

Climate change & extreme weather events

To the Senate enquiry

Dear Senators

Like many at this time, I am enjoying the beach, whilst being much concerned for those victims of the appalling fires ravaging three states. This surely lends weight to the reality of global warming. I have tried to do something in a small way by the use of solar panels, both photovoltaic and hot water, at home. I am increasing the use of solar panels while camping also. I am very disappointed at the seeming reluctance of both Government and major electricity producers to do much more to implement large scale solar generation. Countries such as Norway and New Zealand produce much electricity by renewable means by using their natural advantage for hydro-electricity. Australia has a huge solar advantage over most developed countries but fails to take advantage of this potential to any worthwhile extent. It also fails to lead in the business of developing and building solar systems.

Whilst some may claim that the present hot spell is just a freak one-off event, my observations as a cross-country skier in the Australian high country for more than 45 years are that there has been an inexorable decline in snowfall over that period. 40 years ago it was a rarity to see Rocky Valley Dam not frozen over in winter. Now it is rare to see much if any ice on it at all.

As an XC skier I still spend some money at ski villages, and this will continue to diminish along with fewer opportunities and incentive to go skiing in Australia, where the snow seasons have always been shorter and less reliable than in say New Zealand, where I have been several times in recent years to enjoy better snow cover and conditions. This may well become the norm for both lifted and XC skiers.

If there are to be public hearings I should welcome notice of them and the chance to participate as I have in many matters relating to alpine affairs over the years. I was a founding member of the Ski Touring Association of Victoria and of the Winter Group Inc.

Yours faithfully,
Loch Wilson