



Australian Health Care Reform Alliance

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Climate change call to action



In 2015, governments asked the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the world’s most authoritative climate science body – to advise on how the world can limit global warming to 1.5°C and to examine climate impacts at this level of warming. Their report was released on October 8, 2018.

A [useful briefing document](#) on this report has been prepared by Climate KIC, Environment Victoria, Australian

Conservation Foundation, Future Earth, and Climate and Health Alliance.

This briefing addresses some frequently asked questions about limiting global warming to 1.5°C, and explains some of the key issues covered by the IPCC’s report.

The briefing document outlines how climate change is already being felt in Australia and around the world. For example, heatwaves and bushfires have become more extreme and more common, which is affecting the health and wellbeing of Australian people.

In Australia, the Great Barrier Reef has been severely damaged by human induced ocean heatwaves and acidification. Increasingly intense drought and heat are affecting farmers and regional communities.

Limiting warming to 1.5°C would significantly reduce both the frequency and severity of climate change impacts compared to a 2.0°C, or higher, temperature rise.

Even though “half a degree” below 2°C may sound small, limiting warming to 1.5°C significantly reduces harm, cost, and risks that Australia experiences from climate change compared to higher temperature rises. For example, work by Australian scientists suggests that under 2°C of warming, Sydney and Melbourne could experience temperatures of 50°C, but these extremes would be less likely if warming is limited to 1.5°C.

Australian climate scientists have examined how extreme events of recent years will become more likely as the world warms by 1.5°C and even more frequent and intense with 2°C of warming. Among their predictions are that ‘Severe heatwaves and bushfires’ would be likely to occur every two years if the global temperature increases by 1.5°C and in 7-8 years out of ten if it increases by 2°C.

The briefing document goes on to explain how the 1.5°C target can be met and outlines the actions that we need to take at a local, national and global level.

AHCRA urges all health sector stakeholders to read this important document.

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