

**Subject:** Submission to Extreme Weather Inquiry

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As a counsellor I am particularly concerned about the impact of severe climatic events on people's mental health and resilience.

It is imperative that Australia become a leader in cutting our greenhouse gas emissions as well as investing in ways to mitigate the effects of climate change.

If, as predicted, we have increasingly devastating fires, floods, cyclones and severe storms, the resulting damage costs will be beyond insurance and government purses. It is far more effective to prepare, both to bring down emissions by developing our green economy and by making sensible decisions about future development and ways to protect existing property. As well we need to encourage people and businesses to move from highly vulnerable areas.

Once disaster has struck, it is far more difficult to deal with resulting human stress than it is to prepare and to develop more sensible policies.

Sincerely yours, Patricia Asch

Patricia Asch