



THE SENATE
SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
REFERENCES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the implications of climate change for Australia's national security
Public Hearing –Tuesday, 20 March 2018
Questions on Notice
Department of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

1 PROOF HANSARD, pp. 8–9, 11

Senator FAWCETT: ...Rather than to have three or four different answers on notice, perhaps the various departments could actually talk together in terms of providing a supplementary submission talking about what work you're doing in the space of alternative fuel sources, their suitability for rapid development and deployment in the event of disruptions to our liquid fuel supplies, including, from Defence's perspective, as the owner of the platforms, their suitability for use in current or near-generation platforms.

...

Senator FAWCETT: [Inaudible] asked the question about whether we should give some more guidance for their answer on notice. I want to make a very quick comment on the scope of what I would love to see from the combined agencies. Rather than a generic 'big hands, little map' answer about generalities, I'd love to see an answer that is fairly specific. For example, at the moment we know that you can take a modern gas turbine powered aircraft and put diesel in it. It decreases engine life and the performance suffers a bit, but we know we can do it in an emergency. In World War II, with very simple engines, we could very quickly adapt charcoal and gas producers to put on the front of cars and trucks. Can we do that for our modern Bushmaster type vehicles and other things? With any of the fuels and alternates, whether it be hydrogen or other things, how quickly can we adapt it, if it indeed is at all possible? That's the kind of response I'm looking for, so I understand what priority we need to place upon either investment in adaptation technologies or investment in liquid fuel security to make sure our current platforms remain useable in the foreseeable future.

ANSWER

The Department of Environment and Energy (DoEE) is leading the inter-departmental response for this question.

Senator MOORE: I have only one other question. I know Senator Whish-Wilson has more questions about the humanitarian stuff. I want to go a little bit into the international liaison, in that these issues aren't just for Australia; they're international. I want to know how we link in with other international organisations, such as CHOGM, which I know has a climate change agenda in its space; the Pacific forum, which I know has a climate change agenda in its profile; and also looking at national security. That could well go on notice. But I'm really interested to see how we feed into and who feeds into those international agenda, so that we're getting the best practice and taking our role. Following on from that, I'm interested to see how the SDG agenda is picked up on, because one of the clear SDG agendas is climate change, and, when you read all the little subsequent dot points, one of those is about security. I will put that on notice because that's a big question.

ANSWER

Climate change is a global challenge. Australia supports effective international efforts to combat climate change and its impacts. Fundamental to our approach is Australia's membership of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its 2015 Paris Agreement, which is the international community's core vehicle for addressing climate change. The Paris Agreement has very strong international support with 195 signatories, of which 175 have ratified. Under the Paris Agreement, Australia will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. Australia is also committed to helping developing countries implement the Paris Agreement, including through providing at least \$1 billion to help build climate change resilience and reduce emissions.

In addition, Australia promotes climate action in a wide range of regional and international forums, working closely with developed and developing countries. These forums include the: UN General Assembly; East Asia Summit; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM); Group of 20 (G20); Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (the roadmap for sustainable development) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (the financing framework for sustainable development).

Australia's aim is to build the capacity of the wider international system and countries. This strategic focus recognises the crucial importance of building partner country resilience to external shocks, which will be increased by climate change. Through our network of bilateral relationships, Australia is strengthening political and practical cooperation on climate change.

In the Pacific, Australia works with bilateral partners and with regional organisations to address climate change. At the 2016 Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), Prime Minister Turnbull announced a package of climate change and disaster resilience support to the Pacific of \$300 million over four years. Key partners in implementation of this package include the PIF

Secretariat (PIFS), the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Community (SPC). For example, Australia has funded the PIFS in their work on the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP). The PRP will coordinate regional implementation efforts and be trialled over a two-year period. Australia's commitment and approach is in line with the Framework for Regional Development in the Pacific (FRDP), which brings together policy frameworks to address both climate change and disaster resilience. Australia and New Zealand share a position on the PRP's Taskforce, with Australia leading the shared position for the first two years.

Working within the Commonwealth group of nations on its climate change agenda, Australia has committed to providing \$1 million to establish the Climate Finance Access Hub (CFAH), which will assist small-island-developing and least developed states, including in the Pacific, to access climate finance. Another example of our engagement is our active role in the G20, which has a strong sustainable development focus, including the 2017 G20 Hamburg Climate and Energy Action Plan for Growth.

Australia has played a prominent role in developing the Sendai Framework, which builds upon the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) to guide the implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures at the local, national and regional levels. A review of the HFA found that its measures greatly reduced the devastation of the last decade's hazards. As signatory to the Sendai Framework, Australia upholds its principles, including that national governments and local authorities have responsibility for leading DRR efforts, while responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders (including community-based organisations, non-government organisations, international and regional organisations, the private sector, philanthropic foundations and community members).

Australia strongly supports the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs, which we joined with 193 countries to endorse in 2015, and which we pursue at multiple levels domestically and internationally. The SDGs cover the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. The 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper highlights the link between the SDGs and both Australia's foreign policy and aid program. Australia's aid program is well aligned to the SDGs.

SDG 13 relates to Climate Action. This Goal endorses the Paris Agreement as the principal instrument to galvanize international action. Mitigation and adaptation are both fundamental approaches required of the global community to meet the SDG13 targets. The SDGs are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, designed to be complementary. Whilst SDG13 does not have a specific goal, target or indicator on security, taking action on SDG13 will enhance

human security, stability and peace within and between countries, and therefore reinforces other SDGs, including SDG16-Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: More broadly around foreign aid in our region, what kinds of numbers have we been looking at, annualised over the last, say, five years or 10 years? Can you give us, perhaps on notice, a breakdown of the kinds of annual contributions we've been making to the region?

Mr Suckling: In terms of climate finance or aid generally?

Senator WHISH-WILSON: More broadly, just in terms of foreign aid or humanitarian assistance.

Mr Suckling: For the last five years—in which region?

Senator WHISH-WILSON: In the Asia-Pacific region. I'm going on the assumption that you believe, as do other stakeholders, that humanitarian assistance and, certainly, building resilience in the region through various means is a good investment—

Mr Suckling: Yes.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: in terms of getting ready for more extreme weather events and these kinds of things in the future. My understanding is that the aid budget under this government has been cut by nearly a third since it came to power. Would that be an accurate reflection overall?

Mr Suckling: I don't know the overall aid figures for the last five years in the Asia-Pacific region. I would have to take that question on notice.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Could you take that on notice? In terms of the current gross national income, my understanding it's about 0.27 per cent. Aid organisations are consistently calling for 0.7 per cent, which is part of an international commitment. We're ranked at about 18 at the moment in the OECD in terms of our overseas development assistance. Would that be accurate?

Mr Suckling: The climate finance is going up. The reports that I get back—I went to about eight countries in the region over the last year, and Pacific Island countries in particular—are all effusive, from the leaders down.

Senator MOORE: In terms of the overall aid budget, the data is available, but I'd be interested to see what the climate expenditure has been over those five years specifically. If you put that beside the overall budget, that would be a useful comparison.

Mr Suckling: Since 2015 or so?

Senator MOORE: Yes.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: So that we can break the figures down more. If we're looking at overall effectiveness of taxpayer funds and we accept the premise that there are lots of things we can do in our region to enhance adaption and resilience, as well as having funding available for humanitarian assistance when it's needed—

Mr Suckling: Part of that equation, as I mentioned, is Australia looking at how we mobilise or how we help countries in the region mobilise capital from the MDBs, for example. Some of our aid is going directly to help countries build the capacity to access or build pipeline projects to go to MDBs. That's proving very successful. In terms of harnessing capital, Australia's becoming more effective in the way we're using our aid. That's certainly an objective of ours, and similarly harnessing private sector capital, which is a very big objective, where we can do that. If we can build resilience, as you say, in terms of disaster responsiveness or preparedness, that should save money. That goes into the equation as well. If we can get cheaper renewables, where solar has dropped by 80 per cent over the last few years, we won't have to spend as much money. All of those elements go into the mix when you're talking about the effectiveness of the dollar being spent.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: The aid agencies that we took evidence from were complimentary of DFAT. They said that you're doing good work. Basically, their view—and you can read it for yourself—is that your policies haven't matched up to your words in terms of what they would like to see spent on the ground. I'll let you look at that. If you could provide those figures, that would be great.

Mr Suckling: Yes, Senator.

ANSWER

Details of Australia's development cooperation are published each year in the report *Australian Engagement with Developing Countries Part 2: Official Sector Statistical Summary*. Australia's official development assistance (ODA) since 2015 to the Asia-Pacific region – including Papua New Guinea, Pacific Island countries, East Asia, and South and West Asia – and Australia's support for climate change assistance ('climate finance') to these regions, provided through bilateral and regional programs, is as follows:

	2014-15 (\$ million)	2015-16 (\$ million)
ODA to Asia-Pacific region	3,049	2,573 [*]
Climate finance to Asia-Pacific region	54 [^]	67 [^]
Climate finance as a percentage of total ODA	1.8% [^]	2.6% [^]

^{*} This figure has been revised since publication of *Australian Engagement with Developing Countries Part 2: Official Sector Statistical Summary 2015–16*.

[^] These figures reflect climate finance via bilateral and regional programs but not core contributions to multilateral organisations, some of which would flow through to projects in the Asia-Pacific region.

4 WRITTEN COMMITTEE QUESTIONS FOLLOWING HEARING ON 20 MARCH 2018

The committee has heard suggestions that Australia's funding for disaster risk reduction in particular could be more clearly and consistently tracked over time. Is this being considered?

ANSWER

Through the Australian Aid Program DFAT supports disaster risk reduction (DRR) in developing countries. The aid program's contribution to DRR occurs through targeted investments, where DRR is a 'principal' objective. It also occurs through mainstreaming, where DRR is a 'significant' objective, even if not explicitly identified as such. Infrastructure investments often contribute to reducing disaster risk even though their 'principal' objective may be, for example, improved transport outcomes. DFAT officers annually review all aid program investments to identify levels of DRR funding. This approach is consistent with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s guidelines and is similar to the approach used by DFAT to account for climate change related expenditure.

To improve the efficiency of this process DFAT is developing a marker to capture DRR funding within 'AidWorks'-our aid management system. The system will assist with identification of DRR components within aid investments. In addition to tracking funding over time, this system will provide data to support reporting against the global target F of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-20. The new system will be launched in July 2018.

In January 2018, the OECD's Development Assistance Committee approved a new policy marker to track DRR funding within its Creditor Reporting System. The Marker will take effect for reporting in 2019 on 2018 flows on aid activities with a 'principal' or 'significant' DRR component. Australia will utilise this marker, along with AidWorks, to enhance reporting against the global targets of the Sendai Framework.

5 WRITTEN COMMITTEE QUESTIONS FOLLOWING HEARING ON 20 MARCH 2018

The submissions from Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade both noted the effects of climate change may foster conflict, crime and terrorism.¹ How is this likely to occur? How is the department responding to this threat?

ANSWER

DFAT's submission states that: "[c]limate-related adverse impacts add to challenges for governments of fragile states, raising the risk of state failure and associated familiar threats of conflict, transnational crime and terrorism". This is because climate change will exacerbate vulnerabilities associated with a range of complex, inter-related conditions including poverty and environmental degradation, which increase the risk of these threats.

Australia's Foreign Policy White Paper recognises climate change as amongst the major trends shaping our world. On the relationship between climate change and security, it notes that "[c]limate change, environmental degradation and the demand for sustainable sources of food, water and energy will be political, economic and security disrupters over the longer term". It further notes that climate change will compound pressures on the world's resources "in a way that could limit future prosperity and contribute to conflict and population displacement".

DFAT is integrating climate action and resilience across the Australian Aid Program with a view to reducing these threats. This work includes implementing the Prime Minister's commitment to invest \$1 billion over five years in climate resilience and emission reduction measures in developing countries, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

DFAT's Conflict and Fragility Section supports DFAT's aid program managers and policy makers to identify and consider relevant conflict risks in their work. This area works in close consultation with DFAT's Sustainability and Climate Change Branch.

To reduce or mitigate risks in the Pacific, Australia's aid investments have a strong focus on climate adaptation and resilience building. Examples range from climate-resilient infrastructure projects, to specialised capacity-building in climate forecasting and decision-making, to the integration of social inclusion and gender issues into climate and humanitarian action.

¹ DFAT, *Submission 61*, p. 7; Defence, *Submission 63*, p. 4.

Likewise, in Asia, Australia's adaptation and resilience building investments span sectors from disaster management to agricultural livelihoods, including a focus on water management in view of the potential future social, political and economic-impacts of water scarcity.

More broadly, on matters of national security, DFAT works in close cooperation with other national security agencies, including the Department of Home Affairs, the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police, which each have established responsibilities, both domestic and international.

6 WRITTEN COMMITTEE QUESTIONS FOLLOWING HEARING ON 20 MARCH 2018.

- (i) Is the department preparing for population displacement within the region?
- (ii) What effect would climate adaptation aid have on the likelihood of people having to leave their homes?

ANSWER

(i) DFAT recognises that human mobility – voluntary and involuntary – is one of the defining challenges of our time. DFAT works with whole of government partners to support voluntary, regular and orderly migration with strengthened global governance and cooperation to reduce irregular migration. Australia is committed to upholding the integrity of the refugee protection regime, and our obligations under relevant international humanitarian, human rights and refugee laws.

DFAT prepares for population displacement, globally and within the region, via two principal approaches – firstly through our Aid Program investments and secondly in our partnerships that guide regional and global frameworks and action.

In illustration of our Aid Program Investments - since 2014, DFAT has managed the delivery of over \$800 million to help meet the needs of refugees and displaced people globally. This includes over \$314 million, since July 2016, for protection and assistance for people displaced by crises in Myanmar, South Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. It also includes Australia's May 2017 contribution of \$6.9 million to UNHCR to support implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in Uganda and Ethiopia. This work also includes supporting safe and regular migration through the TRIANGLE in ASEAN program (\$20m, 2015-25). The program helps ASEAN countries reform their labour migration policies and legislation, and provides legal and financial advice to prospective migrant workers and their families. The program and its predecessor (GMS TRIANGLE, 2010-15) have helped more than 75,000 people access advice and legal support through 26 Migrant Resource Centres established in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and Malaysia. More broadly, some 60 per cent of Australia's \$3.9 billion aid program is delivered in fragile and conflict-affected states – including those hosting refugees.

DFAT leads a wide range of multilateral, regional and bilateral partnerships, working in particular with countries and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to find a more equitable way of sharing responsibility for refugees. Australia is keen to support emerging resettlement countries to accept more refugees. We also partner with ASEAN to

improve access to safe and regular migration pathways in our region. Migration for labour is an established feature of ASEAN labour markets and makes a significant contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction in countries of origin (primarily through remittance flows and absorption of excess labour) and destination (through private sector growth and economic stability). The effective management of the movement of millions of migrant workers within and from ASEAN will become increasingly important as ASEAN becomes more integrated.

Such partnerships provide tangible commitments and action. DFAT works with the Department of Home Affairs on the 2016 landmark *New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (NYD)*, which was adopted at the UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants. The NYD provides a strong foundation to guide more comprehensive, well-managed and humane responses to the mass movement of people. Under the NYD, Australia is negotiating the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)², which are due to be finalized in 2018. The GCM enhances global standards for international coordination and governance of migration, focusing on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual migrants. The GCR reaffirms global commitment to the refugee protection system and develop a more equitable way of sharing responsibility for refugees globally, especially in the Indo-Pacific region where many States are not signatory to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees.

In the NYD Global Compacts DFAT advocates on behalf of Australia for inclusion of climate change related frameworks, such as the UNFCCC Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction and the 2030 Agenda. Australia is also a voice for the Indo-Pacific region in these Compacts, supporting setting standards on disaster and climate -induced displacement, and highlighting the importance of regional solutions and cooperation mechanisms, including the Bali Process.

With the aim of supporting a more globally coherent approach to the protection of people displaced by natural hazards (some of which are increased by climate change), DFAT leads Australia's engagement in a range of relevant multilateral forums.

In 2015, Australia joined 110 states in the Nansen Initiative's non-binding *Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change* ('Protection Agenda'). Through this, Australia supports the provision of humanitarian protection to such people, including admitting them on a temporary basis, or

²Although non-binding the Compacts will set the global norms for increasing the protection of migrants and displaced peoples.

refraining from returning a person who was already present in the receiving country when the disaster occurred in the affected country.

In the UNFCCC, DFAT represents Australia as an Executive Committee member of the UNFCCC Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage³ and its Taskforce on Displacement. This Taskforce aims to enhance understanding and expertise on how impacts of climate change are affecting patterns of migration. Australia is also a Steering Group member of the Platform on Disaster Displacement⁴, which aims to strengthen the protections afforded to people displaced within and across borders by disasters and climate change.

(ii) Climate change will compound displacement conditions, including economic vulnerability, exposure to hazards, and food or water insecurity. Reportedly, from 2008-2015 climate-related events (including increased coastal flooding) contributed to the migration of an average of 21.5 million people each year⁵. These trends are expected to increase in coming years.

Climate change adaptation, in combination with the fundamental objective of climate change mitigation to reduce climate impacts, makes an important contribution to reducing displacement.

Climate action projects often include mitigation, adaptation and resilience-building benefits. For example, the DFAT-supported G20 initiative - *AgResults* - delivered in Vietnam, incentivises the uptake of technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from paddy rice farming, while adapting to new climatic conditions and building resilience, through improved agricultural productivity and nutrition, with clear benefits for reducing the risk of displacement.

Further examples of adaptation investments that might contribute to reducing displacement can be found in pages 19 to 23 of the DFAT Submission to the Inquiry.

³ Established at UNFCCC COP19 (December 2013).

⁴ This Platform was launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 and continues the work of the Nansen Initiative, with the mandate of implementing the recommendations of the October 2015 non-binding 'Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change' ('Protection Agenda'). Australia was a steering committee member of the Nansen Initiative from 2012 to 2015.

⁵ *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2017*, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre IDMC, Norwegian Refugee Council NRC.

7 WRITTEN COMMITTEE QUESTIONS FOLLOWING HEARING ON 20 MARCH 2018.

The committee understands the department is in the process of developing a climate change strategy for Australia's aid program. What will this entail? How does it differ from the Pacific Humanitarian Strategy?

ANSWER

The Department is developing a Climate Change Action Strategy, which is due to be completed later in 2018. The Strategy will present Australia's approach to climate change across the entire Aid Program; it will recognise the imperatives provided by the Foreign Policy White Paper, and Australia's international climate and development-related commitments.

The Action Strategy outlines the need to incorporate climate risks into designing our aid investments and the need to mainstream climate action into investments across programs and sectors, as well as to support targeted climate investments. It recognises that implementation will be undertaken in partnership with our country and international development partners, with non-government organisations (NGOs) and with the private sector. The Action Strategy will be developed in consultation with all interested government and non-government groups, including business. The Climate Change Action Strategy will align with and complement all DFAT's existing strategies.

The Pacific Humanitarian Strategy is a DFAT internal document that guides the implementation in the Pacific region of DFAT's (global and publically available) Humanitarian Strategy⁶. Its aim is to strengthen local disaster management and resilience across the Pacific with a view to reduce the lives lost to, and damage caused by, regional disasters. Its geographic scope is limited to the Pacific region and its focus includes but extends beyond climate change-related disasters. For instance, it includes the priority of supporting the FRDP⁷ and disaster and climate risk reduction and resilience building efforts in the region. Additionally, our overarching Humanitarian Strategy, to which the Pacific Strategy contributes, explicitly recognises climate change as a current and future driver of disaster risk and endorses inclusion of the 2015 Paris Agreement in global humanitarian action. The Climate Change Action Strategy will encompass our climate action aid activities globally.

⁶ Found at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/humanitarian-strategy.aspx>

⁷ The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific.