

## EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

### PUBLIC FORUM

All members of the community who have registered have been advised that they have a **maximum of seven minutes** to put their case.

Ordinary Meeting of Council on **26 July 2022**

Name	Subject/Comments
<b>Public Forum – 9.30am</b>	
Brett Stevenson obo A Better Eurobodalla (ABE)	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
Edwina Robinson	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
Jack Egan	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
John McLean PhD	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
Sandy Wilder	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
Dr Alan England	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032
Dr Keely Boom <b>(presentation not provided)</b>	PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan 2022-2032

**ABE Public Forum Presentation 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Regarding GMR22/073  
ORGANISATION STRUCTURE - SENIOR STAFF and PSR22/021 DRAFT CLIMATE  
ACTION PLAN 2022-2032**

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address Council this morning regarding GMR22/073 Organization Structure – Senior Staff and PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan.

I am presenting today as the Co-convenor of A Better Eurobodalla (ABE), a community forum working to achieve open, accountable and responsive government in Eurobodalla.

ABE has applied our principles of good governance to today's agenda items GMR22/073 and PSR22/021.

**GMR22/073 Organization Structure – Senior Staff**

ABE notes that this agenda item recommends continuation of the current organizational arrangements for Council's Senior Staff while the recruitment process for a new Council GM is under way, which is anticipated to be finalised by mid-October 2022. It is also relevant that section 333 of the Local Government Act requires Council's organization and structure to be reviewed by the new Council before the first anniversary of last year's local government elections (i.e. 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022).

It is unfortunate that there has not been a better alignment in timing between the arrival of the new GM (who may recommend a revised structure following a review of Council's priorities and strategies) and the post-election review of the Council's organizational structure. ABE notes that acceptance of today's agenda paper would maintain the omission of an Executive Level Director Corporate & Commercial Services within Council's organizational structure, the position having been eliminated in 2019 following the resignation of the incumbent.

ABE proposes that a suitable mechanism to assist the incoming GM in her or his assessment of Council operations, activities and structural organization would be via an operational review as put in a proposal to the Mayoral Candidates Forum held at Kyla Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The proposal to commission *'an external local government consultant answering to Councillors to review Council's strategic environment and its operational practices'* was endorsed by all the Mayoral candidates (except Councillor Harrison) on behalf of their tickets. Their responses were taken to represent the position of the other Councillor candidates on their group tickets including Councillors Diskon, Schutz, Dannock and Mayne.

ABE considers that any endorsement of the existing structure at today's meeting should be understood in the context of an incoming GM working with

Councillors to undertake a thorough and fully informed review of Council's priorities and strategies following their appointment, and making any changes to senior staff necessary to reflect the outcomes of this review.

## **PSR22/021 Draft Climate Action Plan**

ABE supports the endorsement and adoption of the draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) as outlined in the agenda. The draft Eurobodalla CAP provides a good overview of current climate change issues, as well as a sound background and compelling reasons why this is an urgent and important problem. This information is well laid out in sections 1-3, incorporating a useful set of principles. The CAP reflects the benefits arising from extensive public consultation in its preparation, and provides a good template for Council's future public consultation processes.

ABE welcomes the expanded scope of the updated CAP, which now covers both Council activities as well as the broader Eurobodalla community. The plan identifies actions that Council can take to further reduce its own carbon footprint and make its operations and service delivery more resilient to the impacts of climate change. It also identifies how Council can support households and businesses across the Eurobodalla to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience. There are significant economic benefits which can accrue from these outcomes.

The CAP is a necessarily ambitious program, which requires both adequate resourcing and a transparent implementation plan to ensure that it can achieve real progress on its significant work. It provides an ideal vehicle to deliver the proposal unanimously endorsed by all candidates at the Tuross Heads Mayoral Candidates Forum held at Kyla Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021, which stated :

*Given community concerns about development in the shire, will you support Council developing a shire wide plan for sustainable development?*

While advice and expertise via means of the foreshadowed Climate Advisory Group and external grant funding can provide significant resources towards implementing the CAP, the urgency and importance of climate change mitigation and adaptation needs to be reflected in the allocation of Council's own recurrent internal funding. It would only take a very modest rebalancing of Council's budget (in the order of 1%) to adequately resource the CAP. Council's budget needs to reflect contemporary concerns and issues, and not be locked into a backward vision which views existing budget allocations as an optimal allocation of funds. Real progress in delivering the CAP should not be stymied by a lack of Council resourcing. In addition, Council should continue its positive engagement with the community in this area. In this way, Council can supplement its constrained resources by accessing the relevant expertise and experience held within the Eurobodalla community.

The CAP provides a useful vehicle to provide meaningful engagement with the Eurobodalla community, deliver an undertaking given by all candidates at the last election, as well as assist Council in evaluating and adjusting its own service delivery to reflect key issues of this century. Effective resourcing, delivery and reporting of the CAP will be an important element of informed and forward-looking governance which will benefit the wider Eurobodalla community and its businesses. Council resourcing should therefore be commensurate with this degree of significance.

Thank you for your attention

Dr Brett Stevenson  
Co-Convenor  
A Better Eurobodalla



The General Manager  
PO Box 99  
Moruya NSW 2537

## COMMENTS - EUROBODALLA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Overall the Plan is well researched and well written.

I am a Moruya based landscape architect and founder of the social enterprise, The Climate Factory. I have eight years experience working as a landscape architect/project manager in the ACT Government building living (green) infrastructure.

I am currently writing the 'Draft Living Infrastructure Strategy – how to cool schools' for the ACT Government's public schools 2022-2045. Working with community I've built three community climate-cooling micro-forests in Canberra. [www.climatefactory.com.au](http://www.climatefactory.com.au)

### Heatwaves and urban heat

Climate research shows its likely to be hotter in the future with more extensive heatwaves. Note: heatwaves kill more people in Australia than any other natural disaster. In particular, they impact very young children, pregnant and breast feeding women, outdoor workers, the disabled, the sick and the elderly. Urban areas are more at risk from heatwaves due to the large number of hard surfaces that absorb heat in the day and slowly release the heat at night.

Based on my experience and research, I have a number of comments and suggestions related to urban heat mitigation and landscape.

- **Heat mapping** – heat mapping is required in urban areas to show the hottest areas that require action to cool them in the future. Towns like Queanbeyan have produced Surface Urban Heat maps <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Major-Works-Projects/Keeping-it-Cool-Vegetation-and-Heat-Adaptation-Strategy>. And a comprehensive heat map has been developed for Canberra by the CSIRO. [https://www.environment.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1170968/CSIRO-Mapping-Surface-Urban-Heat-In-Canberra.pdf](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1170968/CSIRO-Mapping-Surface-Urban-Heat-In-Canberra.pdf)
- **Canopy targets** - nowhere in the document is there reference to canopy targets. The ACT Government has committed to a 30% canopy cover by 2045. Goal 4I – Reduce urban heat and improve liveability in [https://www.environment.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1414641/ACT-Climate-Change-Strategy-2019-2025.pdf](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1414641/ACT-Climate-Change-Strategy-2019-2025.pdf)/ [recache](#)

Council should also audit its current canopy targets in urban and regional areas to set a baseline.

- **3-30-300 rule**



This is a great rule of thumb that comes from Europe. Every citizen should be able to see three trees from their homes, live in an area of at least 30% canopy cover and be within 300 metres of a green space.

- **Tree Strategy** - There is no reference in the plan to a tree strategy for Eurobodalla. We need a tree strategy that includes species likely to be suitable for a hotter, drier future. Refer to desktop research conducted by ANU for ACT Government on top 200 trees by climate ranking. [https://www.environment.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/1437047/urban-forest-tree-species-research-for-the-act-consultants-report-2019.pdf](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1437047/urban-forest-tree-species-research-for-the-act-consultants-report-2019.pdf)

The ACT Government has released its Tree Strategy and how they will reach 30% canopy cover by 2045. [https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/trees-and-nature/trees/urban-forest-strategy#:~:text=PDF%202.3MB\).-.Tree%20planting,active%20travel%20routes%20within%20suburbs.](https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/trees-and-nature/trees/urban-forest-strategy#:~:text=PDF%202.3MB).-.Tree%20planting,active%20travel%20routes%20within%20suburbs.)

- **Tree Funding for irrigation and maintenance** - Trees require ongoing generous operation budgets for maintenance (formative pruning) and irrigation. We also need local businesses to grow these trees for the future.
- **Permeability targets** –permeability targets are not referenced in the Plan. The ACT Government (Goal 4I) has committed to 30% surface permeability.

Somebody once told me that Moruya can be described as a carpark looking for a town. Stand in the carpark behind Harris Scarfe on a Sunday and see what I mean – wall to wall asphalt. In a hotter future the carparks will only get hotter and contribute to the Urban Heat Island Effect.



- **Materials use**— importance of selecting materials with reduced heat scores and enhanced permeability. Sebastian Pfautsch, University of Western Sydney has produced numerous studies on heat in schools and playgrounds. A general rule of thumb is usually the darker the material the hotter, and artificial surfaces (like turf/asphalt/concrete) etc get very hot. Many of these papers are available online  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/staff\\_profiles/WSU/associate\\_professor\\_sebastian\\_pfautsch](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/staff_profiles/WSU/associate_professor_sebastian_pfautsch)
- **Living or green infrastructure** (because they provide multiple ecosystem benefits, not just cooling) should be **prioritised** over artificial shade structures in most cases. Obviously a series of artificial structures that support a large array of solar panel over a carpark may be a better outcome than shade trees. It just depends on what your project is trying to achieve.
- **Community refuges** – are a brilliant concept. But they shouldn't be thought of only as a building with air-conditioning and air filtration.

#### **Example – Rainforest Gully, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra**

I took temperatures in the constructed rainforest gully at the Australian National Botanic Gardens on a hot January arvo in 2019. Air temperature at the bottom of the rainforest gully was 11°C cooler than the asphalt carpark and 8°C cooler than the shaded concrete concourse. On that afternoon, the temperature at the bottom of the rainforest gully was 26°C – comfortable for human use. The rainforest was acting like nature's evaporative cooler!

At The Climate Factory I work with local communities to create climate-cooling micro-forests. We are currently planning a Moruya micro-forest using Littoral (Coastal Rainforest) species. We will also incorporate water harvesting design into this plan, like we've successfully achieved in Canberra.

- **Water parks and water play** - could also be places of refuge on hot days and evenings during daylight saving. The Cairns Esplanade lagoon is free and gorgeous -  
<https://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/experience-cairns/Cairns-Esplanade/esplanade-sport-and-fitness-facilities>

What about something like this for Eurobodalla!!!!????!!! At Riverside Park plus a micro-forest.





*Cairns Esplanade Lagoon is a free public space surrounded by a lush and well maintained landscape - great for staying cool in heatwaves. Plenty of cool spaces under shady trees and irrigated grass for those who don't want to or can't swim.*

*Photo: Trip Advisor*

- **Managed Zone** - After experiencing the Black Summer fires in Moruya – I was struck by the idea of creating a zone around our township that was grazed (regeneratively) and fuel loads managed so we could at least create an ongoing managed fire-break between us and the bush.

Regards,

Edwina Robinson  
Landscape Architect and Founder  
The Climate Factory  
52 Evans St MORUYA 2537

25.7.22

A revised version of this document was submitted to Council in March 2022. I have more notes to this current version.

## **Round out the Climate Action Plan by declaring a climate emergency**

Congratulations to Council and staff on bringing the Climate Action Plan to reality..

How about, to round out the plan, Council join 104 other councils around Australia and declare that we're all in a climate emergency?

I know this will be contentious.

On the one hand I really don't want to be here today. I don't want to be in a climate emergency any more than you do. I desperately want to stay under the covers and wake up to find myself back in the predictable, moderate, benign climate I grew up in. I wish I'd never had to hear of climate change, global warming, greenhouse gases.

But that's wishful thinking.

Reality bites. Climate change is biting and biting hard all over the world. It bit hard in the megafires here in Eurobodalla.

It's no good thinking that our Eurobodalla emergency has passed. We know how to handle a big fire now. It's only other places now that are in a climate emergency. Not here.

Though we wish that were true, it simply isn't. There is only one climate and all the earth is in it. Sudden catastrophic climate-driven weather events will come here again. And in the meantime our nature coast will continue to slowly degrade because the atmosphere and water are warming and the ocean getting more acid.

So on the other hand, let's call a spade a spade.

A fortnight ago our Prime Minister signed Australia on to the Pacific Forum's climate emergency declaration.

Last week Prince Charles, the next leader of the Commonwealth, said the world is in a climate emergency as Europe sweltered and burnt.

This year's repeated floods north of us say we are.

104 Councils representing 10 million people across Australia say we are. (<https://www.climateemergencyaustralia.org.au>)

Informed Eurobodalla residents and visitors say we are.

They call a spade a spade.

What does declaring a climate emergency mean?

What it doesn't mean is that we're hitting the panic button, running around in confusion throwing money ineffectually at the problem.

Nor is a climate emergency declaration simply a symbolic gesture in lieu of practical action.

Rather such a declaration is a sober facing up to reality and a driver of action.

Any emergency requires timely planning and then action to implement the plan before the emergency turns into a catastrophe.

A climate emergency declaration tells everybody why the Council's Climate Action Plan is important - why this Council is taking fair dinkum action and not kicking the can down the road.

Such a declaration says we have a big and urgent problem that can't be put off.

Let's show solidarity with all drought, fire, storm and flood-hit shires and so many peoples around the world by calling a spade a spade and putting our shoulders to the wheel.

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# A Brief Lesson in Atmospheric Science

John McLean PhD

## BASICS

- A molecule is a combination of atoms e.g.,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  describes a water molecule.
- Nitrogen, oxygen and argon are not greenhouse gases, and account for about 98.5% of the air. Water vapour (1%) and other gases, some of them greenhouse gases, make up the rest.
- All gas molecules acquire and release energy via conduction (i.e. touching or colliding with another molecule), but greenhouse gases can also acquire and release energy via radiation.
- Radiation from the Earth's surface is infrared radiation. Visible light has a spectrum/rainbow, so too does infrared energy.

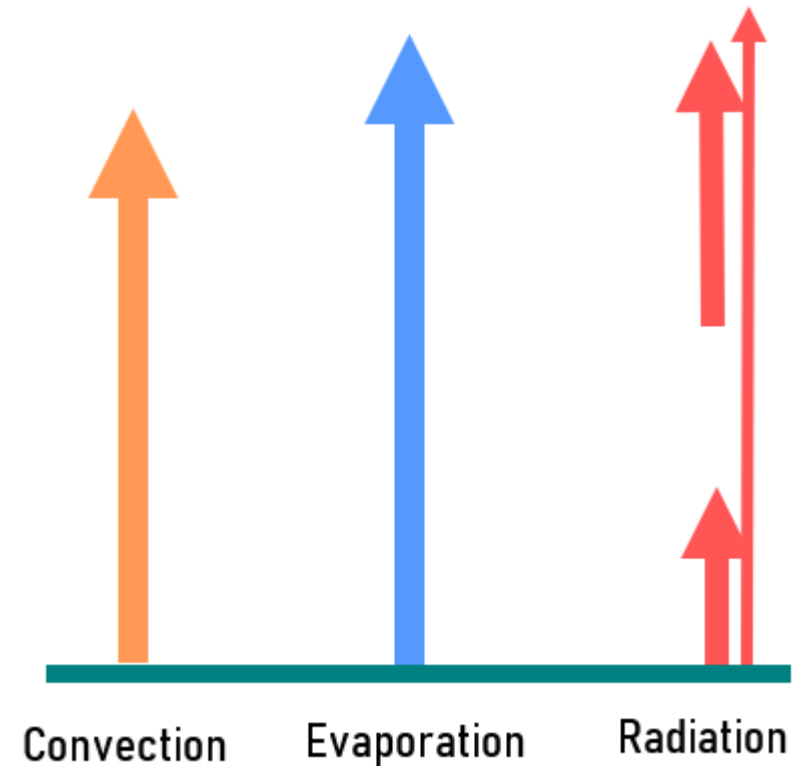
## How the Earth's surface cools:

The Earth's surface cools via three pathways

**Convection** : Hot air rises (think “hot air balloons”)

**Evaporation** : Convection PLUS carrying water vapour high in the atmosphere until it condenses into clouds

**Radiation** : Infrared radiation (longwave), just like the radiant heat from any hot object. This is the only pathway affected by greenhouse gases.



## Surface and atmosphere cooling by infrared radiation:

- Low in the atmosphere the radiation from the Earth's surface is mostly (but not entirely) absorbed by molecules of greenhouse gases (GHGs).
- Those molecules would radiate the energy away if they had enough time, but the energy is transferred to other gas molecules during collisions. (At the Earth's surface, there's about 6.9 billion collisions per second!)
- Molecular collisions transfer the energy around in the atmosphere, from gas molecule to gas molecule.
- GHG molecules can acquire energy during a collision and if they have time, they'll radiate it.
- They get more and more time as we go higher in the atmosphere because the air gets thinner, the molecules spread more and there's more time between collisions. The GHG molecules will radiate the energy in completely random directions including into space, which cools the atmosphere.

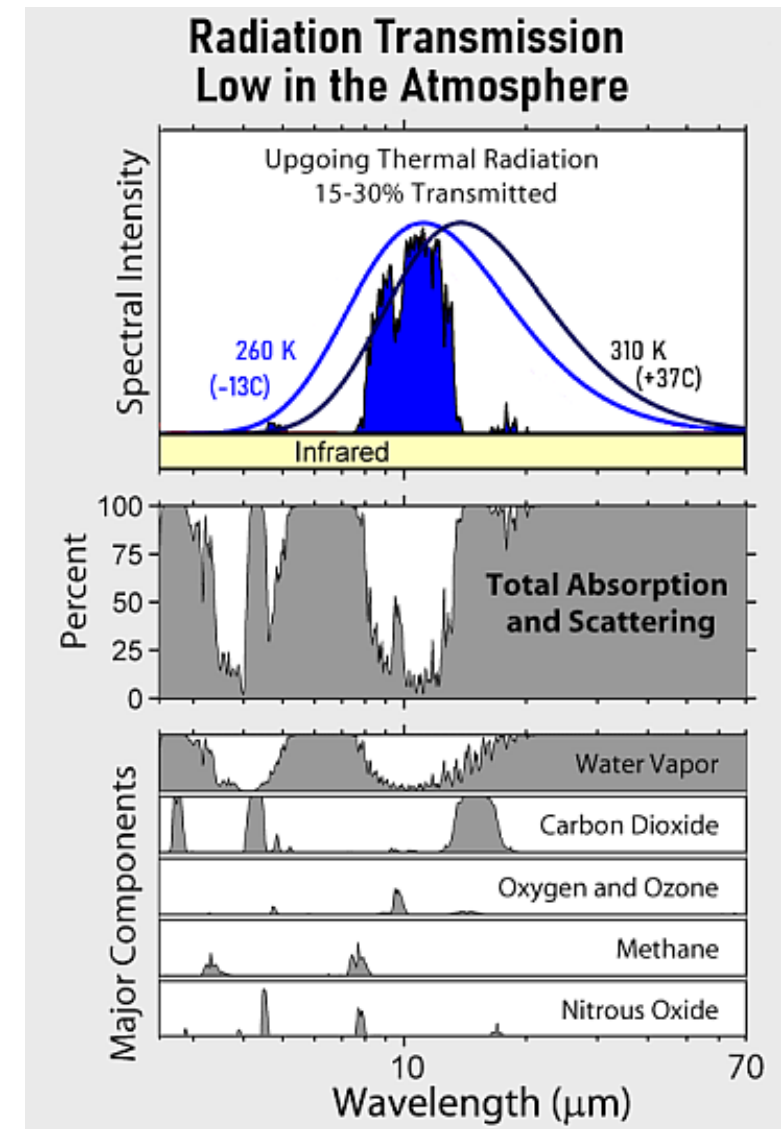
**Summary** – Low down: radiation absorbed but not radiated away; lots of collisions distribute the energy.

High up: a lot more radiating, including into space (which cools). There is NO trapping of any heat !

## Infrared absorption:

- Each greenhouse gas absorbs and emits only in certain wavelength bands of the infrared spectrum. In some wavelengths no gases absorb, but in others it's one or more.
- NB. Gas concentrations:
  - Water vapour: ~7,500 ppm to 10,000 ppm
  - Carbon dioxide: ~420 ppm
  - Methane: ~1.9 ppm
  - Nitrous oxide: ~0.3 ppm(so water vapour usually does most of the absorbing)

(The Figure is based on  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atmospheric\\_Transmission.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atmospheric_Transmission.png) )



## How much warming if CO<sub>2</sub> doubles?

*(At the present rate of increase, as described in the latest IPCC report, that will take about 200 years)*

- The latest report also says it is “very likely” that a doubling will mean 2.0 °C to 5.0 °C warming.
- More than 135 scientific papers predict less than that, most saying less than 1.0 °C  
(see <https://notrickszone.com/50-papers-low-sensitivity/> , which now talks about 137 papers )

Less than 1.0 °C over the next 200 years? That’s no emergency!



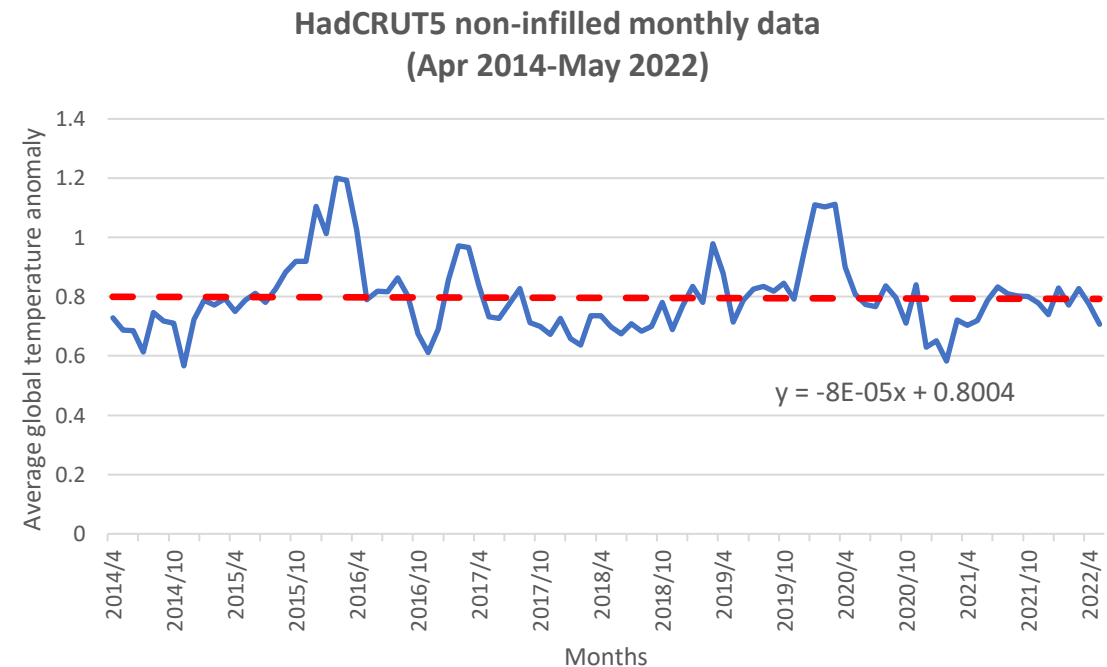
## And how fast is the world warming?

The latest IPCC report tells us (about 10 times) that the 2010-2019 average global temperature was just 1.09 °C above the average for 1850-1900.

If we take the middle of each period that's 1.09 °C in over 135 years, or less than 1.0 °C per 100 years.

*The figure on the right shows the temperature trend in monthly global averages since mid-April 2014 (seven years ago). The trend is FLAT (downwards at 0.00008 degrees/month is near enough to flat)*

*Anyone who says warming is accelerating is wrong!*



## **What should the council do?**

Preferably NOTHING. There is NO climate emergency nor any serious threat.

If orders come from above then do as little as possible, because any action will be a waste of rate-payers' money.

## **SOURCES:**

William Happer - Emeritus Professor of physics, Princeton University, USA

Thomas Sheahan – PhD (Physics), MIT, Boston, USA

William Kininmonth – Former head of Australia's National Climate Centre

John Nicol – PhD (Physics), former university lecturer with special interest in radiation

The End

## Public Forum Presentation - Council Meeting 26th July 2022

I am here to ask council to declare that we are facing a climate emergency. Many people do not understand that yet and council need to take a leadership role before it really is too late. It is getting close to too late to stop runaway climate change.

I loved hearing so much last week from Kamilaroi man about the tradition in his culture of thinking about the needs of people 7 generations ahead. . . a practice we'd do well to take on board.

This is the first meeting I have been to with our new council and I want to appreciate a couple of the changes I'm aware of:

Matt your a focus on the housing needs in the shire. Thinking of people living in tents for over 2 years and not having a hot shower seems cruel and unnecessary in this country!

Councillor catch ups and councillors making themselves available to listen to members of the community in different parts of the shire - I also appreciate knowing about.

*I also want to appreciate everyone who worked on the Climate Action plan.*

These things are hopeful, refreshing, and to me examples of rejuvenating democracy. Thank you! Thank you!

I grew up on a small family farm south of Cobargo where we milked cows and grew a lot of our own food. I went to Bega high school where I loved studying biology and ecology. These foundations gave me strong understandings of the natural world and my parents who both grew up in the depression taught me not to waste things. I like that I got these values these learnings early in my life.

In 1990 I first read about global warming and some time after then that I began getting involved with people and groups concerned about our world's climate.

In a recent re-run episode of David Attenborough's work in exploring the Great Barrier Reef there was a wonderful coming together of the *scientific* learning about the formation of the reef when the sea level rose around 7 - 10,000 years ago and the local Aboriginal peoples who have been passing on that knowledge through story and dance for *all those generations since*.

Losing the Great Barrier Reef, one of the seven wonders of the world, would be an enormous tragedy and alarm bells ring **loud** and **clear**.

Alarm bells about the threat to a safe future *are* ringing. If our children and peoples throughout the world are to have a future we need to listen... and act. With the update of the IPCC report and the recent State of the Environment report we - need - to - act.

Climate breakdown is also a huge **justice** issue. In taking part in workshop leadership teams at COP26 I was working with people from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and India. I learned about the struggles of these peoples. Communities which have caused so few of the emissions creating problems with our climate yet countries where people are feeling the

impacts so heavily and where many face starvation, water shortages and crop failures. It is truly heart breaking to hear their stories and so **unjust**.

Coming back home. As a Eurobodalla community we can be a model of intelligent action, of people who care and respond and plan appropriately. We can decide to be a model community that thinks about **everyone's** needs and the needs of our **future** people. We can play our part in reducing the dangerous emissions and put pressure on state and federal leaders to do the right things as well. We can showcase to our many visitors to the shire that we care and act intelligently and with integrity. *'Come and have a holiday here and learn what we are doing for our people and our country!'* Auntie Loretta Parsley ran a workshop in the library during NAIDOC week which included some young people here on holiday. They took home something special from their visit in addition to going to the beach.

The young people's climate movements are begging for us to act. We have Australian Youth Climate Coalition and Seedmob here in Australia. We have Australian Parent for Climate Action and so many many other organisations pleading governments to act. Internationally we have the pope's encyclicals and the Dalai Lama's calling for leadership on climate and we have Greta Thunberg - an international voice telling us we need to act. While it is still possible to make a difference let us respond and be proud.

I invite you to listen to a voice of a young adult activist from Kenya - Elizabeth Wathuti - in her beautiful and passionate speech at the government zone of the climate talks last November. She ended her 6 minute talk with 'Please - Open - Your - Hearts, and act'

You can find her talk on youtube. It's inspiring and moving. We *can* do as she asks - open our hearts, and take action.

I finish here by quoting from the Uluru Statement From the Heart. It speaks of *Coming together after a struggle*. What a powerful idea to come and act together across our different backgrounds and experiences in all of our best interests, our *real* human interests.

I now ask you our leaders to . . . please, act for our future. Let Eurobodalla be known as a community that leads the way here. Let us as a Eurobodalla community declare a **climate emergency!**

Sandy Wilder

My name is Dr Alan England

My concern centers around the lighting of fires in the Central Tilba area and other RU4 zones, the notices needed and the frequency of such fires.

When I bought a farm in Tilba, some 32 years ago, fires in the burning off season, were few and far between. Each farmer...on RU1 land, would have one, or two fires a year...mainly to burn off collected weeds, or to dispose of dead livestock....always lit in the mid to late afternoon when the morning dew had disappeared, and the Sun had dried the wood.

Since the opening up of 'rural' subdivisions, things have changed dramatically for the worse.

It is very obvious to me, that some suburban dwellers on 5 acre blocks are intent on converting the Tilba farmland and trees, that they inherited, into manicured lawn in a pristine suburban environment.

The object appears to be to beat the natural Tilba landscape into submission with a chainsaw, whipper snipper and fire.

The system is, that during the Fire season.. September to March, a permit is required from the RFS, and strict controls and criteria are in place for that season...

In the smoke season however, as I have come to call it... again the RFS is contacted online and a landowner can request a time period for a fire anytime and any length from April 1st to August 31st.

This so called advisory system is in my view being abused, as in theory a fire can then be lit everyday...a total of 152 days without constraint

One RU4 zone neighbour gave notice by text in April, that he had 'permission' or a 'permit' from the RFS to burn off a few piles...and then proceeded to have a fire almost every day from then on... without further notice...

He had over 60 fires, this year so far 24

There is virtually never a day, from April to September, that Tilba valley is not filled with smoke from a neighbour's fires ..often several at a time.

Even after rain, the fires start early in the morning and continue often to dusk...with a break for lunch... and copious green wet leaves make for a very large polluting fire.

My concerns are several fold...

That the restrictions on fires in urban and residential areas of the State of NSW, do not apply in this area because it is Rural...or used to be...

However the effect on the environment is the same...

In Urban areas even a wood burning stove needs Council permission, and needs to be installed in a professional proscribed way...

It is a travesty, that the definition of 'Rural' can be used by a 5 acre block owner, as an umbrella under which to hide their polluting ways.

This on blocks which are not being used in a 'Rural' manner, but just happen to be 4 or 5 acres in size.

They are to all intents and purposes a suburban block with all the desirable attributes of mowed lawns, manicured areas with many ornamental trees, and hedges

The burns to which I refer are not for hazard reduction....The fires are far from the houses, which are already in large cleared areas.

The fires appear designed to convert the whole property to a manicured space...and to slowly remove, under the guise of natural tree death, many of the native trees.

It is obvious to me, and on their own self admission, that the majority of people are unaware of many aspects of the Clean Air Act...if not all of it

Admitting in Emails to me for example that...

I quote...

'Today's fire will be very smoky as it contains a lot of green material...'

I believe that it is the 2 tier system involving the RFS even during the non-fire danger period, that is the major part of the problem. People believe that by telling the RFS, they have done the correct thing and now they can just pollute away.

That is not the case and the Act must be complied with...but Council's application of the Act relies on Self Assessment...and as Council would know along with other regulatory bodies, leaving people to police themselves can be fraught with problems.

I would ask Council to consider a different approach to fires in what used to be traditional rural areas.

I believe that the number of fires should be limited in number...not potentially limitless as is now the case.

That all effort be made to make everyone aware of their responsibilities under the Clean Air Act...

I suggest that a notice is sent out in the Rates package, and that further Emails, letters, texts, leaflet drops and advice are sent to Ratepayers who live outside the town and village areas.

That the Council keep records of fires, by requiring each and every one to be logged online 24 hours before being lit...

This would flag to Council the persistent polluters among us, and allow advice on composting or other guidance to be given as necessary.

This Council site should be available to the public online on a daily basis...as at present RFS advisory permission is not available at all online.

In other words if I see smoke today, I cannot know if the RFS has been informed or not, except by phoning them...and they don't know either, as they may have rubber stamped a window of several months for each property...so the whole purpose of informing the RFS is negated.



No one should be in a position in 2022, to give someone permission to pollute everyone else, all day, everyday.... without a valid community based reason.

If Australia is in any way serious about cutting its Carbon emissions, then much regulatory change by Councils is needed.

With the IPCC's most recent report, on human induced Climate change, being so definitive and damning, we should all be doing the right thing...not just following our own selfish agendas

Finally I would like to stress that I am not a rabid green activist...I am nearly 80 years old, but I see this as not just a health issue for me and my wife here in the firing line in Tilba, but a threat to us all in the long run.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter..

Alan England

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