

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.

The heat waves have scorched the US and Europe are becoming more frequent say scientists who have studied decades of weather records and computer models of the climate.

Two weeks ago Paul Della-Marta, a researcher at Switzerland's Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology, presented findings at an international conference on climate science in Gwatt, Switzerland, showing that since 1880 the duration of heat waves in Western Europe has doubled and the number of unusually hot days in the region has nearly tripled.

In a separate 2004 study, researchers at Britain's Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research produced computer models showing that greenhouse gas emissions had doubled the likelihood of events like the lethal 2003 European heat wave, and that by 2040 it is likely such heat waves will take place there every other year.

Researchers at the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.Carolina, report that nighttime summer temperatures across the country have been unusually high for the past eight years, a record streak.

Only the Dust Bowl period of the mid-1930s rivalled recent summers for sustained heat levels.

Kevin E. Trenberth, chief of the climate-analysis branch of the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado pointed to a study published in March by the Journal of Geophysical Research that showed that for more than 70 percent of the land researchers surveyed worldwide, the number of warm nights each year had increased and the number of cold nights had declined, between 1951 and 2003.

Last month the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that the first six months of 2006 are the hottest on record in the United States, and last month ranks as England's hottest July since recordkeeping began in 1659.

And so we are led to conclude that [a] the climate is warming and [b] human activity has something to do with it except if you are from the coal industry

Bracewell & Giuliani LLP lobbyist Frank V. Maisano, who represents coal-fired power plants, sent an e-mail to US reporters this week noting that more than half of the days with temperatures at or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the Washington-Baltimore region occurred between 1874 and 1934.

In the 12 August Age we have a report of sea levels rising and impacting on the inhabited islands of the Torres Strait to such a degree the Howard government has decided to spend a little bit on band aid measures there, assumedly while they wait to see if geosequestration begins to impact on global warming or the seas rise to create sea rights.

When the pressure to act is inescapable and the coal industry has managed to avoid taking effective action what then will be their missive to us - can't live with us and can't live without us, a bit late then.

At the same time it is reported that the Greenland Ice Sheet is melting at 3 times the rate the models predicted and that additional moisture is not precipitating in Antarctica as snow, as some models predicted.

I thought this site was all about Tasmania

Every day, all day [24/7] attests to the fact that Tasmania is not insulated from global phenomenon.

The failure of snowfall to increase in Antarctica is considered to be due to the large cold Southern Ocean which Tasmania sits on the edge of. The warming of this ocean is dependent on global circulation and the nature of Antarctica with its reduced solar radiation through part of the year, the albedo effect of the ice and that there is a polar ocean circulation.

Here in northern Tasmania onion crops are being irrigated. The Hydro dams are yet to show a trend towards the previous year's pattern of filling during these winter months.

The single model report on Tasmanian Climate Change produced by the University of Tasmania for Hydro Tasmania runs to 2040 and predicts the dams will continue to fill sufficiently for us not to panic about the hydro investment before then.

However, we see the impacts of climate change not conforming to the models, indicating that some caution should be built into our dependence on inaction and delay.

If the Tasmanian Government is still considering a new strategy for climate change methinks they had better place in it a capacity to adopt best available technologies entailing little or no economic cost that assist in avoiding dangerous climate change and so invest a little now in securing Tasmanians future to avoid huge costs later.

The Howard government had decided to leave action to market forces [read abandon responsibility], however, if they decide to support conversion of cars to using liquefied gas there will be greenhouse gas benefits even though the action is about relieving political pressure over fuel prices.

Besides expanding our alternative energy supplies to secure us from rainfall vagaries, including the simple measure of solarising water heating, Tasmania should produce biofuels for domestic consumption because of the secondary benefits.

The state economy would benefit from replacing the cost of imported fuel with home grown fuels. The only practical fuel, given the supply of gas, appears to be biodiesel, a fuel that could replace all others with a conversion to a single fuel nation or could just power all diesel engines.

Yes farmers, truckies and other users can bring fuel costs under control if we act to break the link with world oil prices and produce our own fuel.

Table shows impact on balance of payment of Australia going over to 100% biodiesel with all vehicles diesel powered.

Place	Cropland Area km ²	Land for biofuel	Pop. M	Balance of Payments Impact
EU	989,999	20% for 5.75%	457	Not assessed, no food produced
US	18,800,000	43% for 10%	299	
OZ EU fuel use	498,974	26% for 100%	21	Positive by \$2.9B pa
OZ US fuel use	498,974	41% for 100%	21	Positive by \$2.2B pa

All gas can be exported for fuel needs elsewhere. Food [wheat] exports, although reduced, continue and the balance of payments improves every year because Australia becomes a net fuel exporter in a world of fuel scarcity. A modern Saudi Arabia.

Further gas has a lesser impact on the accumulation of greenhouse gases and both fuels are existing technologies needing only a change in the engine production lines

What are the implications for Tasmanian agricultural producers? Provided the crops replaced have a gross margin less than Canola [\$400 to \$600 per ha] there is little impact if Tasmanian fuel [or diesel if only that is replaced] imports are more than the export value of those crops.

Controlling the fuel input into the cost of production is another benefit that would impact on all Tasmania's exports as fuel prices rise to multiple dollars per litre

All the infrastructure for distribution of liquid fuels is in place but some older diesel engines may need new fuel lines. Markets for the by products of glycerine [e.g. soap] and low oil seed cake [e.g. stock food] are also needed.

In the interim gas powered and hybrid vehicles are available and it is time for the governments to stop subsidizing car manufactures gas guzzlers and oil companies that continue to destroy our future by fuelling dangerous climate change and buy these.