

I am concerned at the slow response to what is now clearly a climate emergency. In addition to increasing dire predictions by scientists there is now substantial experiential evidence of a level of change that threatens not merely our way of life but the survival of humanity itself.

In the last three years I have been forced to leave my home several times under threat of bushfires (twice in the last week). In the previous 25 years of my current residence I have not had to leave my home once. Things have changed for the worse, and quickly. The insurance companies factor in this new reality which poses the question as to why our government is so slow to take more determined action than is so far evident.

At sixty nine years of age I am old enough to not feel great concern for myself. But I have grandchildren; and I want not only for them to survive, but to have a future worth surviving for.

I believe in democracy and that all views (even those of climate sceptics) have a right to be heard. However, it is clear that the democratic process has been hijacked by wealthy vested interests unwilling or unable to look beyond the desire for profit.

Responsible decision making on climate change demands that environmental and social needs be made the context for economic development.

I urge that the committee break the cycle of procrastination that has bound us to economic priorities that are not only no longer relevant, but now stand to threaten our very existence.

It is time - indeed, well overdue - that our government does all in its power to legislate a context for economic activity that is environmentally and socially responsible. In other words, investment (particularly bank loans) must be required to be conditional on environmental and social impacts.

Our government must act now; decisively and with the courage stand its ground against vested interests that threaten our capacity as a nation for timely response to the global challenge of climate change.

Anything less is tantamount to collective suicide in the long term.

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