

Policy responses to climate change in the Australian tourism industry: The case of Canberra, ACT

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Abstract

Climate change and its expected impacts will affect many, if not all, areas of human activity over time. While much work has been done on the science of climate change (e.g., Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018), the study of the impacts and possible responses for the tourism industry is less well-developed (e.g., Prideaux et al., 2016).

This gap is important because the impacts of climate change – rising temperatures, changes in rainfall and shifts in rainfall patterns, as well as the expected manifestations of these make tourism a business sector likely to be particularly vulnerable (Weir & Dickson, 2012). Further, much of the current research has been done in iconic and particularly vulnerable destinations, such as ski resorts (Scott, 2016) and small tropical islands (Belle and Bramwell 2005). Little work has been done on developing policy responses for destinations more representative of the broader tourism industry – destinations of moderate size in temperate environments also facing climate change.

This thesis investigated this gap in such a destination, Canberra Australia, aiming to illuminate more broadly how the Australian tourism industry could respond to climate change. The research identified insights related to possible lessons from the past, the connections between climate change adaptation and sustainability, policy and organisational decision-making, and the importance of organisational role and placement in considering climate change and possible responses.

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'Everywhere you go,
Always take the weather with you,
Everywhere you go
Always take the weather,
Everywhere you go
Always take the weather with you
Everywhere you go
Always take the weather'

Neil & Tim Finn, *Weather with You*

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my grandchildren:

Sofia, Sebastian, Siena, Charlotte, Leroy, Lachlan and Audrey