



# The rise of disaster risk reduction: Contemporary thinking on climate and disaster risk

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# Current Context

We are experiencing the effects of a changing climate today



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# Current Context

Seeing beyond the present day



**John Blackburn:** [bit.ly/DisasterRiskVideos](https://bit.ly/DisasterRiskVideos)

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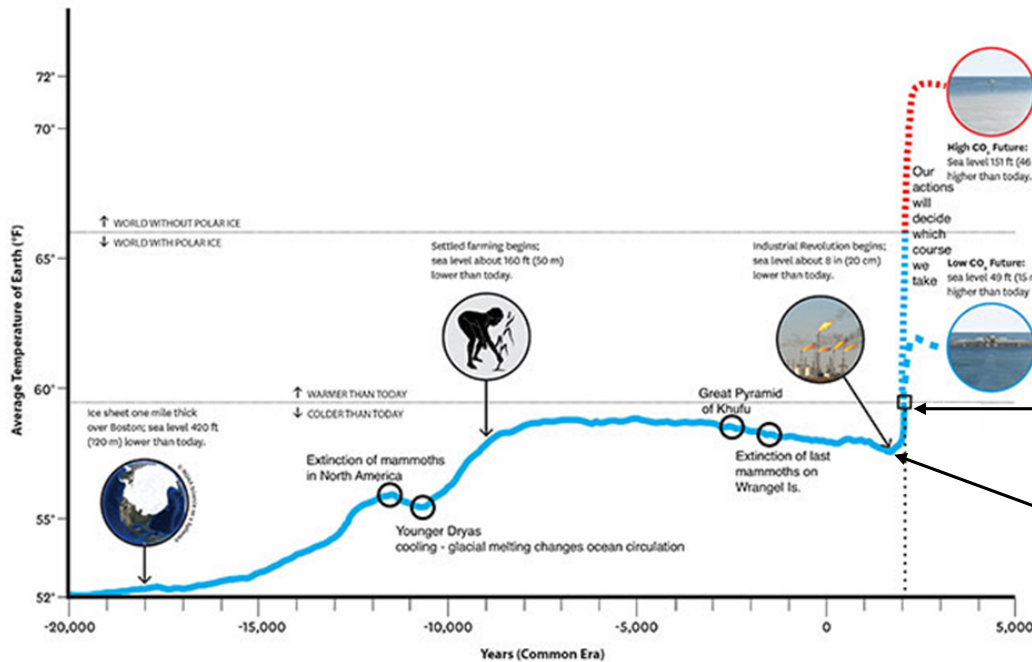
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# Current Context

Visualising the rate of global temperature change over time

 **Global Temperature**  
Since the Last Ice Age



**Our actions will decide which course we take**

**■ We are here**

**Industrial Revolution begins**

Paleoclimate timeline:  
Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/paleoclimate-timeline/>

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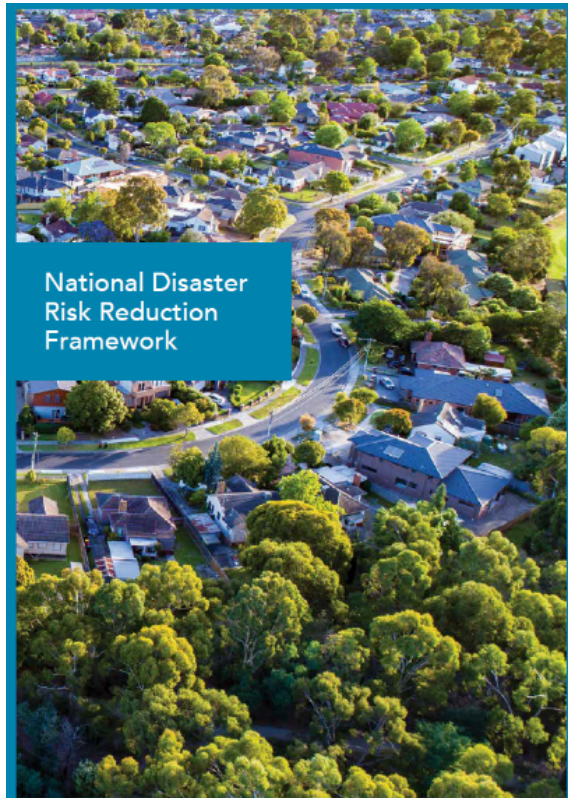


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# National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework

A new agenda



*“In changing how we think about disasters and working together, we can take action to be better prepared and more resilient for what ever comes out way”*

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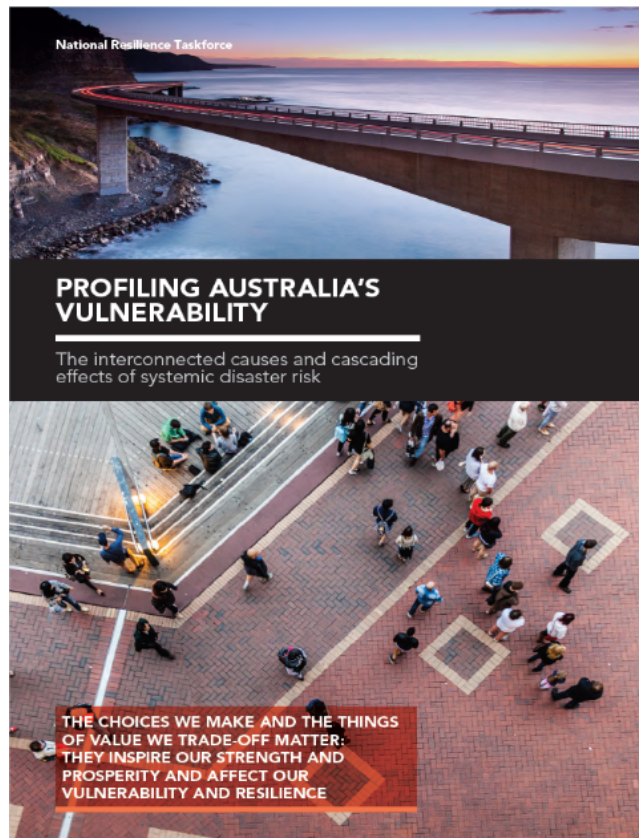


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# Changing how we think

What makes us vulnerable when severe to catastrophic events impact what people and society value?



- Severe to catastrophic events are inevitable
  - We do not need to know where or when events will manifest in order to be better prepared nationally
- In most instances, disasters are not 'natural'
  - We need to inquire 'why' and 'how' do naturally occurring events lead to devastating suffering and loss.
- Understanding disaster risk is more than understanding hazards
  - Vulnerability is the least understood dimension of disaster risk.

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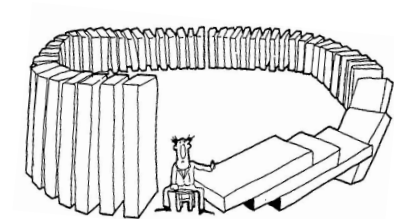


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# Understanding systemic risk

A big picture view that we can all relate to. All levels. All sectors. All communities.



In complex systems, cause and effect are often distant in time and space

Source: Karlnorth.com

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# Stories of the lived experience

Experiences of disaster and recovery



**Michael Jenkins & Mary and Paul Clark:** [bit.ly/DisasterRiskVideos](https://bit.ly/DisasterRiskVideos)

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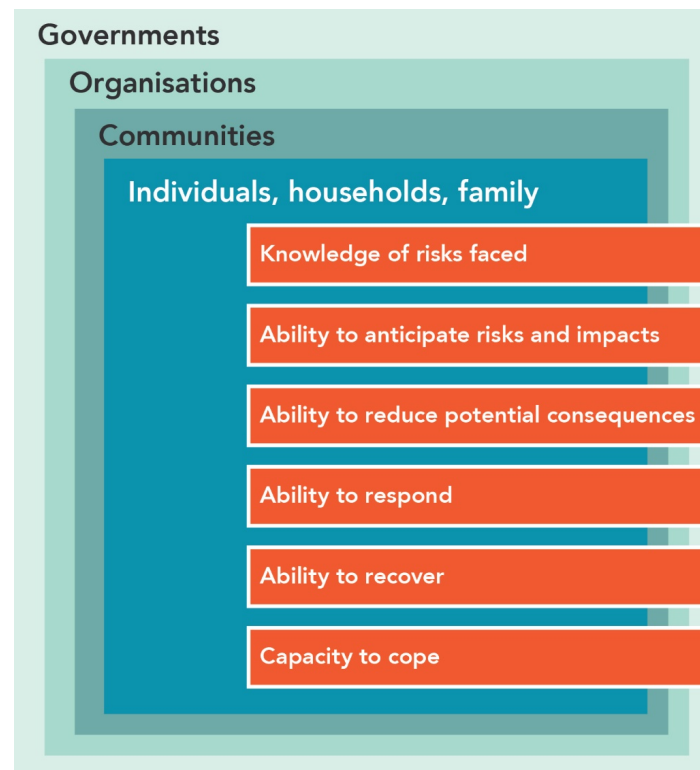
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# Responsibility is not equally shared

Decisions and trade-offs create systemic vulnerability



- There are limits to the ability of individuals and communities to reduce their vulnerability
- Some groups in society have disproportionate power to increase or reduce vulnerability, while others are disproportionately vulnerable
- Understanding the cycles and points where our individual and collective capacity to cope reach its limits, can provide clues for points of intervention.

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# Stories about systemic vulnerability

Typical patterns that can apply to a range of places or contexts



“Vulnerability sounds like truth and  
feels like courage...

Vulnerability is not weakness. And that  
myth is profoundly dangerous.  
Vulnerability is the birthplace of  
innovation, creativity and change.”

- Brene Brown

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# Values

A big picture view that we can all relate to. All levels. All sectors. All communities.



- People value things differently in stable times and in the face of disaster
- All values cannot be satisfied at the same time and trade-offs are made
- People value the processes in society that keep them safe and prospering

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# Navigating the journey ahead

2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction



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# Navigating the journey ahead

## What we've learned

- Systemic vulnerability needs to be addressed
- Better decision making is key to preventing and reducing disaster risk
- Equip decision makers with the right knowledge
- A suite of options is needed to address disaster risk
- Recognise the connections between disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and sustainable development



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# Foundations for catalysing action

Turning the page: reducing systemic climate and disaster risk



# Thank you

*“The future is not pre-determined in any important sense.*

*It is not an unknown land into which we totter unsteadily one day at a time, but an extension of the present that we shape by our decisions and our actions.*

*The future is not somewhere we are going but something we are creating.*

*We all have a role in shaping Australia's future”*

Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe



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