

# Climate Action Campaign

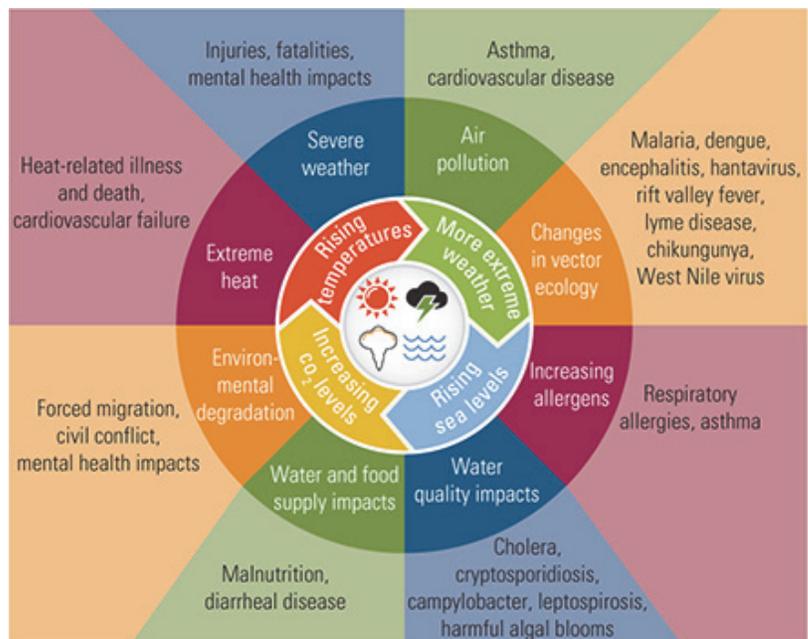
We face a climate crisis. Christians are called to care for God's creation, and to love their neighbours. Urgent action to secure a safe climate for all is essential.

## Key Facts

- Australia is already experiencing significant impacts from climate change. The 2019/2020 bushfire season started in winter and was the worst on record for New South Wales in terms of its intensity, the area burned, and the number of properties lost. [1]
- Warming has caused the Great Barrier Reef to bleach for the third time in five years in 2020, causing irreparable damage. Limiting greenhouse gas pollution is our only hope to save the reef. [2]
- The best scientific evidence shows that for climate change to be kept below 1.5°C, we need to reduce global emissions by 76% in just ten years. [3] The consequences of not keeping below 1.5°C is shown in the first image.
- Australia, as a rich nation with very high per capita emissions, has a moral responsibility to do more than the global average to reduce our emissions.
- The second image shows the health impacts of climate change. The Australian Medical Association says climate is having the earliest and most severe health consequences on vulnerable populations including deaths and injury from severe weather events, heat stress, vector-borne diseases, food insecurity and higher rates of mental health issues. [4]
- NSW currently has a target of only 35% emissions reductions by 2030, [5] and is currently not on track to achieve even that. This is largely due to slow investment in renewables - despite the job opportunities such investment represents. The ACT uses 100% renewable electricity of which it generates 5%. [6]
- Uniting has 45,000+ clients and we are concerned that the most vulnerable people in our society will be those most affected by global heating.



CLIMATECOUNCIL.ORG.AU | crowd-funded science information



# The Campaign

In July 2019, the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of NSW/ACT resolved to:

- (i) Develop a Synod-wide Climate Action Strategy to reduce carbon emissions across all councils and agencies of the Church and to advocate to the Federal, State Governments and Local Councils to take decisive steps to reduce our emissions nationally.
- (ii) Support initiatives taken by young people in advocating for action of climate change, including the global climate strikes. (Resolution 106/19S)

To achieve this, the Synod has established five Task Groups through which church members and Uniting staff can take action for a safe climate, either by joining the groups, using their resources, or attending their events.

## Synod Emission Reductions Task Group

Focussed on reducing emissions across the Synod, its agencies, boards and schools; and supporting emissions reduction at scale across congregations and among Uniting Church members. Major areas of work include reducing electricity consumption, increasing the proportion of renewable power, and transitioning vehicle fleets to hybrid and then electric.

## Congregation and Individual Emissions Task Group

Focussed on reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of Uniting Church congregations and Uniting Church members, families and households.

## Advocacy Task Group

Focussed on helping the church advocate to all levels of government for action for a safer climate; positioning the Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT as a respected organisation regarding climate pollution reduction and climate leadership.

## Climate Mass Actions Task Group

Focussed on facilitating Uniting Church involvement in the global climate strikes.

## Climate Anxiety and Pastoral Care Task Group

Focussed on creating conversations and training to help people deal constructively and hopefully with the growing anxiety and despair related to climate change, especially climate driven extreme events.

**Find out more about all the task groups and how you can get involved at:**

[www.unitingearth.org.au/campaigns/](http://www.unitingearth.org.au/campaigns/)

**Find out why the church is taking action for a safe climate:**

<https://www.unitingearth.org.au/a-short-summary-of-ecothology/>

## References

- [1] <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/summer-of-crisis/>
  - [2] <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/25/great-barrier-reef-suffers-third-mass-coral-bleaching-event-in-five-years>
  - [3] 2019 UN Emissions Gap Report <https://www.unenvironment.org/interactive/emissions-gap-report/2019/>
  - [4] Australian Medical Association, 2019, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2019/09/ama-labels-climate-change-a-health-emergency/>
  - [5] <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/climate-change/net-zero-plan>
  - [6] <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-01/act-is-100-per-cent-renewable-but-what-does-that-mean/11560356>
- Image 1: <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resource/infographics/>

Image 2: <https://www.armadalefamilyclinic.com.au/afcs-efforts-in-reducing-climate-change-impact-on-health/>