

Subject:

Submission to Extreme Weather Inquiry

I live on a small farm bordering Cape Bowling Green national park in Townsville. We live through bush fires and recently Cyclone Yasi which destroyed nearly 30% of our fruit trees. My husband and I are both aware and concerned about the impact of climate change on the environment in the loss of biodiversity through extreme heat and bush fires and the impact on humans in the future.

With rising sea levels I had to sell my home in Railway Estate in Townsville because high tides were inundating the garden by up to half a metre with salt water. (You don't need to visit Kiribati Islands to witness rising sea levels) Most of Townsville is built on low lying river flats and will be directly affected by sea level rises. I lived in my house in Railway Estate for 15 years and when the fish were swimming in the gutters outside my house I thought it was time to move on. The irony of climate change is as the overall temperatures increase so people flock to air-conditioning thus making the situation of energy consumption worse. I have witnessed the increase in sea levels with my own home and garden and also the devastating damage that bush fires create having to take a week off work in 2011 to fight fires threatening our property.

The Queensland Premier Campbell Newman needs to learn some science and not tell people that the current heat wave conditions are not related to climate change. A person in his position needs to be more responsible. Perhaps he could do a climate science course for ignorant politicians? With his cuts to all service areas including nursing staff how are the already stretched emergency services going to deal with another Cyclone Yasi? When we have the next disaster there will be a huge deficit of professional people to assist. Already the two cyclone shelters in North Queensland were built with donated funds from the Arab Emirates. Campbell Newman opened them as if he was personally responsible. They will only shelter 800 people max in populations of 200 000. It is reprehensible how the QLD government has put the population in such danger. Closing down the Quarantine and Biological Research station in Townsville creates another risk with lack of direct information on North Queensland issues. This is not a diatribe against a new government but genuine fright at the destruction of emergency services.

I try not to feel despair as I bear grass roots witness to changes in the climate and environment but the ideology of growth at all costs will ultimately cost us and all other sentient beings our lives.

Sincerely
Lindy Collins