

Dear Sir,

I am deeply concerned at the extreme weather being experienced both in Australia, and around the world.

This is exactly what has been predicted by the scientific community when they have examined the issue of a changing climate.

We have a holiday home in Nymboida; we drive several kilometers along an unsealed road, lined with trees, and our bush block of a 100 acres is fully timbered. Due to the current fire conditions, we feel unable to visit our home, or take our grandchildren there. This is a very small matter, compared to the potential issues being faced throughout our nation - and nations around the world.

When the Stern Report was issued, it clearly stated that it would be far less expensive to bring about changes required to reduce and mitigate climate change, rather than to just fix up things if we continued 'business as usual'. Well the world HAS continued with 'business as usual' and the costs are rapidly mounting.

We MUST heed the warnings, and start mitigation efforts now. We should be on a War Footing and bring all our experience, innovative skills, and finances to put a plan in action, that will aim to keep within the two degrees of warming. The very first thing that should happen - tomorrow - would be to withdraw ALL subsidies to coal and oil, and to move these subsidies over to clean, renewable energy.

We need to stop burning coal and oil and phase out these industries, in the very near future.

Of course it will be difficult. But ask people who have just had their house burned down, or their livestock killed, or have had their businesses flooded, whether THAT is difficult for them now.? Or the many thousands of people in Indonesia who have to move from their communities that are flooded - how will they rebuild ?

Can we really afford to see this sort of thing happening on an ever increasing scale, into the future ?

And can we risk the possibility that we will pass over an unknown tipping point and suddenly find ourselves in an accelerated world that is totally out of control ?

Can you face the thought that your children, and grandchildren, will ask you "Why didn't you do something while there was time ?"

My husband is a civil engineer, and he despairs at the lack of preparedness that he sees in his field of work. For instance he shudders at subdivisions that are allowed to go ahead, when they are clearly going to be seriously affected by flooding. The road and railways on the North Coast are likely to be seriously affected and there appears to be no consideration of this, in forward planning.

We have a very narrow - quickly closing - window of opportunity to make the future different. And that is without even considering the huge threat of the end of cheap energy, which will cripple the world's efforts.

There is a growing groundswell of intelligent people who are deeply frustrated that our Government can spend endless hours in Parliament, fighting and denigrating each other, rather than lifting their eyes, and looking ahead - and do what they are paid for - to guard and guide our nation through the turbulent times ahead.

Yours faithfully,
Siobhan Holmes