

Effectively communicating climate change

The challenge of clearly communicating climate change to a public under-standably alarmed about the associated changes to our world is as real in Australia as it is for other countries, says Dr Bruce Mapstone, Chief of CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research.

Commenting on the findings of the Independent Climate Change Email Review, Dr Mapstone says the challenge for scientists is to learn to communicate the realities of their work to a public wanting straight answers.

‘Tackling the challenges of climate change will require us all to understand not just the science of climate change, but also what options we have to respond to it and mitigate further change,’ he says.

‘We must not just talk about the future, because there are essential steps that have to be taken now if we wish to prepare for the changes ahead. We must be clear about what is happening now, and that information must be available to everyone.

‘The message has been clear: tell us what is happening now as well as about the likely climate in the future,’ says Dr Mapstone, referring to the State of the Climate Snapshot (www.csiro.au/resources/State-of-the-Climate) earlier this year that updated Australians about how their climate has changed over recent decades, and what those changes mean.

‘People need to understand these recent changes and those expected in future, to plan for adapting to a changing climate and to take action to reduce the extent and impacts of future climate change,’ concludes Dr Mapstone.

From ECOS online <http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC156p17c>