

## ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE CRISIS - 'CODE RED FOR HUMANITY'

Human-induced climate change is critically changing our society, economy, global relationships, and the natural world. Rising average temperatures are causing more frequent extreme weather events, endangering more animal and plant species with extinction, and straining our agricultural systems. If left unchecked, climate change will become an existential crisis for humanity and today's children and young people will bear the brunt of its impacts.

As the industries contributing towards greenhouse gas emissions decline and new ones emerge, employment patterns will change. The types of jobs being created will be different to those disappearing and many displaced workers will not have the required skills or knowledge.

Education and training systems will need to adapt. Schools, universities, and vocational training institutions will need to adapt the curriculum and develop new courses to teach the skills and knowledge needed in the new occupations and industries. Young people must be taught the new skills and knowledge so that the next generation of workers are ready for the new industries. Failure to do so will lead to future skills shortages and slow the development of the new industries.

Where governments purchase products, fund services and invest in infrastructure, they can use their financial power for the next generation of young people by investing to create secure employment for them. Where governments subsidise 'green' energy generation, non-polluting vehicle manufacturing, other greenhouse gas reduction activities and other sustainability measures, funding requirements should include employment targets for young people in entry-level jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships.

Creating a sustainable Australia requires more than reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to addressing climate change, environmental groups have proposed many sustainability measures such as: protecting threatened species and ecosystems, improving degraded soils for agriculture through

regenerative farming practices, developing recycling systems and products from recycled materials to reduce waste going to landfill and polluting the environment, and reducing the impact of invasive species on indigenous species and ecosystem and agriculture.

The necessary changes to avoid a climate catastrophe will inevitably lead to significant changes employment in some jobs and industries. Polluting industries and the associated jobs are in decline and will eventually disappear. Sustainable 'green' industries are developing and will expand, some new ones will emerge. The development of sustainable industries should be facilitated by governments across Australia by direct investment and using government purchasing power to speed up growth. The new industries will need a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, which will require changes to education and training of the existing and emerging workforce.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** Government plans for the transition from fossil fuels should ensure that employment opportunities in affected communities are created for young people.

**Recommendation 2:** Governments, education and training providers, and employers should develop education and training opportunities suited to the next generation of employees in new and changing industries and occupations.

**Recommendation 3:** The Australian, state, and territory governments should use their purchasing power to create apprenticeships, traineeships, and entry level jobs in sustainable industries.

**Recommendation 4:** Governments in Australia should create entry level positions for young people in government run and funded environmental programs.