



CLIMATE<sub>AND</sub>  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE

# Implications of Climate Change for Women's Health

7th Australian Women's Health Conference  
***'Gender Matters: Determining Women's Health'***

Fiona Armstrong, Convenor, Climate And Health Alliance (CAHA)

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Australian Women's Health Network, Women's Health East, Women's Health in the North, Public Health Association of Australia, Australian Physiotherapy Association, Australian Psychological Society, Australasian Medical Students Association, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Australian Nursing Federation, Australian Association of Social Workers, Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, Australian Rural Health Education Network, Australian Council of Social Service, Australian Health Promotion Association, Australian Institute of Health Innovation, CRAN*Aplus*, Doctors Reform Society, Health Issues Centre, Australian College of Nursing, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of NSW, Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health, North Yarra Community Health, and World Vision



## The health of the planet is our future.

The Climate and Health Alliance is an alliance of stakeholders in the health sector who wish to see the threat of climate change addressed through prompt policy action.



## Welcome to Climate and Health Alliance

The Climate and Health Alliance was formed in August 2010 and is a coalition of organisations and individuals from a broad cross section of the sector, including health care professionals, health care service providers, institutions, academics, researchers, and health care consumers.

The Alliance aims to contribute to the development and implementation of evidence based public policy to protect the community from the adverse consequences of climate change, and promote recognition that

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# Our Uncashed Dividend

The health benefits of climate action



A briefing paper prepared by the Climate and Health Alliance and The Climate Institute



CLIMATE and HEALTH ALLIANCE



The Climate Institute

August 2012



- Free to join the Network – commit to two goals
- Access to tools and resources, experts and community
- Share case studies – successes and failures
- Dynamic and innovative online forum
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- Opportunity to collaboratively develop global best practice
- Annual reporting on progress

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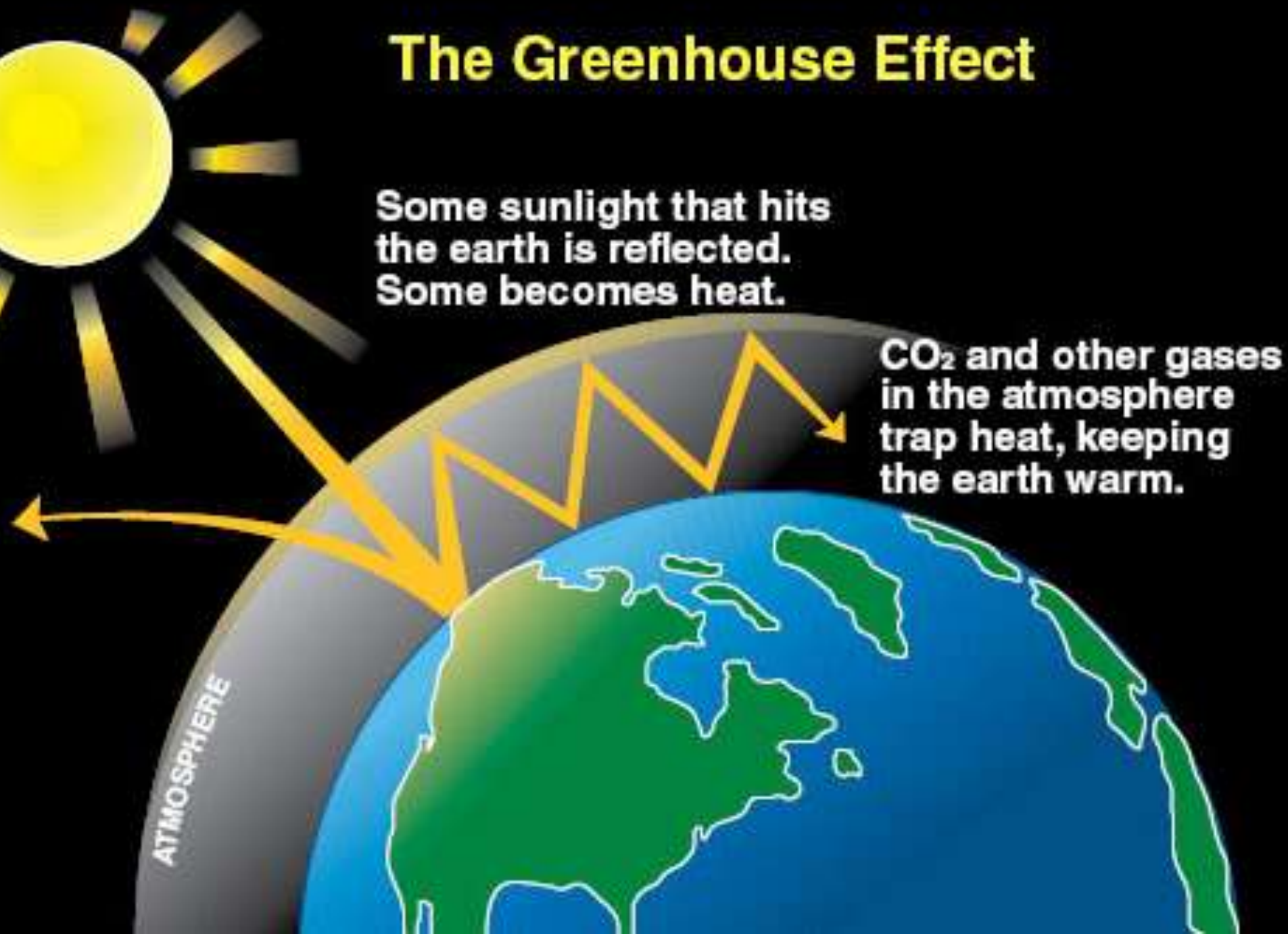
# Gender, Climate Change and Health



# The Greenhouse Effect

Some sunlight that hits the earth is reflected. Some becomes heat.

CO<sub>2</sub> and other gases in the atmosphere trap heat, keeping the earth warm.



# Global climate change: the potential effects on health

Anthony J McMichael, Andrew Haines

Excess carbon dioxide, methane, and other gases which trap heat are accumulating in the troposphere, the earth's lower atmosphere, because of the scale and type of human economic activity. Climate scientists predict that the resultant increase in the troposphere's "radiative forcing" will warm the earth's surface.<sup>1,3</sup> Indeed, in its recent second assessment report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—a multi-disciplinary scientific body established by the United Nations in 1988 to advise governments—concluded that on balance an anthropogenic influence upon the global climate was now "discernible."<sup>1</sup>

The intergovernmental panel forecasts an increase in the average world temperature of 1.0-3.5°C over the coming century.<sup>1</sup> This forecast is necessarily uncertain because the sensitivity of climate to atmospheric change is imperfectly understood and because future trends in gaseous emissions and modulating processes (for example, the cooling effects of industrial aerosol emissions) cannot be foreseen accurately. Nevertheless, the expected rate of climate change over the coming century would be far greater than any natural change in world climate since the advent of agriculture 10 000 years ago.

Anthropogenic climate change signifies that for the first time the aggregate global impact of humankind exceeds the physical and ecological limits of the biosphere.<sup>4</sup> The potential consequences of this and other global changes (including stratospheric ozone depletion, loss of biodiversity, worldwide land degradation, and depletion of aquifers) are wide ranging. We can expect that climate change will affect the health and wellbeing of human populations in diverse ways. This greatly extends the temporo-spatial scale of environmental health beyond our usual concern with localised and immediate exposures to toxic or infectious agents.<sup>4</sup> A major research task, therefore, is the application of current knowledge to forecasting probable health effects. The primary objective is to provide indicative forecasts of an important consequence that will assist

## Summary points

Most climatologists believe that global climate change is now occurring as a result of emission of greenhouse gases, especially from fossil fuel combustion. Its expected rate over the coming century will far exceed that of any other climatic change in the 10 000 years since agriculture and human settlement began

Changes in climate conditions and, possibly, weather variability would affect human health through several processes, many mediated by disturbances of ecological systems

Changes in the environment to which human biology and culture are adapted or disturbances of ecosystems that set the conditions for health would generally have adverse effects on health

More readily foreseen effects (resulting from thermal stresses and changed patterns of air pollution) will probably have less impact than will those resulting from complex changes in ecological infrastructure (altered patterns of infectious disease, agricultural production, coastal ecology, etc)

The types and circumstances of exposure would vary geographically. Populations would vary in their vulnerability because of differences in location, social and technical resources, and concurrent health status

*See editorial by Read and Stott*

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*BMJ* 1997;315:805-9

to wide ranging international peer review with contributions, corrections, and criticisms from over 60 scientists worldwide. That text was then expanded to form a book of 10 chapters.<sup>7</sup> This entailed a further intensive review

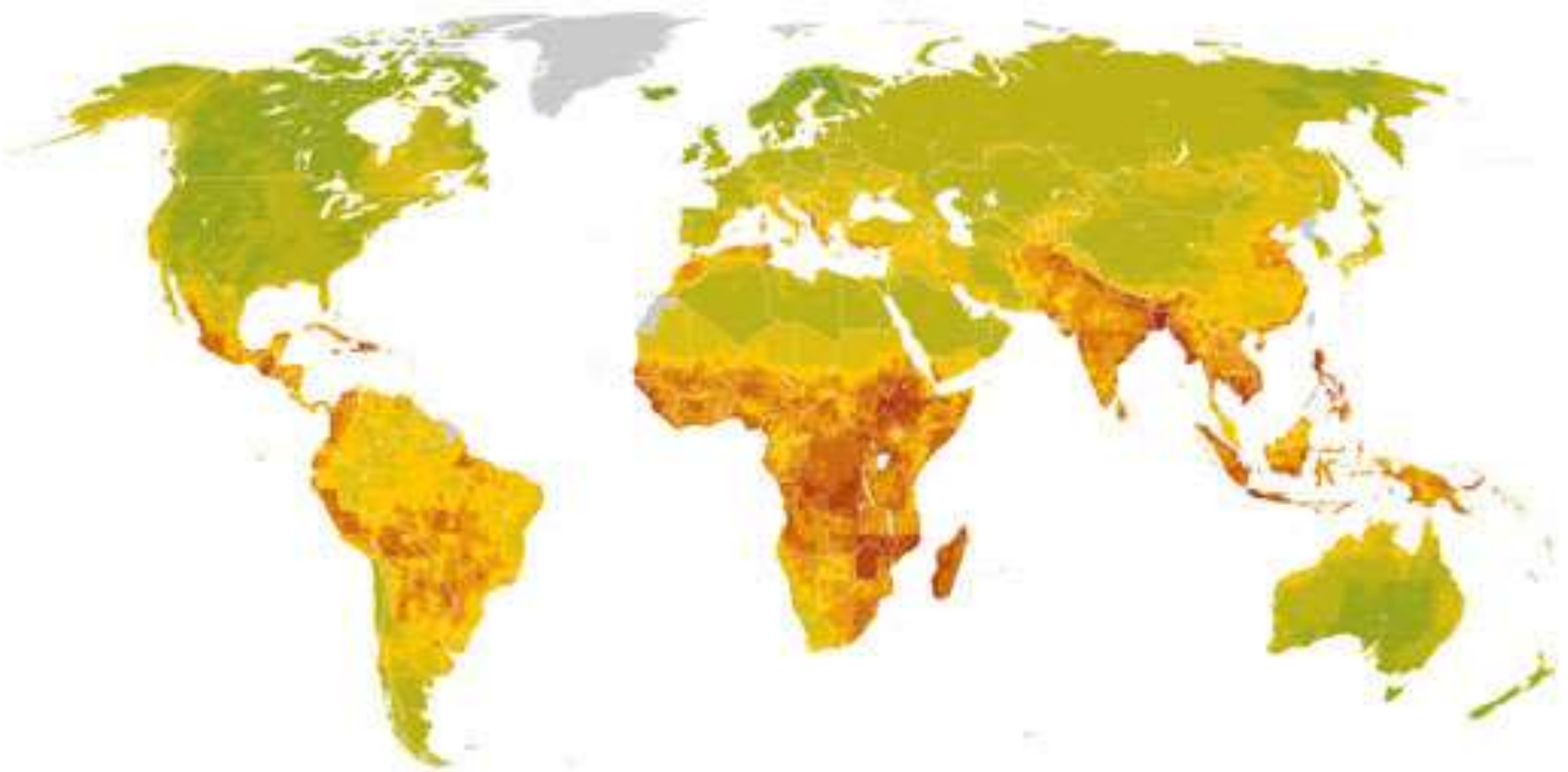


**Table 1. Categories of Climate-Change Risks to Health, According to Causal Pathway.**

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Causal Pathway</b>
Primary	Direct biologic consequences of heat waves, extreme weather events, and temperature-enhanced levels of urban air pollutants
Secondary	Risks mediated by changes in biophysically and ecologically based processes and systems, particularly food yields, water flows, infectious-disease vectors, and (for zoonotic diseases) intermediate-host ecology
Tertiary	More diffuse effects (e.g., mental health problems in failing farm communities, displaced groups, disadvantaged indigenous and minority ethnic groups) Consequences of tension and conflict owing to climate change-related declines in basic resources (water, food, timber, living space)

McMichael, A. J. Globalisation, climate change and health, *New England Journal of Medicine*, 4 April 2013.

# Maplecroft's Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2013





## The effects of gender on climate change knowledge and concern in the American public

Aaron M. McCright

Published online: 5 June 2010  
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2010

**Abstract** This study tests theoretical arguments about gender differences in scientific knowledge and environmental concern using 8 years of Gallup data on climate change knowledge and concern in the US general public. Contrary to expectations from scientific literacy research, women convey greater assessed scientific knowledge of climate change than do men. Consistent with much existing sociology of science research, women underestimate their climate change knowledge more than do men. Also, women express slightly greater concern about climate change than do men, and this gender divide is not accounted for by differences in key values and beliefs or in the social roles that men and women differentially



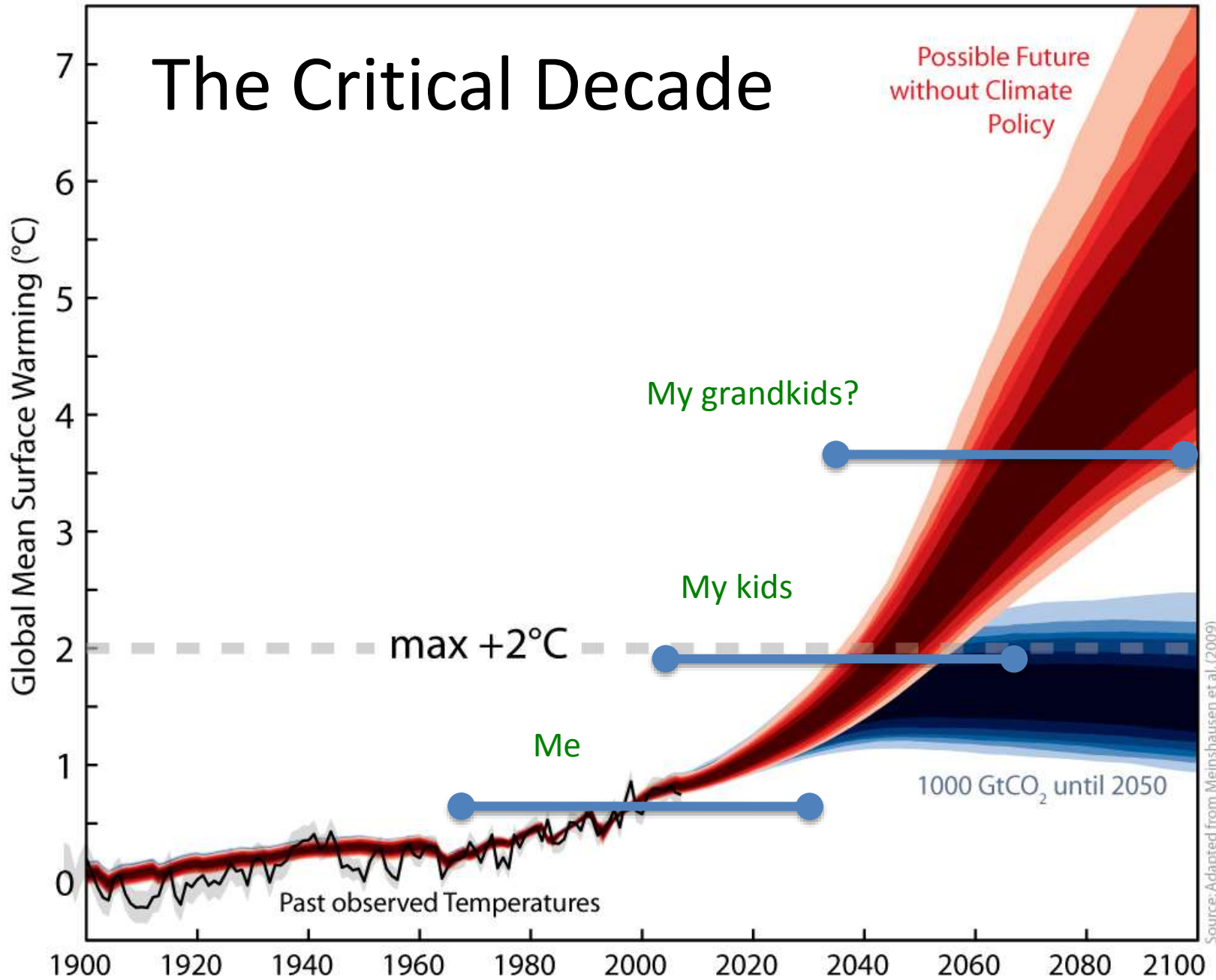
# Public risk perceptions, understandings, and responses to climate change and natural disasters in Australia, 2010 and 2011

Final Report

Joseph P. Reser, Graham L. Bradley, A. Ian Glendon, Michelle C. Ellul  
and Rochelle Callaghan



# The Critical Decade

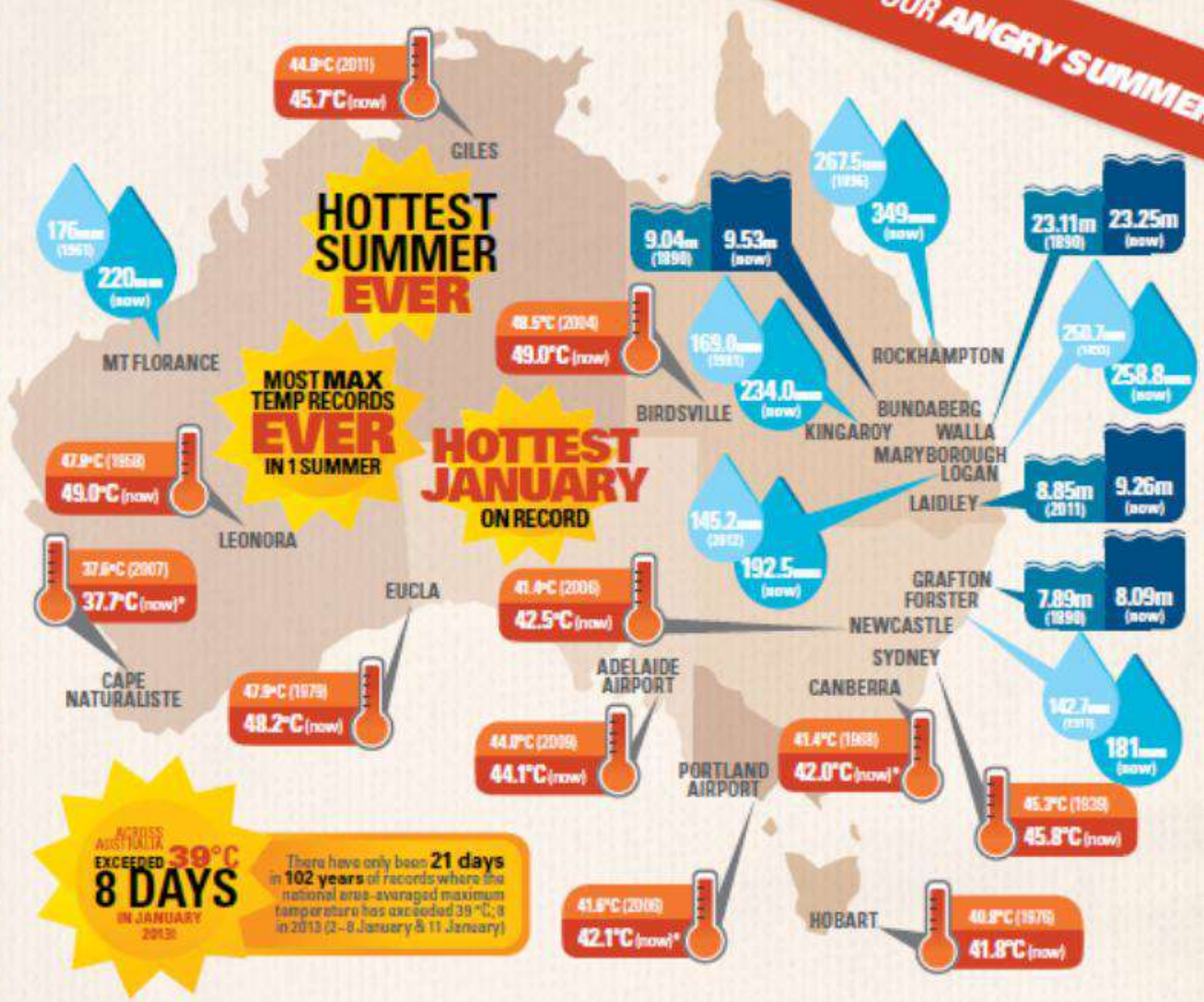


**OUR ANGRY SUMMER**

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- FLOOD RECORDS **BROKEN**
- RAINFALL RECORDS **BROKEN**
- HEATWAVE RECORDS **BROKEN**



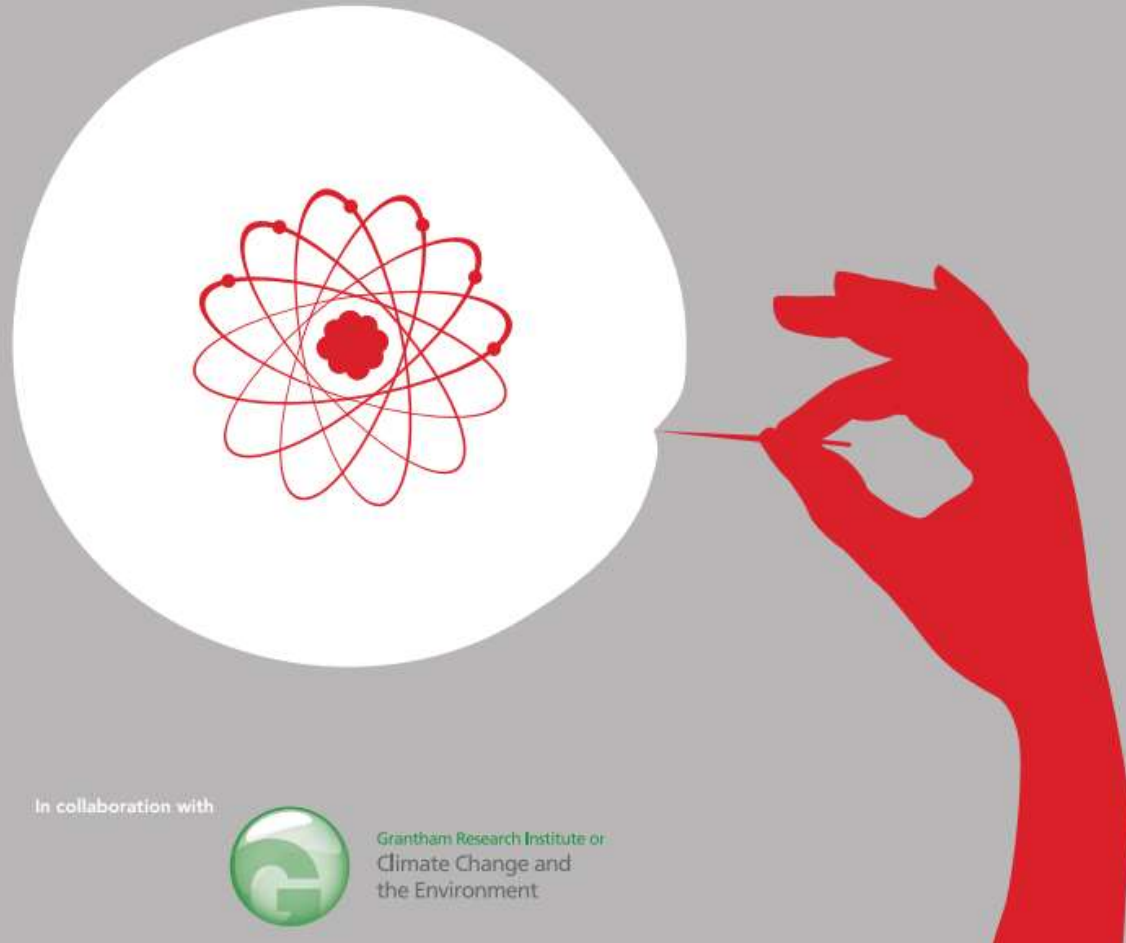
ACROSS AUSTRALIA EXCEEDED **39°C**  
**8 DAYS** IN JANUARY 2013

There have only been **21 days** in **102 years** of records where the national area-averaged maximum temperature has exceeded 39°C; 8 in 2013 (2-8 January & 11 January)

SOURCE: BoM (Bureau of Meteorology), (2012a). Special Climate Statement 43 – extreme heat in January 2013

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In collaboration with



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## More power for women means less climate pollution, study suggests

By [Lisa Hymas](#)

Here is yet another indication that women are greener than men.

According to a [new study in \*Social Science Research\*](#), “controlling for other factors, in nations where women’s status is higher, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are lower.”

Study coauthors Christina Ergas and Richard York, sociologists at the University of Oregon–Eugene, write:

even when controlling for a variety of measures of “modernization,” world-system position, and democracy, nations where women have higher political status — as indicated by the length of time women have had the right to vote and women’s representation in parliament and ministerial government — tend to have lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita. This finding suggests that efforts to improve women’s political status around the world, clearly worthy on their own merits, may work synergistically with efforts to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and avert dramatic global climate change.



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The medium chill, revisited



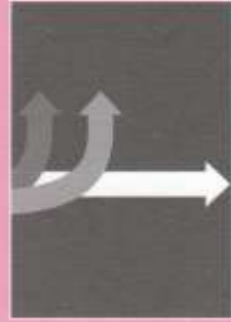
Gut bomb: That turkey burger could kill you, and here's why



Millennial medium chill: What the



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# *A switch in time*

restoring respect to Australian politics

Mary Crooks Victorian Women's Trust

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**sexism**  

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# Questions? Comments? Ideas?



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