

## Climate Health WA Inquiry

### About your submission

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or group?

No

Yes

If yes, please identify the organisation:

### Your contact details

The following information will not be published without your permission but enables the Inquiry to contact you about your submission if required.

First name	Ana
Surname	Gowrea
Address	[REDACTED]
Phone	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]

### Publication of submissions

Submissions will be published with the name of the submitter unless otherwise indicated below. Do you consent to be identified in the published submission?

Yes, I / my organisation agree to be identified

No, I / my organisation request to remain anonymous

### Terms of Reference

You are encouraged to address at least ONE of the Terms of Reference as listed below. Please select which item/s you will address:

1. Establish current knowledge on the implications of climate change for health in Western Australia (WA) and recommend a framework for evaluating future implications.

2. Identify and recommend a program of work to manage the implications of climate change for health in WA, which will protect the public from the harmful health impacts of climate change.

3. Identify and recommend a program of work to manage the implications of climate change for health in WA, which will strengthen the preparedness and

resilience of communities and health services against extreme weather events, with a focus on the most vulnerable in the community.

- 4. Identify and recommend a program of work to manage the implications of climate change for health in WA, which will reduce the contribution of WA health services to climate change and other detrimental impacts.
- 5. Identify and recommend a program of work to manage the implications of climate change for health in WA, which will enable WA Health services to implement change, including energy efficiency, to a more sustainable model.
- 6. Evaluate the likely benefits (health and wellbeing, social and economic) arising from climate change mitigation strategies, with a focus on WA health services.
- 7. Define the role of the Department of Health in leading public policy on climate change and health.
- 8. Recommend the Terms of Reference, scope and preferred methods for undertaking a climate change vulnerability assessment for the health sector.
- 9. Recommend the Terms of Reference, scope and preferred methods for developing a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the health sector.

### Submissions response field

**Please type your response to the item(s) selected above into the field below. Alternatively you may provide your submission as a separate attachment (suggested maximum 5 pages).**

#### **Dietitics**

- WA Department of Health should include in the program of works how food production both contributes to, and food intake (and thus health) is impacted by climate change.
  - Current Australian diets and food systems contribute to global warming and environmental degradation leading to climate change, oil, water and nutrient scarcity, land degradation, food insecurity, food waste and biodiversity loss. Food production is a large contributor to climate change. The current food systems contribute to environmental degradation and inequitable food distribution, overconsumption of foods in general (especially energy-dense nutrient-poor foods) and food waste. In contrast, diets that are consistent with recommendations for good health (i.e. encourage plant foods, limit animal foods and energy dense, nutrient poor foods and recommend energy balance) are also likely to have lower environmental impact and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable, nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy, while optimizing natural and human resources.
  - Climate change in turn impacts on the food system and people's health. Food security is going to be one of the most pressing climate-related issues, as food is going to become increasingly scarce and expensive. Those who experience socioeconomic disadvantage e.g. remote Indigenous Australians, the homeless, the elderly and those

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already living in poverty are likely to be the most vulnerable to effects of climate change. Availability and cost of some foods has already been affected by climate change induced extreme weather events. Future food production is likely to be challenged by shorter growing seasons, changing rainfall patterns, faster rates of land degradation, increasing ocean temperatures and rising sea levels and the quality of crops including fruits, vegetables and grains is likely to be reduced by heat and drought.

- Call to action: The WA Health's Climate Change response need to include objectives that to ensure the local food system is ecologically sustainable, healthy, and affordable. It needs to recognise the relationship between climate change, obesity and malnutrition (refer to The Lancet's January 2019 Commission report <https://www.thelancet.com/commissions/global-syndemic>), and promote local strategies that aim to ensure that the local food system (production, transport, retail, consumption and waste management) is ecologically sustainable, healthy, and affordable, e.g. ECU work with local government and in promoting the healthier food choices (with pricing, promotion, product and placement) through policies and public health planning support, as well as increasing food literacy (low cost menu planning, basic cooking skills, sourcing local produce) of local communities.

Include in the DOH program of works the importance of training the future workforce to address the above. For example, ECU Dietetics' teaching and research considers food supply, food services, food and nutrient intake, vulnerable populations, sustainable diets, waste management, etc.

**Please complete this sheet and submit with any attachments to: Climate Health WA Inquiry**