



***Letter to The Australian 8 April 2008, rebutting Prof Don Aitken by Fiona Wain, CEO, Environment Business Australia***

If I, the IMF, the Pentagon, the IPCC, NASA, Sir Nicholas Stern, Professor Ross Garnaut, WWF, CSIRO and the many thousands of informed scientists, economists, policy makers are wrong about the foreseeable impacts of climate change, then the worst we will have done is invest in making Australia a smarter and more efficient country, better placed to be competitive in the market of 'the next great technological era'.

Of course if Professor of history and political science Don Aitken is wrong, but his advice has been heeded, we will be in a calamitous and irrevocable disaster.

We are all agreed that there has always been climate variation but it is an extraordinarily naive proposition that human activity is not forcing faster and very significant change. The potential new extremes over a very short period suggest that ecosystems (and the 'services' we rely on from them) will not be able to adapt.

This is not a gamble that I for one am prepared take. Water, peak oil, peak fish, peak rare metals, peak soil productivity and desertification are all massively serious issues in their own right but fixing any/all of them would mean nothing if 'runaway' climate change evolves.

The time for serious and rapid action is now. And for those who may still be sceptics, remember the naysayers who argued that neither tobacco nor asbestos were harmful. The difference is this time individual humans will not be the only ones to take the brunt, our vulnerability is at the global scale.

Yours sincerely

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