



Introducing DEA's five-year plan

We are delighted to share with you [DEA's Strategic Framework 2020-25](#), which outlines our vision for the next five years. This will be a critical time for action on climate change and other environmental harms, and we are confident DEA's "road map" will ensure our organisation is well placed to lead on addressing these enormous challenges.

The Framework was launched on February 15th in Melbourne. DEA Co-chair, Eugenie Kayak, spoke of the process leading to the formation of our 5 year Strategic Framework, which was developed after extensive consultation with DEA members and other key stakeholders, following an organisational review. DEA Executive Director, Denise Cauchi, discussed the Framework outline. Grant Blashki, a Co-founder of DEA, GP, Associate Professor at the Nossal Institute for Global Health and currently the Lead Clinical Advisor at Beyond Blue also presented. Over 50 DEA members attended the evening and over 500 have accessed it on Facebook. If you missed the launch it can be viewed [here](#).

Over the next five years, DEA will build on its reputation for high-quality, evidence-based information to inform progressive policy on climate change. An area of significant growth will be a more deliberate approach to campaigning, involving partnerships and collaborations with other organisations. The Framework centres on DEA's overall strategic aim: Human health is at the heart of the climate emergency response.

The 10 Objectives stem from 3 main Change Goals involving; Public Awareness and Campaigning; Public and Political Influence; and Organisational Transformation. After a Summer like no other for so many Australians, DEA's mission seems like it has never been more relevant "Protecting health through care of the environment".

Hence we hope DEA's Strategic Framework will ensure DEA is well placed to step up its influence, advocacy, education and campaigning work – by working with all our members and staff - to realise our aim and goals.

Eugenie Kayak (DEA Co-chair) and Denise Cauchi (Executive Director).

National Climate Emergency Summit 14-15 February 2020

Breakout session: We Declare, Professionals and Industries Mobilise At the National Climate Emergency Summit

DEA was represented by Richard Yin as part of the panel discussion with other professional and industry groups who had declared a climate emergency. These included tourism, town planners, architects and engineers. In the audience were also lawyers, veterinarians and physiotherapists also looking to mobilise and declare support for a climate emergency.

An interesting aside was a discussion by both engineers and town planners was that historically, their disciplines arose in response to health issues, namely water and sewerage. There might be more that unites us than separates us! It was really heartening to see groups representing a broad section of community engaging with this issue and each doing what they could to be part of the solution. Perhaps an important distinction for us was our role in advocacy.

Seen through the lens of health and this as a public health issue, there is a need for us to go beyond what is occurring within our sector in terms of emissions but also a requirement for us to demand policy change as part of a public health response to this crisis. *Richard Yin*

Hon Zali Steggall Bill - A Climate Change Act would be a game-changer!

Urge your MP to vote for it!

The Climate Change (National Framework for Adaptation and Mitigation) Bill 2020 being introduced into the Federal Parliament by Hon Zali Steggall is a bold attempt to halt 15 years or more of dithering within that Parliament while climate change has become increasingly obvious, destructive and dangerous and responses to it have been woefully inadequate.

How can you help canvass support for this Bill?

1. Sign the petition <https://climateactnow.com.au>
2. Convince your MP to have a conscience vote for the Climate Change Act (phone/write or meet with them)

3. Consider being in Canberra on March 23rd to show support.
4. Ensure to note that you're a doctor concerned about climate-health risks.

Doctors are uniquely placed to support this bi-partisan, essential legislation which should have been enacted years ago. DEA has developed an MP visit Advocacy Pack to assist members with MP visits in relation to this Bill, our Climate Emergency campaign <https://climateemergency-notimeforgames.nationbuilder.com> and more (please contact admin@dea.org.au or your state DEA committee).

Guidance and resources can also be found on the Climate Act Now website <https://climateactnow.com.au>

In response to the best available scientific evidence, the objective of zero net global emissions, incorporated within the Bill, has now been adopted by over 80 countries, all of the Australian States and Territories, many local governments, the Business Council of Australia and many major corporations. The Federal Government has chosen not to do so and repeats the same tired excuses why it cannot set that minimum goal.

The Bill proposed by Zali Steggall has four major objectives:

1. a positive response to the challenges of climate change that is transparent and effective, and that pursues new opportunities, generational equity and just transitions
2. national plans for adapting to a changing climate, so that the different parts of our continent and economy can respond positively to changing physical conditions and international policies
3. national plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet emission reduction targets that align with scientific imperatives and State government and international commitments, and
4. transparent monitoring, reporting and accountability for national adaptation and emission reduction actions, with an independent Climate Change Commission (CCC) to advise Government and Parliament.

The inclusion of an independent Climate Change Commission is a vital component of this Bill and an independent Commonwealth Sustainability Commission has been DEA policy for some time.

[DEA-Policy---Action-on-Climate-Change-and-Health-Governance-and-Strategy-09-18](#)

. It would need however to be led by genuine experts in a number of relevant fields (including health which appears to be lacking in the current proposal) and mandated to give strong high- level advice,

based upon the best available evidence, to the Federal Government with the clear understanding that such advice must be taken into account when major policy is being formulated.

What the Federal Parliament has failed to address, and what this Bill still does not adequately emphasize is the absolute urgency (this decade, this year) of addressing the rising green-house gas emissions causing the present impacts of climate change nationally and internationally. Even if all commitments made to the Paris Agreement were fulfilled, we will not achieve the necessary reductions in national or global emissions by 2030.

The next decade is crucial, made more urgent by the policy and practice failures of the previous decades. A recent IPCC report <https://unfccc.int/news/cut-global-emissions-by-76-percent-every-year-for-next-decade-to-meet-15degc-paris-target-un-report> highlights that globally an annual reduction in emissions of 7.6% through to 2030 will be needed to keep the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrialisation levels.

Politicians must listen to the science.

After a summer of horrendous bush fires with associated air pollution sweeping through large areas of Australia, the Australian public is now well aware of the threats climate change presents and that more effective policies are going to be necessary to reduce the chance of such events recurring in our very vulnerable country and being better prepared for that likelihood.

The Zali Steggall Bill is a private members Bill and it proposes a valuable framework. The Bill does not stress the urgent challenge of what should be done in the next decade. The 2050 net zero goal is fine but the climate emergency is present now, not thirty years ahead.

As the initiative has come from a non-aligned independent member of the Parliament, the Bill could be a circuit breaker to achieve sufficient bi-partisan support. Unlike the UK and many other nations, that level of rational behaviour on this issue has been absent in Australia to date.

Although the proposed Bill does not include all that DEA would like to see embraced and has not emphasized the scale and urgency of actions now required, it does include the widely accepted goal of net zero emissions by 2050 and proposes a useful framework for action with an independent Climate Change Commission to assist in accelerating the process.

With those reservations, DEA as an organisation supports the Bill and encourages its members to use their advocacy skills to persuade their local Federal Parliamentary members to do likewise.

Members have already begun engaging their MPs and DEA member Dr Kate Charlesworth spoke on behalf of health professionals at the launch of the Bill in Canberra. Kate spoke about:

- Climate change as a health issue that risks undermining the last 50 years in public health gains
- A Climate Change Act would mean that the health sector could put into action, plans to adapt to and mitigate climate-health risks
- Climate action is a tremendous opportunity for health: many climate actions – renewable energy, cleaner transport, greener cities > will mean cleaner air, healthier communities, safer/ cooler cities.

Photo from left: Andrew Wilkie, Dr Kate Charlesworth, Prof. Penny Sackett (former Australian Chief Scientist), Charlie Prell (Farmers for Climate Action), Rebekah Sharkie, Zali Steggall, Helen Haines

iDEA 2020: 4 - 5 April

A reminder that iDEA 2020 is now less than a month away. If you are still considering attending the event please click [here](#) for further information regarding the program.

Limited Edition "Recovery" Print by Shaun Tan.

Recovery, a limited edition print for bushfire relief, from an original painting for Rules of Summer. Together with Beinart Gallery and Splitting Image Colour Studio, a specially priced print is being sold to raise money for communities and wildlife restoration in bushfire ravaged regions of Australia and for organisations committed to long

term climate justice and advocacy for change. 100% of all proceeds will split evenly among the following four charitable organisations:

- Greening Australia
- Zoos Victoria Bushfire Emergency Wildlife Fund
- Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network and
- Doctors for the Environment Australia.

For further information please click [here](#)

State Updates

New South Wales

DEA presents at NSW Parliamentary Committee

Drs Kathleen Wild and John Van der Kallen (pictured below) presented to the NSW Parliamentary committee enquiry into the Territorial Limits Bill. This bill has been designed to try and exclude the consideration of Scope 3 emissions (those emissions that are burnt in other countries from projects that originate in Australia – think coal and gas) from new developments. The argument from the fossil fuel lobby is that these don't impact the health of Australian's which is clearly wrong!

[Read the submission here](#)

Watch DEA NSW explain the Australian climate emergency on French TV

ARTE TV (akin to ABC in Australia) recently presented a report on the climate emergency in Australia featuring NSW DEA chair, John Van Der Kallen. The report looked at the impacts of the fires and our deleterious climate politics. Huge thanks to Dr Tuan Au (pictured), Singleton GP who assisted the production team with obtaining aerial footage.

[Watch the report here \(subtitles available\)](#)

DEA NSW represented at Climate Action Rally

Newcastle GP and DEA member Dr Kathleen Wild spoke at the Newcastle Climate Crisis: National Day of Action Rally, which was attended by about 2000 people. The Rally was held to call upon government climate action including a transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030 and for no new fossil fuel projects. In her speech, Dr

Wild highlighted the necessity of climate action for protecting our health and communities.

Kathleen Wild at the Newcastle Climate Crisis: National Day of Action Rally.

South Australia

Equinor withdraws from drilling in the Bight

Equinor withdraws from drilling in the Bight The most shocking revelations about this development was the total support from both major parties, state and federal and the relative absence of environmental and health regulations to oppose it. These are detailed in an article this week

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/a-reprieve-from-oil-drilling-in-the-bight-but-a-permanent-ban-is-vital-17264/>

Further offshore drilling is planned around Australia particularly in WA and near to Newcastle off the NSW coast and it is important that the lessons learned by DEASA are understood and built on. These are

- NOPSEMA, the “independent expert regulator for health and safety, environmental management, structural and well integrity for offshore petroleum facilities and activities in Commonwealth waters.” is not required to address climate change, individual or community health impacts, or adverse economic outcomes, or their alleviation.
- Its committee has no marine ecologist, no health expert and no expert on climate change progression or modelling.
- Its “licence” to adjudicate which emanates from the totally inadequate EPBC Act was last reviewed in 2014!

There is little hope for change in regulations in the next two years and even then we need wait new environmental laws

The contributions of the DEA SA committee

A comprehensive submission

<https://www.dea.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Stromlo-1-Exploration-Drilling-Program-Draft-Environment-Plan-submission-03-19.pdf>

to NOPSEMA which detailed the damages to human health from spills are present for decades; this information was researched from the Valdez spill in Alaska and the New Horizon spill in the USA. One of us had studied impacts of the Valdez spill on site 10 years after it had

occurred. Long standing impacts almost certainly occur because of the release of PAHs which remain in the environment.

Articles in the media:

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/oil-drilling-in-australian-bight-a-disaster-for-climate-biodiversity-16393/>

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/oil-drilling-in-the-bight-will-signal-an-unsustainable-future-for-humanity-72979/>

<https://croakey.org/formulating-a-medical-response-to-a-deadly-disease-of-disordered-thinking/>

[Health and oil fact sheet](#)

Meeting NOPSEMA representatives and Professor Finkel when the government asked him to review the process.

Working with Rebekha Sharkie entre Alliance, Mayo, who opposes the development

Letters to the Norwegian parties and parliamentarians

Working with Wilderness Society to inform communities around the Bight

We also determined that the assessment by NOPSEMA that impacts on the environment are "acceptable" as defined by the ALARP principle that the residual risk shall be reduced as far as reasonably practicable. In other words the proponent decides.

Liaison with Adelaide University Law School- it appears there are no mechanisms for communities and industries (fishing and tourism) to take legal action after a spill.

Scope 3 emissions

Equinor's withdrawal from the Bight is seemingly because of its need to reduce Scope 3 emissions to fulfil commitments made by European oil companies. Australia's scope 3 are likely the largest in the world, just imagine if this was imposed on Australia

Thanks are due to the magnificent and dedicated work of Team DEASA
David Shearman

Other South Australia News

- The enlarged South Australian Committee will meet again next week to decide on the final formation of Special Purpose Groups.

- Equinor's withdrawal from the Bight is good news but gas exploration is continuing in South Australia.
- Leigh Creek Energy's underground coal gasification pilot project is continuing out of the spotlight and the issue of lead levels in children remains a problem in Port Pirie.
- DEA SA continues to liaise with Carbon Neutral Adelaide. As part of Adelaide's "mad March", Flinders University, the Garden of Earthly Delights and WOMADelaide are presenting a free public reading of the IPCC SR 1.5 degrees with readings by comedians, elected representatives, scientists, and some Carbon Neutral Adelaide. Partners:
<https://www.flinders.edu.au/engage/culture/whats-on/degrees-live>

Victoria

Future of gas in Victoria

Vic DEA is campaigning for the Victorian State Government to extend the moratorium on onshore conventional gas exploration. The Victorian Gas Program's final report on the status of underground gas supplies in Victoria is expected to be released around March. The Government's decision will follow in June.

We are planning a week of action beginning March 16th during which we will be asking members to email the Premier and other target MPs, sign a petition and use social media to demonstrate public opposition to further gas exploration and development in Victoria. We will also be meeting with key MPs to discuss the range of health impacts associated with gas extraction and burning.

For these discussions, and to facilitate public education, we have prepared a fact sheet on the health impacts of burning gas indoors. This will soon be available on DEA's website so please share widely. This provides an additional reason for moving away from gas, in addition to those extensively discussed in [DEA's background paper](#) on the implications for human health and wellbeing of expanding gas mining in Australia.

Coalition MP visits

Last month, Vic DEA met with MP Katie Allen to discuss the health impacts of the climate crisis and ask her to support Zali Steggall's proposed [climate change bill](#). A similar meeting has been arranged with

Russell Broadbent in the coming week. These are both Coalition MPs who have been identified as potentially more likely to put their support behind the proposed legislation than other Coalition MPs. We have put out a call to our members asking them to seek meetings with their own MPs to garner support, particularly those from the Coalition.

L to R: Eugenie Kayak, Jenny Smithers, Katie Allen MP, Fiona Stanley , John Iser

Ethical paper

Does your hospital or clinic use ethically sourced paper or is it made from on-going logging of Australia's remaining native forests? Vic DEA member Xavier Harvey has been involved in driving Austin Health to sign the Ethical Paper pledge and thereby commit to environmentally sound paper procurement.

Read the Austin Health ethical paper story here:

<http://www.austin.org.au/news/CaringforCountry/>.

If you would like to lobby your health service to make the switch, Xavier can offer advice and support. Please contact Xavier on 0432563107 or xavharv@pm.me.

Western Australia

This month has seen members make significant contributions, with 2 articles featuring DEA members, in a special edition of the [AMA WA magazine Medicus](#) (available only for AMA members) with a focus on climate change and health. The state is still awaiting the outcomes of the Climate Health WA Inquiry. Encouraging in the articles was that authored by the state AMA president, Andrew Miller, where he outlined the AMA's position in their submission to the inquiry calling for WA Health to be the lead agency in a whole of government approach towards addressing climate change and its impacts on human health in WA.

The committee has also met with the policy advisor to the health minister to discuss the issue of a Sustainable Development Unit. Congratulations to Emma-Leigh Synott and her sustained advocacy for a sustainability officer at Fiona Stanley Hospital. The hospital has since advertised for the position.

DEA has also made a small submission on the proposed Browse to NWS Development and North West shelf project extension. The magnitude of

this project should not be underestimated.

[Total emissions from the joint venture](#) would dwarf those from the Adani coal mine.

Campaign Updates:

Climate Emergency Declaration

Since we started our Climate Health Emergency campaign, the RACP, RACGP, ACEM, ACRRM, ANZCA, RANZCP, CICM and TSANZ, colleges representing over 80,000 doctors, have all declared climate change as a health emergency. More colleges are expected to make similar declarations as DEA continues our engagement with them. Our members have been very supportive and have been directly lobbying their respective colleges to make a declaration. Around 2400 doctors have signed onto our petition page.

In addition, AMA SA have also signed onto our petition page and Dr Chris Moy and Professor Julian Rait the presidents of AMA in South Australia and Victoria respectively, Tessa Kennedy, the chair of the Doctors in Training council and Daniel Zou, president of AMSA, spoke at the recent Climate Emergency Summit. DEA will use this broad support as a platform for further discussions with the AMA to have them take a more active stance on this issue. When we started the campaign, we had as end points that 6 colleges would have declared; 5000 doctors sign onto the petition; that the AMA would show greater leadership and publicly demand more from government and that we would have recruited 400 new doctors into DEA. We have exceeded expectations on some fronts and while being well on the way towards other objectives. More importantly have been the sense of a growing movement with more and more members seeking to be actively involved.

Siemens

In January it came to our attention that Siemens, a company which has significant investments in the health sector, were providing rail signalling equipment for the Adani coal mine. Many environmental groups had begun advocacy including Market Forces, Australian Conservation Foundation, Greenpeace, Stop Adani but also within Germany where the company had their main office, groups such as Fridays for Future (their school strike equivalent) were lobbying. In support of this global movement, DEA wrote to the CEO, Joe Kaeser, asking him to cease the company's involvement with Adani. We also invited members to write personally. Some 1-200 members wrote personal letters, some even in German! As a follow-up action, in the lead-up to the shareholder assembly, DEA again wrote and organised a joint letter signed by 17 health groups from around the world.

Members were again invited to write in. (attach link to letter) Siemens while expressing understanding for the position of activists has not changed its position and will honour the contract that they have signed. In their press release however, they acknowledged that they had "secured the right to pull out of the contract if our customer violates the very stringent environmental obligations".

Just after the shareholder assembly, Adani has been found guilty of a criminal offence in regards to land-clearing for the Adani mine, theoretically opening the door for Siemens to withdraw from the project. [adani-guilty-of-criminal-offence-over-mine-site-land-clearing](#) . This action from DEA has been an experiment in working internationally with other health groups around the world and building relationships. Arguably, actions in Germany were more effective against Siemens than actions in Australia with the collaborative voice being the strongest point of advocacy. As the BMJ moves to promote fossil fuel divestment as a public health measure, how we engage in this space might become more important.

Divestment update:

March 20th is Divestment Day 2020!

Are you still banking with one of the Big 4 banks? Now is the time to tell them you are leaving them for a bank that doesn't still lend billions to new fossil fuel projects! Find your nearest event here [Divestment Day 2020](#) or set up your own local event. Bank Divestment actions are fun and powerful and if you haven't yet switched to a clean bank, they are a great way to make leaving noisy and effective.

Biodiversity update:

WTF does EPBC mean and why should I care?

Hope I got your attention with the rude acronym?!! Using complex and confusing terminology is a clever way of government distancing the public from their plans to destroy more nature.

EPBC stands for Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act , or as the Liberals and other right wing people would say, 'green tape'. The EPBC act is the system currently in place doing an abysmal job at protecting nature, and is one of the reasons for our appalling rates of species loss, land clearing and logging. Did you know, for example, that Australia has the highest rate of biodiversity loss of any country apart from Indonesia and is leading the world in mammalian extinction?

Every 10 years the government has to review this legislation and it's currently in the process of doing so. It has appointed an 'independent' committee chaired by Graeme Samuel. Sadly, there is no health voice on the committee and no doubt the purpose is to 'cut green tape' and make it easier for mining and other destructive processes to proceed. DEA has been collaborating with other groups to help develop an alternative set of laws that will protect nature and Katherine Barraclough has been working hard on a submission on DEA's behalf. What would be wonderful is if DEA members can add their individual voice too. You can do this by:

- Leaving a comment- if you are short of time you can make a short comment, less than 300 words and still very much worthwhile: [brief comment](#)
- Make a submission- these hold more weight- by doing this as a doctor, and linking the importance of nature to human health, you can help shift their narrow perspective from regarding nature as a something to chop down or dig up to its fundamental importance to our wellbeing: [Submissions](#)

The closing date to have your say is **April 17th** and we have a resource to help you on our website here

Let's flood their review with comments and submissions!

Nature prescriptions

Dimity Williams was interviewed by ABC Canberra on the value of nature prescriptions for human health and it is great to see that the ACT government has allocated money for this in their budget document!

Wonderful nature- beginning with blue banded bees

Our committee has a new initiative where we highlight the beauty and value of biodiversity for human health by sharing positive stories. These will be published monthly at Openforum and shared on our website and socials. Our first one is by Marion Carey and celebrates the wonder of the blue banded bees in her garden. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

DEA in the News February 2020

Click [here](#) to see media articles featuring DEA and our members

Connect with us on social media!

Keep abreast of the latest DEA news and events, as well as health and environment stories, reports, studies and insights by connecting with us on

@DocsEnvAus @doctorsfortheenvironment

Doctors for the Environment Australia
Inc.

1 Tripovich Street,
Brunswick VIC 3056

admin@dea.org.au

ABN: 80 178 870 373

Join us on social media!

Keep abreast of the latest DEA news and events, as well as health and environment stories, reports, studies and insights by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!