

Submission to Extreme Weather Inquiry

Dear Senate committee,

I have 30 years experience as a Registered Nurse.

Global warming will have a disastrous effect on public health. Once tropical diseases will migrate to the sub-tropical and even the temperate climate zones. Qld has already had multiple scares with increased outbreaks of Dengue Fever - and Dengue Fever, Ross River Virus (as well as other tropical diseases) will only continue to migrate further south into other parts of Australia.

We must also expect to see major outbreaks of mosquito- borne infections including Malaria, Murray Valley encephalitis, etc. It's entirely possible that we could see major outbreaks of tropical diseases thought to be non-existent or eradicated in Australia.

This will have great impact on health - with far more people suffering serious debilitating diseases, far greater hospital treatment costs, and great impact on the workforce with increased sick leave.

The public health system is struggling to cope with demand already due to population growth and govt funding cutbacks - these added burdens will only increase demand for health services, and blow out the health budget even more.

We have seen some disastrous weather events cause major problems - e.g. the floods that covered most of Qld and the recent bushfires in several states concurrently. These events are only set to get worse and more frequent. With a relatively small population, and thereby small tax income (in comparison to more populated countries), Australia does not have the finances to keep outlaying millions and billions of dollars on disaster recovery projects.

I remember very clearly when Brisbane's dams had dropped to a mere 17% of capacity and we were on severe water restrictions. Once the dams drop below a certain level the water in your household tap become muddy - many of us thought we would end up drinking mud from our taps. These memories still haunt myself and most Brisbane-ites, causing us to still have brief showers and limit our water use.

Climate change is a serious issue and state and federal governments are not doing enough. The best way is PREVENTION. And the way to do this is to invest heavily (Billions of dollars) in renewable energy projects and reduce use of fossil fuels.

Phil Browne