

## READER REPORT

# Climate change: Don't let your grandchildren become climate migrants

Brad Dixon • 12:31, Dec 06 2019



DR. VAUGHN POUTAWERA/SUPPLIED

Brad Dixon, pictured at Mt Tarawera, tries to live a "lite" day once a week to reduce his impact on the climate.

**OPINION:** Like most Kiwis, I love swimming in our beautiful oceans and making use of our incredible bush and forests.

But the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report has stated that [we have until 2030 to "drastically" change the way we live](#) to ensure that we give our grandchildren a fighting chance to have a life on planet Earth.

If we don't change the average global temperature will rise above 1.5 degrees Celsius and will set off an irreversible, negative cascade of events that will create

There will be climate change migrants as the land won't support crops due to heat and flooding. Severe weather events will cripple our insurance and banking systems, and there will be social breakdown.

**READ MORE:**

- \* ['Existential' chosen as a word of the year for 2019](#)
- \* [Climate change could make hay fever season longer for Kiwi sufferers](#)
- \* [Low methane New Zealand sheep coming to a farm near you](#)
- \* [Eco Living: Does it really take too much time and effort?](#)
- \* [Eco-Living: What's the best waste-free moisturiser?](#)
- \* [We need to become climate change #influencers](#)

Yes this makes for difficult reading, and yes it's much easier just to ignore it, deny it and carry on with our important lives paying back debt and planning the next holiday to escape our very stressful, important jobs.

My family has come to the point where we know we have to make changes. I love my kids, and I know I'll love my grandkids. I imagine talking to them and I don't want to be on the wrong side of climate change history. I know humans have a large effect on what's happening and if I want to live with any authenticity then I must act in accordance with my desire for the next generations to enjoy this beautiful planet as I do. Swimming in the ocean and being in the bush is my happy place and I have no right to take that away from my offspring.

So what can you do help? Heaps. You can gradually change some habits and make a difference. I now have a "live light" day in which I ride my bike to work and fast until dinner that night.

How are you adapting for climate change?

Share your stories, photos and videos

CONTRIBUTE

Tuesday is typically a rest day from my usual training so it's the perfect day for me to live with a light footprint on the earth. Most days I do 10 minutes of yoga, writing and taking an invigorating cold shower but now I also ride my bike to work and fast to really live mega light for one day a week.

Driving a 1.5 tonne car to go to work is very resource heavy. Not only are we producing 2.3L of CO<sub>2</sub> for every litre of petrol used, it also emits a whole range of



Riding a bike is a far healthier option on so many levels – you could also run or walk to work. It allows you to add to cardiovascular exercise time, it's a far more energy efficient mode of transport, and it takes cars off congested roads. It's the way so many progressive cities are going to create a healthier, more friendly environment. Cities like Amsterdam, Zurich, Copenhagen, and Paris are all reducing car parking, increasing parking costs, and planting more trees. Almost 50 per cent of all people in Amsterdam travel to work by bike. Nudging people towards a healthier mode of transport is part of the "drastic" changes required to save us and the planet.

[Eating a plant based diet](#) is another way to reduce land and water use for producing food. Looking at the big picture growing animals to eat requires far more energy than plants. Also plants sequest carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, while animals do the opposite (while also producing urine and feces that can add to environmental issues).

123RF

Swimming in the ocean and being in the bush is my happy place and I have no right to take that away from my offspring, writes Brad Dixon.

Food waste is also a problem. New Zealanders on average waste almost 160,000 tons of food annually, while globally 1.3 billion tons of food is not consumed, and the dumped food produces methane – a very destructive greenhouse gas that is almost 80 x more destructive than CO<sub>2</sub> on a 20 year time frame.

## environment

[Log in](#)

allows the body to get rid of mutant proteins and other junk within the cells. This process, named autophagy, can only be accessed if the digestive system takes a break.

I feel more alert and focused on my Tuesday afternoon compared to having lunch. Also, I feel energised that my Tuesdays are a day where I am making a noticeable difference to my children's ability to live on our beautiful planet. The ultimate win – win!

Drastic change doesn't have to be depriving. In fact, from what I'm finding hooking into habits that will save the world will also help move me towards a healthier state.

So please have a look at riding your bike more and go without food for increased periods of time. Then once you entrench these lifesaving habits – add some more! Be more, have less, save the world, and improve your health.

Please start now.

**Here are 10 wellness habits to save the world and make you healthier:**

1. Ride your bike rather than taking the car (unless it's an EV)
2. Fast (for 16–24hrs once a week)
3. Eat a plant based whole food diet
4. Look at investing in renewable energy eg solar
5. Take shorter cold showers – so invigorating!
6. Reduce, recycle, refuse, reuse
7. Less screen time – more sleep time
8. Spend time with inspiring people that want to make the world better
9. Go for a run in the bush or go for a swim in the ocean, lake or river
10. Be prepared to change your old habits.

***Brad Dixon is a sports physiotherapist, coach, and wellness evangelist. His passion is helping people strive for their potential with promotion of enhancing daily habits.***

Send us your stories

[VIEW THIS ASSIGNMENT](#)

[VIEW ALL CONTRIBUTIONS](#)

## more environment stories from stuff



Do you know  
your carbon  
footprint?



Regional  
sewerage plant  
pleads case to



More direction  
needed from  
Government



Fuel leaks into  
Waikato River  
in Hamilton



Simple Way  
To Relieve  
Nail Fungus

## about this content



Find out what  
NZ has spent  
\$1 Trillion on

fungussecrets.com www.paymark.co.l

Recommended by

# 'Climate emergency' vote one of Environment Canterbury's biggest moments

Paul Gorman • 15:52, May 13 2019

▶ Video will play in 1 second

■ Stop

DAVID WALKER/STUFF

A group called Extinction Rebellion turned off water at the ECan offices and chained themselves to the water mains in protest to the way ECan has been dealing with Canterbury's water. (Video first published on December 20, 2018)



first council in the country to do so.

Regional councillors have been informally discussing the issue in recent weeks, since Extinction Rebellion (XR) Ōtautahi members protested outside ECan's Christchurch headquarters a month ago and received an assurance the emergency would be debated at the May 16 meeting.

ECan has also been pressured about taking a leading role in dealing with climate change during its draft annual plan process.



LEE KENNY/STUFF

Members of Extinction Rebellion staged a demonstration in Christchurch city centre last Friday, chalking the names of 160 cities and councils around the world that have declared action on climate change.

The [agenda for Thursday's meeting](#) recommends councillors declare a climate emergency but notes ECan "already demonstrates leadership in the face of climate change" and also that climate change "does not satisfy the definition of an 'emergency' under the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002".

#### READ MORE:

- \* [Call for Environment Canterbury to be in vanguard of global change](#)
- \* [Extinction Rebellion protesters score climate change commitment in Christchurch](#)
- \* [Environment Canterbury chairman Steve Lowndes joins Extinction Rebellion](#)

## vote

**\* Five arrested after protesters turn off water to Canterbury's regional council HQ**

Chairman Steve Lowndes, who is a member of XR, says he will stand down for that part of the meeting, which is likely to be run instead by deputy chairman Cr Peter Scott.

DOMINIC HARRIS/STUFF

Environment Canterbury chairman Steve Lowndes will stand aside for part of Thursday's meeting as he is also a member of Extinction Rebellion.

An ECan spokesman said the council was looking at how it could cater for a larger number of observers than the maximum of 65 people allowed by fire regulations in the council chamber.

The meeting would be livestreamed as usual.

Councillors had been briefed on the issue last week, he said.

JOSEPH JOHNSON/STUFF

Deputy ECan chairman, Cr Peter Scott, will likely be in the chair for the "climate emergency" debate at Thursday's council meeting. Chairman Steve Lowndes says he will declare a conflict of interest as he is also a member of Extinction Rebellion.

Just before Christmas, XR staged a protest at ECan's offices, [turning off the water supply](#). Of the 40 original protesters, including Sophie the dog, five were arrested for what police called "obstruction-type offences".

Lowndes said a lot of energy had gone into producing the report for councillors.

It gave a lot of background to the fact 17 councils and cities in Australia, 96 in the United Kingdom, and 382 in Canada had recognised or declared a climate emergency.



PAUL GORMAN/STUFF

Extinction Rebellion representatives filled the Environment Canterbury council chamber last month to outline the case for declaring a "climate emergency".

"It's time for everyone to start to think very, very seriously that this is needed," he said.

The report, by ECan chief executive Bill Bayfield, says recognising a climate emergency "could provide an opportunity for the council to further highlight the importance of, and urgent need to address, climate change issues".

He recommends the council affirm the science of climate change is "irrefutable", reiterate acceptance of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change's special report that the world has 12 years to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and realise everyone has a role to play in making the change.

QUICK!

WHAT'S THIS?

| FULL COVERAGE

The report says by declaring a climate emergency, ECan will commit to continuing to:

- Robustly and visibly incorporate climate change considerations into council work programmes and decisions.

IAIN MCGREGOR/STUFF

Babs Theinert-Brown, left, and Grace Uivel chalk the footpath on Tuam St during last Friday's climate change action.

- Advocate strongly for greater central government leadership and action on climate change.
- Increase the visibility of ECan's climate change work.
- Lead by example in monitoring and reducing the council's greenhouse gas emissions.

STACY SQUIRES/STUFF

Environment Canterbury has become a lightning rod for protest about the changing climate, with Extinction Rebellion Ōtautahi regularly visiting the regional council's Christchurch offices this year.

There is no official, single definition of what declaring a climate emergency actually means, Bayfield's report says.

To declare one would be consistent with council policy, but would not carry "any statutory or legal weight for future council decisions".



STACY SQUIRES/STUFF

Extinction Rebellion Ōtautahi protest at Environment Canterbury as part of last month's International Week of Rebellion.

Stuff

COMMENTS 41

## more from stuff

[Discover an IT career with Foodstuffs](#)[Smoky haze from Australian fires covers Nelson Tasman](#)



## Environment Canterbury declares climate emergency

**Date:** 16 May 2019

**CATEGORY: NEWS** | Leadership | Governance | Environment

Environment Canterbury has today declared a climate emergency, highlighting both the urgent need to address the issue, and the work already being done to help the region respond.

"Climate change presents significant challenges, risks and opportunities to Canterbury and we've long acknowledged the urgent need to address climate change for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Council's role is to support the region and its communities to better understand and proactively respond", deputy chair Peter Scott says.

"We have no doubt at Council that urgency is required – the science is irrefutable and we have for some time now, been responding accordingly".

In making the declaration, the Council noted it already demonstrated climate change leadership, including establishment of the Climate Change Integration programme; incorporation of climate change considerations into all Council's work programmes and decisions; working with regional partners to ensure a collaborative response; advocating and engaging with Central Government; and leading by example in reducing its emissions.

An attachment in the council's meeting papers provided more detail of that ongoing and planned climate change focused work.



There are no additional immediate financial implications for ratepayers associated with today's decision, Peter Scott says.

An increasing number of governments around the world have recognised a "climate emergency" in some form, including the UK and Welsh Parliaments, and a large number of local governments in Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States.

"There will inevitably be those who say we are still not doing enough. I'd encourage those people to find out more about the wide range of work we, the territorial authorities, and central government are already doing, and what is planned before they draw that conclusion," Peter Scott says.

"Extinction Rebellion asked us to declare a 'climate emergency' and, after debate and careful consideration, that is what we have done. We are not at odds with Extinction Rebellion's desire to see people sit up and take urgent notice and urgent action. Our declaration today confirms that."

**Note:** Chairman Steve Lowndes is an ordinary member of Extinction Rebellion and as such declared an interest and did not take part in the Council decision.

### **The Council affirmed the following statement:**

"Environment Canterbury recognises the importance of an urgent need to address climate change for the benefit of current and future generations.

The science is irrefutable – climate change is already impacting ecosystems and communities around the world, with increasingly frequent and severe storms, floods and droughts; melting polar ice sheets; sea level rise and coastal inundation and erosion; and impacts on biodiversity including species loss and extinction.

The IPCC's Special Report in October 2018 stated that we have twelve years to turn greenhouse gas emissions around to limit global warming to the Paris Agreement target of 1.5-degrees, or face an uncertain future.

This requires 'rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems.

Everyone has a role to play in delivering the change required."

### **Our commitment**

As such, Environment Canterbury declares a climate emergency and commits to continue to:

- robustly and visibly incorporate climate change considerations into Council work programmes and decisions
- provide strong local government leadership in the face of climate change, including working with regional partners to ensure a collaborative response
- advocate strongly for greater Central Government leadership and action on climate change
- increase the visibility of our climate change work
- lead by example in monitoring and reducing Council's greenhouse gas emissions.