



17th March 2015

Dear: Mr Tony Abbot, Prime Minister; Mr Greg Hunt, Federal Minister for the Environment; Ms Sharman Stone, MP for Murray; Mr Daniel Andrews, Premier of Victoria; Ms Lisa Neville, State Minister for the Environment; Ms Steph Ryan, MP for Euroa; Ms Deb Swan, Mayor for Shire of Strathbogie; Mr Steve Crawcour, CEO, Shire of Strathbogie

Re: Appeal for increased action on climate change

On Saturday 7th February, 120 people attended a seminar in Euroa to discuss the current situation around climate change and potential actions we all can take to abate and mitigate this impending risk. We were privileged to have the input of Professor David Karoly, University of Melbourne, to help provide the technical guidance to this community conversation. From Professor Karoly we heard:

- The rate of climate change over the last 100 years is faster than at any other time in geological history
- The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere has not been this high for millions of years
- The increase in CO₂ is all due to human activity, including through emissions as well as vegetation clearing
- We are trending towards the 'high risk' category, in terms of projected impacts
- Our area of Australia will receive 20 – 30% less average annual rainfall, including a decrease in cool months leading to loss of deeper soil moisture. This has huge implications for our farmers and our ability to grow food.
- We are projected to have a reduction in stream flows, an increase of approximately 50% of days above 35oC, less snow cover in our region and an increase in the frequency, extent and intensity of bushfires.
- That, without a reduction of 50% emissions by 2050, we are increasing the risk of irreversible impacts. If we can achieve a 50% reduction, we are likely to stay within 2°C of warming, which some scientists say is manageable in terms of human life.

But we need urgent action now. Delaying action will substantially increase the challenges of mitigation. Please commit to:

- Developing or lobbying for the development of a price on carbon that results in lowering emissions by 50% by 2050.
- Incentives that transform our energy system from predominately fossil fuels to renewable systems, such as solar, wind and (where appropriate) wave.
- The phasing out of fossil fuels and the distinguishment of subsidies to these industries, with supporting initiatives for renewable energies to take the place in the jobs market
- Strong agricultural policies that promote increases in native vegetation, emissions abatement and increase investment in research for new crops or the like,
- Ending clear-felling forestry techniques and accounting for the increase in biological storage of carbon as a result. The creation of the Greater Forests National Park in our region will go a long way to achieving this.

A short 3-minute video of the above conference can be found at <https://youtu.be/x8nFq47V2Fs>

More information about this, and future seminars to be held, can be found on www.strathbogievoices.com.au.

We look forward to your response to this urgent issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Stothers', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Kate Stothers

Strathbogie Voices, on behalf of all participants at the recent Euroa forum (names and contact details on following page).

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