



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

MEDIA RELEASE

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PC study into climate policy must also consider health costs

The Climate and Health Alliance has urged the Australian Government to include consideration of the economic benefits arising from avoided ill health in the terms of reference for the Productivity Commission study into climate policy economics announced last week.

“The Climate and Health Alliance welcomes the Government’s decision to ask the Productivity Commission to compare the impact of international policies to address climate change,” CAHA Spokesperson Fiona Armstrong said.

“We urge the Government and the Commission to not overlook the important and significant impacts on health sector costs when ill health is avoided due to strong emissions reduction policies.”

CAHA points to a recent study from Europe which demonstrates that substantial health and economic benefits would arise from strong targets for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The report, *Acting Now for Better Health*¹, by the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and Health Care Without Harm Europe (HCWH E), quantifies the benefits for people’s health, health sector budgets and productivity that are possible from the 30% by 2020 emissions reduction target being considered in Europe.

The report reveals that health sector savings from reduced air pollution alone would be equivalent to 2/3 of the costs of implementing the requisite climate policies. Accrued health benefits to the European Union (from avoided ill health and productivity) would be worth more than €80 billion/year.²

“This report shows that, even using conservative estimates of health sector savings, early implementation of effective climate policies to achieve strong emissions reductions can deliver better outcomes for human health, health care budgets and productivity,” Ms Armstrong said.

The Climate and Health Alliance is urging the Government to include consideration of these benefits, as well as the health sector costs of climate policy inaction, in the terms of reference for the Productivity Commission study.

For more information contact CAHA spokesperson: Fiona Armstrong on 0438 900 005 or visit: <http://climateandhealthalliance.blogspot.com/>

¹ *Acting Now for Better Health*, available at: http://noharm.org/lib/downloads/climate/Acting_Now_for_Better_Health.pdf

² Includes earlier estimates from HEAL associated with 20% by 2020 reduction targets (see p.26 of *Acting Now for Better Health*)