

This is a brief submission because I believe the facts about climate change are well known. What is needed is political and public will to change.

1. Current warming is enough

We have recently seen bushfires in NSW in October and super typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. ANU Professor Will Steffen said the hotter, moister climate is already affecting storms such as Haiyan.

“Once [cyclones] do form, they get most of their energy from the surface waters of the ocean,” Professor Steffen said. “We know sea-surface temperatures are warming pretty much around the planet, so that's a pretty direct influence of climate change on the nature of the storm.”(reference <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/typhoon-haiyan-influenced-by-climate-change-scientists-say-20131111-2xb35.html#ixzz2m1knxxTg>)

We face a climate emergency. The climate is changing faster than we thought. What we believed would happen in a hundred years is happening now. It's getting hotter, the ice caps are melting, the oceans are rising, bushfires and floods are bigger, and crops are failing.

We are seeing it now and here - Australia is hotter. Last January the averaged maximum temperature was the highest on record for Australia as a whole. The increase over average was +2.28 °C
(<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/month/aus/summary.shtml>)

The Climate Change Commission said last January “The length, extent and severity of the current Australian heatwave is unprecedented in the measurement record.

- Although Australia has always had heatwaves, hot days and bushfires, climate change is increasing the risk of more frequent and longer heatwaves and more extreme hot days, as well as exacerbating bushfire conditions.
- Climate change has contributed to making the current extreme heat conditions and bushfires worse. (<http://climatecommission.gov.au/report/off-charts-extreme-january-heat-2013/>)

2. Given we don't want the world to get hotter we need to take effective action NOW

Dr. James Hansen, of NASA says” If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted, paleoclimate evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that CO₂ will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm....If the present overshoot of this target CO₂ is not brief, there is a possibility of seeding irreversible catastrophic effects.”(<http://arxiv.org/abs/0804.1126>). I understand we are at about 392 ppm now; the 385ppm figure was from 2008.

The world needs to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, then cut them to zero and then start sequestering the excess greenhouse gases. The IPCC has

suggested that nations such as Australia should be reducing emissions by between 25 and 40%, based upon 1990 levels.

As a nation we need to do at least as well as the ACT which in October 2010 legislated for the introduction of the most ambitious greenhouse gas reductions targets in the country.

- zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2060
- peaking per capita emissions by 2013
- 40% of 1990 levels by 2020
- 80% of 1990 levels by 2050.

3. There is a major free-rider problem in climate change policies

As was said by Prime Minister Howard Australia is only about 2% of the problem, it doesn't matter what we do. The problem is that statement is true for all individuals and many groups. This is a world wide problem and the actions of any one individual – or even nation – are not enough to solve the problem.

The problem is that if everyone and every nation takes that approach, then we will continue to emit too many greenhouse gases and end up with a future that nobody wants.

Australia is one of the worst polluters of the world on a per capita basis. Australia must act to decisively reduce our emissions, and use our leadership to encourage other nations to do the same. This is in our best interests, and in the best interest of the rest of the world.

4. We need to create the political will for action

There is already considerable political will for action. ABC's Vote Compass showed that 61% of Australians believe the Government should do more to tackle climate change. Other polls have shown a majority want action.

Action on climate change is not inconsistent with Liberal party, conservative values. In the ACT in 2008 the Liberal party had as part of its policy platform a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

David Cameron, the British Prime Minister said ""There's no doubt that there have been an increasing number of severe weather events in recent years. I am not a scientist but it's always seemed to me that one of the strongest arguments about climate change is that even if you are 90% certain or 80% certain, or 70% certain - if I said to you that there was a 60% chance your house might burn down, you would take out some insurance.

"I think we should think about climate change like that."

(http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/11/16/david-cameron-climate-change-tory_n_4286357.html)

We need to act now for a lovable future