



CLIMATE AND HEALTH ALLIANCE

CAHA NEWS

[Senate Inquiry into health effects of wind farms](#)

The Climate and Health Alliance has made a submission to the recently concluded Senate Committee Inquiry into the social and economic impacts of rural wind farms – an inquiry prompted by concerns raised with Senator Steven Fielding by anti-wind farm groups that wind farms pose a threat to human health.

One group, the Waubra Foundation, has been calling for a moratorium on wind farms until independent research is conducted to assess health impacts.

The Climate and Health Alliance is not aware of any published peer reviewed scientific studies that demonstrate adverse health effects associated with wind farms. CAHA's submission concluded: "no convincing health-related evidence exists at this time that would support a moratorium on deploying wind turbines. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that wind energy poses a lower public health risk than alternative means of power generation. The Alliance strongly supports any on-going research efforts that continually monitor, quantify, and compare the risks to physical and mental health associated with all means of power generation."

The full submission is available at www.caha.org.au or click [here](#).

Professor Simon Chapman from the University of Sydney and Dr Susie Burke from the Australian Psychological Society represented the Climate and Health Alliance in an Inquiry hearing on 29th March 2011.

CAHA = CAHA Inc

Climate and Health Alliance [members](#) made a unanimous decision for CAHA to become an incorporated association at the members' meeting in February 2011. A set of Rules was developed with the membership and an application made. CAHA's incorporated status was formalised on 17 March 2011. The new Rules are available on the website www.caha.org.au

REPORTS

[Cutting emissions from beef](#)

A new report from the Union of Concerned Scientists highlights the emissions reductions possible by avoiding intensive feedlots for fattening cattle prior, converting crops to pasture, and cutting the amount of nitrogen used in fertilizers. 'Raising the Steaks' points to the carbon sequestration opportunities possible through no-till farming methods and prevention of overgrazing, and highlights the methane emissions reductions possible through the inclusion of legumes in forage mixtures.

The full report is available [here](#).

You can read a transcript of their evidence [here](#).

A sustainable population strategy for Australia

The Climate and Health Alliance has made a submission to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities in response to its Issues Paper on a sustainable population strategy for Australia. In its submission, CAHA highlighted its stated position on population, which is to “encourage the development of a sustainable population policy for Australia that recognises our fragile ecology while respecting and protecting the rights of refugees”.

CAHA’s submission made four key assertions:

- Population impacts on the climate
- Unsustainable population increases will lead to resource depletion
- An unsustainable population impacts on human health
- Continuous growth is unsustainable

The full submission is available at www.caha.org.au or click [here](#).

NEWS

[New study into the health effects of coal](#)

A new study is to be undertaken by University of Sydney’s Health and Sustainability Unit will investigate the effects of coal mining, transportation and combustion in the Hunter Valley and Liverpool Plains in NSW. Melbourne research consultancy Beyond Zero Emissions has commissioned a report by Dr Ruth Colagiuru from the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at the University of Sydney that will investigate the direct, quantifiable harms as well as indirect and unquantifiable harms to health

[Climate change putting trillions at risk](#)

A new report on investment and superannuation risk suggests continued delay on action on climate change along with uncertainty about climate policy is adding a 10% risk to almost every investment portfolio. The research undertaken by Mercer and a group of global investors suggests that while investment opportunities in low carbon technologies could reach \$5 trillion by 2030, the cost of impacts from a failure to mitigate on environment, health and food security could exceed \$4 trillion. The report urges shifting of investment allocations to manage climate risk to help finance low carbon technologies and reduce emissions.

[Environmentalism is failing?](#)

A recent debate on the environmental movement in Australia at Melbourne’s Sustainable Living Festival hosted by Julia Zemiro featured Canada’s eco-warrior elder David Suzuki, Professor Ian Lowe, Climate Code Red co-author Phillip Sutton, environmental activist and academic Clive Hamilton, youth climate coalition co-founder Anna Rose, and Senator Christine Milne.

As one audience member tweeted: “Ian was funny, Clive savage, Anna Rose courageous, Christine bossy, David wise, Julia pretty, and Phillip told it like it is.”

You can view a video of the event [here](#).

GREEN HEALTH

[Solar savings for hospital](#)

from mining in the Hunter Valley and Liverpool Plains regions. This will include assessment of the excess burden of respiratory disease, mental health disorders, cancer, injury and death as well as the impacts on social health and sense of community.

BZE Director of Operations Mark Ogge said state and federal governments had failed to properly evaluate the effects of coal mining on communities in the Hunter Valley, despite rising community concerns and increasing evidence of adverse health effects.

“For decades, coal mines and power stations have been approved with little regard to the health impacts on local communities,” Mr Ogge said. “As international research mounts, it’s time the Australian public is given access to the information necessary to make a true assessment of the costs and benefits of coal. In the face of governmental inaction, this responsibility has fallen to others.”

[What will four degrees look like?](#)

A new paper from [Climate Code Red](#) co-author David Spratt offers sobering reading on what a four degree global temperature rise will look like. Average global temperatures have increased around 0.8°C from global warming already, with demonstrable catastrophic effects on many populations. But if the current policy impasse continues, scientists predict that we can expect a rise of four degrees by 2100, well beyond the two degrees “guardrail” agreed at Copenhagen as the limit beyond which climate change poses “dangerous, irreversible and practically uncontrollable consequences for both nature and mankind”.^[1]

Since global average temperature rises do not reflect regional variations, a global average rise of 4°C could see some regions such as Africa warm by up to 10°C and the Arctic warm by up to 15°C.^[2]

Spratt’s paper cites the head of the leading UK climate research institute, the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change,

A Californian hospital is the first of 15 Kaiser Permanente facilities in the US that will use solar power to generate part of their electricity this year. The Santa Clara Medical Center will produce around 8.5% of the power used at the centre through rooftop and elevated solar panels.

Kaiser Permanente hopes to save more than \$10 million per year in energy costs from its facilities.

Nurses blue wrap the environment

Nurses at Legacy Health System in Oregon recycled 15,000kg of blue wrap in 2010, following the program’s launch in 2009. The sterile blue wrap is collected from the operating rooms at the medical center by environmental services personnel and then picked up by a local recycling company.

CAMPAIGNS

Fighting for clean air

International health coalition Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) is lobbying US members of Congress to reject legislation that would limit the capacity of the Environmental Protection Authority to regulate to reduce air pollutants.

“These threats to the EPA are also threats to the nation’s health,” HCWH said in its Help Protect our Clean Air! campaign.

Air pollutants contribute to a range of climate and weather related events, such as smog and extreme heat conditions - both of which exacerbate asthma,

Kevin Anderson, as saying the consequences of a four degrees rise were “terrifying” and that only ten percent of the current human population might survive this level of warming. Two-four degrees celsius of warming is considered likely to trigger the permanent break-up of the Greenland ice sheet; the dying of the world’s major coral reefs; the failure of oceanic ecosystems; desertification of much of the globe; and the release of hundreds of billions of tonnes of methane and carbon dioxide from melting Artic permafrost.

Read the paper [here](#).

[1] German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU), Solving the climate dilemma: The budget approach, Summary for policy-makers, September 2009.

[2] Shukman, D. Four degrees of warming likely, BBC News, 28 September 2009

[Communities to monitor climate change](#)

A new study being funded by the US Centers for Disease Control will fund local communities in Alaska to monitor changes in the climate and health of the population.

Rapid warming in Alaska has led to changes in flora and fauna distribution, declining water quality, and decreasing ice for food storage – all of which have human health impacts. This community surveillance system is one of the first to connect climate change and health, according to David Driscoll, director of the Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

[Climate change driving release of POPs: UNEP](#)

A new report from the United Nations highlights the increasing risks to human health from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), which are dangerous chemicals such as the widely banned DDT and chlordane. These and other POPs such as PFOs and lindane pose high human health risks already but climate related flooding and rising temperatures may lead to increased releases of POPs leading to higher health risks, according to the director of

affecting one in 10 children, and causing increased morbidity and mortality from respiratory and cardiac disease, according to HCWH.

EVENTS

4 - 6 April 2011

Communicable Disease Control Conference

The Public Health Association of Australia will host this conference at Hotel Realm, National Circuit, Barton, ACT on 4-6 April 2011. For more information, see: www.phaa.net.au

6 April 2011

NCCARF Annual conference

The National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility will hold its annual conference Cairns in conjunction with Greenhouse 2011.

For full details, click [here](#).

9-11 April 2011

[Climate Action Summit in Melbourne](#)

The national [Community Climate Network](#) of community based climate action groups is holding its third summit for grassroots climate action groups and campaigners on Saturday 9th to Monday 11th April.

This Summit: *From the ground up* provides an opportunity for individuals and groups to share information and collaborate to build the community movement for real action on climate change.

For more information, see the Summit website [here](#).

the UN 2004 POP treaty.

These toxic chemicals accumulate in the environment, are dispersed through air and water, and enter the food chain, leading to reproductive and mental health disorders and cancer and affecting human development and growth.

The UNEP report calls for the ratification and enactment of the 2004 treaty obligations, to which 172 countries are signatories, but some are yet to ratify it and many are yet to enact national legislation to enforce the bans and restrictions it imposes.

[POPs may contribute to diabetes](#)

A new study published in the journal [Environmental Health Perspectives](#) suggests exposure to toxic chemicals known as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) may substantially change the risk of developing diabetes and thus play a role in the current diabetes epidemic, otherwise attributed to obesity.

Lee et al suggest that diabetes risk may be increased through endocrine disruption following exposure to POPs at low doses - similar to current exposure levels.

10-13 April 2011

Health promotion and the determinants of health

The Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA) will hold its 20th National Conference to at the Cairns Convention Centre from 10-13 April 2011. To visit the conference website, click [here](#).

20th May 2011

Climate adaptation 'masterclass'

The National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) is holding a Masterclass on '*Climate Adaptation: from Theory to Implementation*' in Brisbane on 20th May 2011. For more information, or to register, click [here](#).

Our mailing address is:
PO BOX 523 Camberwell VIC 3124.