

World Bank Report Warns of 4°C Warmer World

In an unprecedented report released this week, the World Bank has warned that the world could experience 4°C warming over pre-industrial levels as early as 2060 with the largest warming occurring over land.

The report is called *Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4 °C Warmer World Must Be Avoided*.

President of Climate Action Monaro, Ms Jenny Goldie, says climate change impacts have already started to emerge, even with 0.8°C warming, and the shift to 4° C warming will see unprecedented heat waves, severe drought, and major floods in many regions.

“The United States has seen widespread drought and record temperatures this year, not to mention Superstorm Sandy that was exacerbated by climate change,” says Ms Goldie. “The World Bank report cites the Russian heat wave of 2010, with a death toll of 55,000, crop failure of about 25 percent, one million hectares burned and economic losses of about US\$15 billion.”

According to the report, observations indicate a tenfold increase in the surface area of the planet experiencing extreme heat since the 1950s. It warns that recent extreme heat waves, such as the Russian one, are likely to become the new normal summer in a 4° C world.

“Southern Australia, including the Monaro, may suffer water shortages as well as higher temperatures,” says Ms Goldie. “The report warns that food yields may improve with increases in local average temperature from 1 to 3° C but above this

they are projected to decrease.”

Ms Goldie says the World Bank has not concerned itself with climate change in the past but is now worried about the effect of higher temperatures on development.

“Extreme heat waves in recent years have caused heat-related deaths, forest fires, and harvest losses. The report warns that heat waves in a 4°C warmer world may exceed the capacities of many societies and natural systems to adapt.”

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