

CASPI: NEWS

Climate Adaptation - Science and Policy Initiative

November 2007



Courtesy: Scratch! Media

Climate Institute Report: Evidence of Accelerated Climate Change

The Climate Institute commissioned CASPI to write a brief report on recent evidence of climate change, particularly focussing on new information published since the material used in the last IPCC report. The report was reviewed by Dr Barrie Pittock and Dr Graeme Pearman. It shows that science emerging since that considered by the IPCC demonstrates temperatures and greenhouse pollution are rising faster than that indicated by most of the projections.

The global temperature warming trend is accelerating faster than expected. If continued such a trend will lead to a temperature rise of approximately 3°C by the end of this century (relative to pre-industrial temperatures).

Carbon dioxide emissions growth is accelerating. The growth rate is increasing from 1.1% per year for 1990-1999 to over 3% per year for 2000-2004. This recent high growth rate exceeds that in the most fossil fuel intensive emissions scenarios used by the IPCC.

The recent rapid decreases in Arctic sea ice extent are occurring much faster than any of the climate model projections suggest would happen. The recent summer minimum is approximately 30 years ahead of a range of simulation model forecasts. On the basis of current trends, an ice free Arctic Ocean might occur much earlier than 2050 - 2100 as previously thought.

The full report is available for download from the Climate Institute:
http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/images/stories/CI056_EACC_Report_v1.pdf



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National Centre for Coast and Climate

The University of Melbourne has entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth Government and the Point Nepean Community Trust to establish a centre for marine science and climate adaptation research at Point Nepean.

There are three components to establishing this new centre:

- * At least \$7 million will be allocated by the trust for redeveloping the existing infrastructure to create high quality laboratory, teaching and accommodation facilities. The facilities will be rent free for the first seven years.

- *The Commonwealth will provide \$2.1 million towards operating costs, technical and maintenance staff.

- * The Commonwealth will provide 110 fully-funded student places for undergraduate and post-graduate students.

The site has great potential to become a significant centre for marine and climate research. In addition to marine science, there are opportunities for a wide range of other disciplines to have a role in the site, such as the history of early settlers, coastal geo-

morphology and so on. The Centre has in mind a low carbon footprint, and will be looking at alternative energy sources such as wave technology and solar heated water.

The Centre will also have a community role, with a focus on more general education and learning activities, such as programs for schools.

Details on the Point Nepean Trust can be found at <http://www.pointnepeantrust.org/>, and further inquiries can be directed to the Head of the Department of Zoology, Professor David Macmillan or Professor Mick Keough.



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Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility

Griffith University will host the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF), as announced by the Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources on November 13.

Griffith University and the Queensland Government, through its Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence and Department of Emergency Services, won the Australian Greenhouse Office's competitive bid through establishing a consortium with Macquarie University, Murdoch University, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Newcastle, University of Southern Queensland, James Cook University and the University of the Sunshine Coast.

South-East Queensland is regarded as a strategically important location for the NCCARF, being the only region identified by the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council as a vulnerability hotspot for each of the priority areas of natural systems and biodiversity; cities and coasts; water; health; infrastructure; and agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

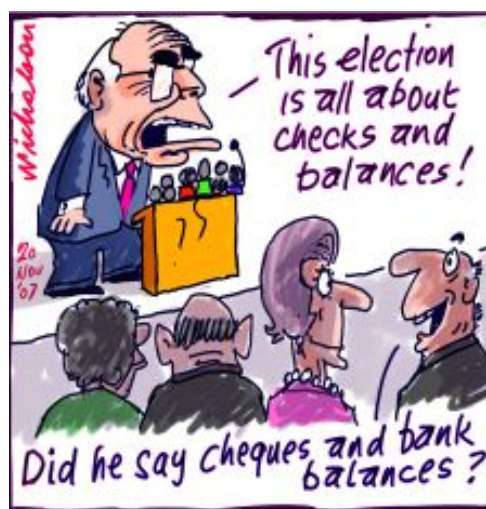
The director of the new centre will be Professor Jan McDonald, Professor of Law, and Deputy Director (Research), Griffith Law School.

However, a recent report in the Canberra Times (Wednesday, 21 November 2007) suggests that Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull overruled an expert scientific panel's recommendation for the Australian National University to co-host the new \$50 million national climate change adaptation centre.

According to Government sources, the bid by the Universities Climate Consortium (ANU, Monash University, the University of NSW and the University of Melbourne) was widely regarded as "unbeatable" because of the world-class expertise and international reputations of its key climate scientists.

According to the Canberra Times, the sources claim that the expert panel's recommendation was overturned after pressure from Prime Minister John Howard to support a rival bid led by a university based in the safe Liberal seat of Moncrieff on Queensland's northern Gold Coast.

The article can be viewed at:
<http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/local/general/turnbull-stymied-climate-project/1089806.html>



Courtesy: www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au



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Garnaut Climate Change Review Emissions Stabilisation Report

Our second project for the Garnaut Review has now been submitted. This report focusses on the issue of greenhouse gas stabilisation targets, and the emissions pathways to achieve stabilisation. The project team was, Ian Enting, David Karoly, Jim Falk, Nathan Clisby, Roger Bodman and Domenica Settle.

University Steering Committee Grant Second Year of Funding

CASPI has been awarded a \$20,000 University Steering Committee Grant to assist the continuation of the project in 2008. This initiative has had a successful first year, leading to a greater awareness of the University's capacity and potential for climate adaptation research. A number of commissioned projects have been completed. The groundwork has been laid and some opportunities identified which CASPI plans to follow up on next year.

On The Move CASPI moving to LFR

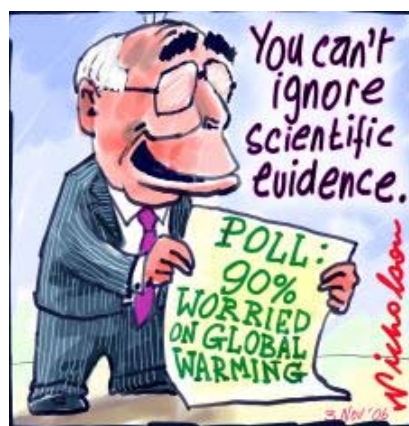
CASPI, along with its parent organisation, ACSIS, will be hosted by the Faculty of Land and Food Resources from the start of next year. LFR will also be hosting the new Resilience Institute and the Office for Environmental Programs (<http://www.environment.unimelb.edu.au/>)

IPCC Synthesis Report

The final part of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, "The Synthesis Report" was released in Valencia, Spain, on 17 November 2007. It is clear from the report that mitigation is urgent and that adaptation to climate change is necessary to address impacts resulting from the warming which is already unavoidable due to past emissions.

Prof David Karoly, Earth Sciences, is a member of the Core Writing Team for the Synthesis Report. He was recently featured on the ABC Catalyst program (November 15th).

This newsletter, its contents and style, are the responsibility of the author and do not represent the views, policies or opinions of The University of Melbourne.



Events

* 30th to 3rd December - Asia-Pacific Eco-Health Conference. Deakin University. Details: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/events/ecohealth2007/>

* Ecological impacts of prescribed burning and timber harvesting: Results of a long-term study in south-eastern Australia. Friday 7 December 2007 @ 09:30 am - 10:30 am, free UoM Public Lecture

* 9-11 January 2008 - Workshop on Hydrologic Prediction: Modelling, Observation and Data Assimilation. University of Melbourne

Please forward any comments, suggestions, and information about related events to:

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