

A DIFFERENT APPROACH COMMUNITY Pty Ltd

ADAC – Climate Action in Australia

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28<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Senator M.F. Smith  
Commonwealth Parliament Offices,  
Suite 6, Level 13, 100 King William Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

Dear Senator M.F. Smith,

Australians have appreciated collaborative state and federal government initiatives to halt the spread of Covid-19. Like many around the world, they are suffering from high levels of anxiety as they deal with the fragmentation of family and social networks, loss of freedoms and loss of travel dreams.

Many have felt the pain of isolation, and of financial and social distress. Breadwinners are doubting their ability to provide for their families into the future. Grandparents have been denied seeing their newborn grandchildren. Family members have had to die alone. Our children fear closeness. They are developing germ phobias and struggling with nightmares. There will be long-term effects of Covid-19 on the mental health of Australians.

The virus is the tip of the iceberg in terms of mental health. Australians, especially our young people, are already suffering a profound foreboding about the effects of climate change on their future. Some doubt they will reach old age and plan not to have children.

They are painfully aware of the rate at which plant and animal species are becoming extinct. The increased frequency of bushfires and other climate-driven disasters is obvious to them. They fear the long term international tensions that will result from shortages of food and water. Intense feelings will turn to anger if Australians see political vested interests blocking collaborative action to avert the worst effects of climate change. The Covid-19 catch cry 'we are all in this together' needs to permeate political thinking about the even deeper crisis that the world faces, climate change.

The nation's capacity to prevent disasters, to nurture a healthy environment, to ease international tensions and to develop a strong economy based on sustainable technologies will diminish the longer we put off the bipartisan approach necessary. As the nation rebuilds from Covid-19, it is important that the advice of scientists and economists modifies oppositional politics and is treated with the same respect as it has been during the pandemic.

ADAC encourages you to support Zali Stegall's <https://climateactnow.com.au/>

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