



Public Statement from the Climate Emergency and Species Extinction Working Group of Australia Yearly Meeting

Quakers in Australia call for sustained action in all areas of human activity to transform the root causes of environmental destruction and climate change to create a fairer, healthier and more equal society. We continue to be deeply concerned about the slow progress towards climate justice both in Australia and other countries.

Australian Quakers believe we must consider the world as an en-Spirited whole, to accept no boundary to repairing and sustaining the Earth for the future, and to appreciate more deeply the creative energy in all living things and life processes. We seek to mend what has been hurt, and to strengthen our courage to discern and bear witness to this spiritual care for the Earth.

We call on the new Australian Government to carefully consider the voice of Australian people who have so clearly expressed similar impatience with Australia's response so far. That voice has heard the authoritative warnings from climate scientists, emergency response leaders and many others with expertise in disaster relief following fire, flood and crop failure. Many Australians understand the existential nature of the climate emergency and the ominous implications of continued decline in our biodiversity and unique natural ecosystems. But others feel threatened and are worried by the changes required of them, in addition to those now suffering enormously from the effects of the climate crisis. They need our love, support and government assistance during the difficult years of transition that lie ahead.

Australian Quakers share the concerns of many people worldwide that yearn for global peace and justice. We endorse the statement by our Quaker representatives at the United Nations who say to the international community: *"Our human existence is dependent on the health of the planet. Yet we exploit nature and human beings for profit over wellbeing, resulting in environmental crises that threaten the survival of our and other species. We can heal these relationships and protect future generations."*

The Earth is our spaceship; its natural resources are limited. Unsustainable and unjust economic approaches are driving environmental crises, including climate change. The "global economy is almost five times the size it was half a century ago and has already been accompanied by the degradation of an estimated 60% of the world's ecosystems."

In this part of the world we must heed the voices of our Pacific Island neighbours and others in the region who are already bearing the burden of rising sea-levels, growing salination of land, and cry out for help. Our neighbours did not cause the climate crisis but are suffering its consequences. As good neighbours we must respond by playing our full part in addressing the causes of climate change and in helping communities mitigate its impacts.

We grieve with those who are so saddened and concerned about the world they currently live in or will inherit that they feel driven to take direct action. We must find ways to hear their voices, and not ignore their cries for help and more urgent action. Quakers recognise the climate emergency is more than physics and chemistry. It is about humanity recognising the value of being guided by the interdependent values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, community and earthcare.

Adopted 9 July 2022 at Yearly Meeting 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Henry".

Bruce Henry
Presiding Clerk

Australia Yearly Meeting

The Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers) in Australia Inc.
Incorporated in the ACT
PO Box 4035
Carlingford North NSW 2118
Australia

M: 0423 308 550
E: secretary@quakersaustralia.info
www.quakersaustralia.org.au
ABN 16 036 715 933