

18 Aug 2025

Submission regarding the algal bloom in South Australia.

I'm writing on behalf of my Human.Kind and Salty Sips communities, located in Glenelg, Henley Beach and the City. In total we engage in various ways with over 43,000 South Australians each year. We are a health and wellness studio very much engaged in intersectional health of humans, society and ecosystems. The discussions in our studios have been ones of sadness, grief, numbness around the loss of life, loss of future, and in some ways the loss of innocence / ignorance around climate collapse.

This toxic algal bloom and the lack of appropriate scale state and federal governmental action have real world impact on a huge swathe of the communities mental and physical health. One of Adelaide's biggest assets is, or perhaps was, the long expanses of clean, clear beaches and crystal clear waters. Many of our members include beach walks, ocean swims, surfing as part of their weekly healthy lifestyle. This has been cut to almost naught in the space of six months with no sign of recovery. I myself am /was a regular surfer on the mid-coast. I haven't been back in the water since February for fear of respiratory irritations and just the deep sadness of knowing that everything below the water is suffering.

Salty Sips is a weekly free yoga session on the beach, followed by a swim and social coffee at local cafes. It has been running for over 5 years and is by far the largest such event in Australia, often numbering over 600 attendees each week in summer, and over 200 in winter. This population skews to the younger, 18-30 age group. Our last couple of events we've had to suggest that people don't swim for risk of health issues and our obligation to keep people well. What a bloody sad thing that is for a much loved community health event! And for a group of young people to see that the climate and ecosystem failures, and loss of their future, have arrived on our shores.

So I write to say that this is not an economic issue for us, but a psychosocial impact on the health of our members, staff and broader community. The vibrancy of our natural places is deeply intertwined with sense of safety, abundance, connection, meaning, place, hope, and future. Our members have articulated that to us clearly, but it is a universal experience, throughout human history.

Our Human.Kind and Salty Sips communities would like to see this treated as the severe natural disaster that it is, with federal government funds released to support the science. And then, crucially, for the federal government and particularly Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt, to be rapidly moving Australia with that science towards an evidence-based approach and global leadership role on climate change, biodiversity loss, waterways care (Murray Darling), fossil fuel phase out (including exports) and native forest loss. These are all interlinked and each have had direct impact on what we're now experiencing here as the toxic algal bloom. But we it shows up elsewhere in Australia as floods, droughts, fires, or species extinction.

This doesn't need industry band-aids for local fisheries and cafes. It needs systemic change to the way Australia governments at all levels care for the ecosystems that *all* industry, and *all* people, depend on for survival and prosperity.

We request the committee consider this inquiry through the lens of human and non-human health rather than economics.

These are all public health issues before they are economic issues. And without a serious shift of priorities I fear for our communities physical, psychological and social well-being both now and into the future.

Thanks for your time in reading this. I'm happy to speak to any of this publicly should it be required.

Sincerely,

Triton Tunis-Mitchell  
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