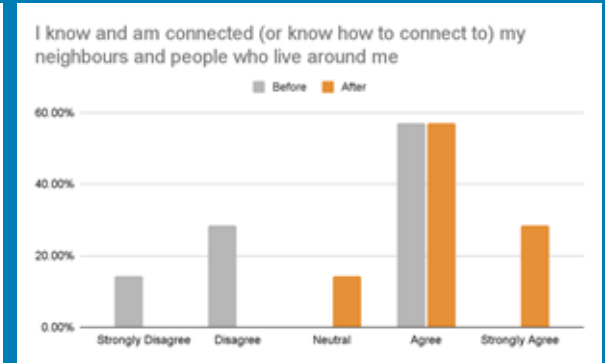
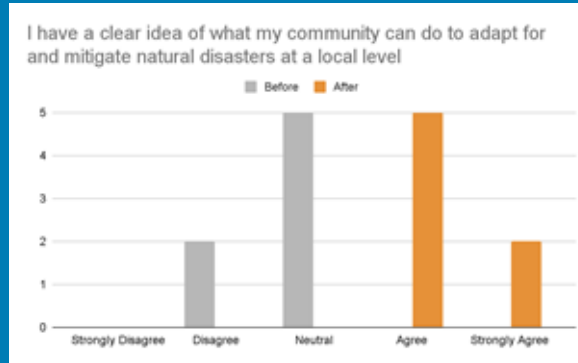
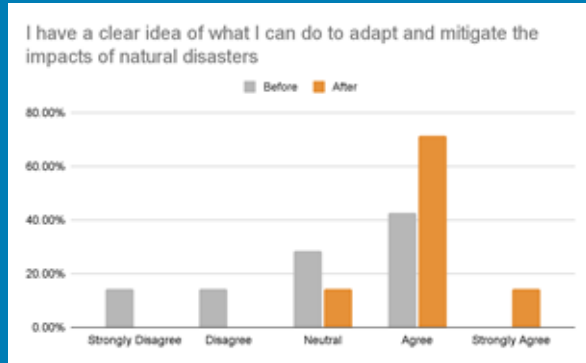
TAG Impact

In **TAG** Bendigo's first community session, 16 players spent 5 hours with us, learning deeply about their own resilience journey, and debriefing with us after the game.



Big changes in player mindset before and after

Players showed an increased understanding of what to do to plan for and mitigate impacts of natural disasters, as well as an increased connection to their community.



The game showed a change in perspective for players in feelings toward climate change induced natural disasters, especially:



Decreased feelings of:
Anxiety (71% -> 0),
Overwhelm,
Despair & Anger

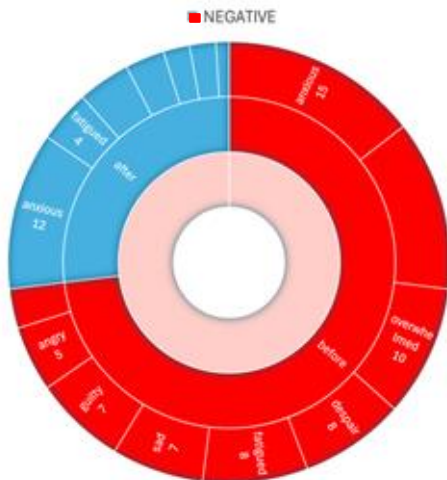


Increased feelings of:
Compassion,
Empowerment

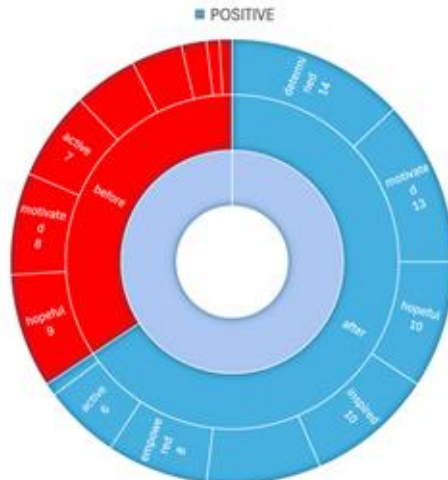
More results, from Merri-bek

27 participants across 7 tables, before and after playing TAG

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE RIGHT NOW?



BEFORE



AFTER

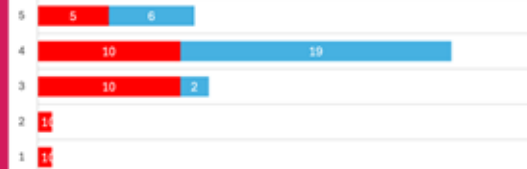
I KNOW MEANINGFUL THINGS I CAN DO THAT WILL HELP MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

■ before ■ after



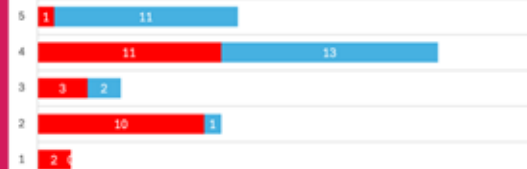
I KNOW MEANINGFUL THINGS MY COMMUNITY CAN DO TO ADAPT THAT WILL HELP MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

■ before ■ after



I HAVE AN IDEA OF LIKELY CLIMATE IMPACTS IN MERRI-BEK (LGA)

■ before ■ after



TAG as an ongoing community resource



Roll out works with local partners activating existing strengths to deliver shared-value and impact.



TAG in Councils

TAG can be expanded as a game for council teams. In Yarra Ranges more than 50 senior leaders attended a day workshop, role playing through near future climate scenarios to build empathy, and a shared vision across the organisation.





Ben Pederick



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Participatory storyworld building for unlocking climate adaptation

Benjamin T. Pederick^{a,b,*}, Martin Potter^a, Hailey Cooperreider^a, Sidney Ikonis^a, Donna Luckman^a, Rebecca Dahl^a, Mark Elliot^a, Trish Cave^a, Jason Tampake^a, Brett A. Bryan^a [Show more](#)

[View PDF](#) [Download full issue](#) [Cite](#) [Add to Mendeley](#) [Share](#) | 10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2025.103054

Article Recommended articles Cited by (4) Metrics

Highlights

- Communities worldwide are dangerously unprepared for projected climate risks.
- Storytelling can help reduce the socio-political barriers to climate adaptation.
- We introduce climate storyworld building as a participatory, transferable method.
- We co-produced place-based climate storylines using narrative downscaling.
- Method is now being used to support climate adaptation in 19 communities.

Abstract

Worldwide, local communities are experiencing increasing climate change impacts, for which they are underprepared, and which are predicted to further intensify into the future. Closing this knowledge action gap in local climate adaptation is a socio-political challenge, requiring social science solutions. Recognising the strategic value of local governance actors, we prototyped an innovative participatory storyworld building method with local

Outline

- Highlights
- Abstract
- Keywords
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Methods
- 3. Results
- 4. Discussion
- 5. Conclusion
- CRediT authorship contribution statement
- Declaration of competing interest
- Acknowledgements
- Appendix A. Supplementary data
- Data availability
- References

[FEEDBACK](#)

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Reading Assistant

TAG has won an award !

We are honoured to have recently won a Resilience Australia, Local Government award for our work with Merri-bek Council.



Ready to **try** TAG in your organisation?

Send us a message at tagclimatedrill@gmail.com



Ben Pederick
GMB films



Rebecca Dahl
Amble Studio



Hailey Cooperrider
Amble Studio



Logan Timmins
Amble Studio



Jason Tampake
Amble Studio



Kiri Bear
Amble Studio



Sidney Icarus
Wax Wings

www.tagclimatedrill.org

With thanks to



Merri-bek
City Council



DEAKIN
UNIVERSITY

Collabforge



Please stay in touch

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In Naarm (Melbourne) I live and work on the traditional lands of the Kulin nation and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship of land, water and sky. Sovereignty has never been ceded. I pay respect to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all traditional owners, custodians and ancestors of the many lands around the world, in whose footsteps we follow, and from whose example we have much to learn.