

CLIMATE CHANGE

Motion

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [10.46 am] — without notice: I move —

That this Council debate the directions needed for this state to adapt to and mitigate current and projected impacts of climate change and take proactive action to decrease climate change emissions into the future in terms of its responsibilities on the impact on the community, health, biodiversity and economy of our state.

I am not attempting with this motion to engage in a blame game or to debate what should be done or what has not been done or whatever. I am trying to get debate into this chamber in which the opposition, the government and the Greens look to the future and what is before us in terms of the impacts of climate change. A lot of the motion has been pre-empted by the recent report from the Climate Council, “Be Prepared: Climate Change and the Australian Bushfire Threat”. However, it is broader than that inasmuch as there are many things that departments, a range of other agencies and agriculture need to think about in how we move forward and deal with what faces us.

I turn to the bushfire threat. The budget predictions for firefighters and emergency services are fairly flat in terms of projection. The report that I have just alluded to indicates that climate change is already increasing the risk of bushfires, extreme fire weather has increased over the past 30 years in south east Australia and hot, dry conditions have a major influence on bushfires. We have already seen a drying of the south west by 20 to 25 per cent. Climate change is making hot days hotter and heatwaves longer and more frequent, and some parts of Australia are becoming drier. These conditions are driving up the likelihood of very high fire danger weather, especially in the south west and south east. We have always been faced with significant bushfires in the Kimberley and the Pilbara; that has always been the nature of the beast. I am not expecting to see any significant impacts up there, plus the fact that we are starting to see greater rainfall in the Kimberley.

In south east Australia, the fire season is becoming longer, reducing the opportunity for hazard reduction burning. These changes have been most marked in spring, with fire weather extending into October and March. The fire season will continue to lengthen into the future, further reducing the opportunities for safe hazard reduction burning. One analysis has indicated that under a relatively modest warming scenario, the area of prescribed burning in the Sydney region would need to increase two to threefold to counteract the increased fire activity. In doing that, we really need to be mindful that to provide the services that are needed for the fire department and for emergency services to be on the ground earlier and doing this work, means that we will need to have significant budgetary and manpower increases in these areas.

The recent severe fires have been influenced by record hot dry conditions. Australia has experienced its hottest 12 months on record. New South Wales has experienced its hottest September on record, days well above the average in October and exceptionally dry conditions. These conditions mean that fire risk has been extremely high and we have already seen extreme bushfires in New South Wales, the Central Coast and the Blue Mountains.

I am mindful that the Black Saturday fires in Victoria were preceded by a decade-long drought with a string of record hot years coupled with a severe heatwave in the preceding week. The previous record for the forest fire danger index was broken by such an extent that it was revised and the category “catastrophic” or “code red” was added. This category had to be added because we had never gone into that area before. Since 2009, there have been a number of subsequent declarations of catastrophic conditions around southern Australia in step with the hotter and drier climate. Whilst it is not related to fire, for many years we all knew that Marble Bar was the hottest place in Western Australia; it always recorded the highest temperatures. In 2002, Port Hedland broke that record four days in a row. We have had many examples of records being broken not only in Australia but also in Western Australia over recent times. We need to be very mindful as a society of where we need to be going with some of our funding parameters in relation to fire management at least.

I refer to the Western Australian branch of the United Firefighters Union of Australia, which presented a position on 17 November 2013. It identified that in the 97 years of the union’s history, the most catastrophic fire was the Dwellingup fire, which resulted in the loss of over 160 structures in 1961. The union states —

In the last 5 years Western Australia has witnessed many of these large “Campaign Fires”.

We have seen the destruction that these “Campaign Fires” can inflict on our communities—in Toodyay, Brigadoon, Lake Clifton, Kelmscott–Roleystone and Margaret River which resulted in great losses, totalling more than 160 properties.

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 12 December 2013]

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Hon Robin Chapple; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Rick Mazza; Hon Col Holt; Hon Mark Lewis

These fires were of such magnitude that every available resource was required to contain the fires and to protect life and property.

These statistics do not include the misery attached to the loss of personal possessions, live stock, farm land, pets and our bush.

These statistics do not include the ordeals that our fellow citizens experience as a result of fire, and the fears they have had for their safety and the well being of their families and neighbours.

And for my members—

This is referring to the firefighters —

these statistics do not include the trauma and frustration triggered by the chronic under resourcing of Fire Services throughout WA because of decades of neglect by a series of governments and administrators.

They are the union's words. I do not want to particularly go down the path of blaming anybody. All I am saying is that we need to address this and have a greater budgetary commitment in these areas into the future. While we need to be doing our utmost in the realm of climate change to reduce emissions, for at least the next 100 years we will be playing catch-up on the emissions that have already been released. We will have catastrophic situations and we need to have the funding and the wherewithal within departments to manage these systems. The statement continues —

When we were called the Fire Brigade—long before we had FESA and now the Department of Fire and Emergency Services we had approximately 850 Firefighters in operational Fire Defence and 40 administrators.

In 2013—despite significant growth in the population of WA and the development of additional infrastructure in the last 10 years—we only have approximately 950 Firefighters in operational Fire Defence and we now have nearly 400 administrators.

My members do not blame our Commissioner or our Minister ... they have inherited a system that has been chronically under resourced ...

The union goes on to say that because it is facing a significant increase in fire activity associated with climate change, it needs to be greater resourced.

[Quorum formed.]

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: The statement continues —

So—I am here today to offer you an insight into the practical world of Fire Defence. No matter what decisions our governments and politicians make about how to stop or fix or indeed to manage climate change we need urgent intervention to increase fire and emergency services now. Climate change cannot be ignored—these fire, flood and storm events cannot be ignored.

My members—your Firefighters are protecting you not only for more catastrophic fires, during what appear to be longer duration fire seasons, but Firefighters are also protecting you during more frequent flood and storm events. Look at the recent flood and storm events in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. Look at the catastrophic NSW fires in October—the earliest start to the fire season in our experience.

That was the message from the Western Australian branch of the United Firefighters Union of Australia.

The budget papers do not provide any extra funding for or allocation of full-time equivalents to fire and emergency services to deal with those issues. I would urge the government to be mindful of its responsibility to protect our environment into the future. I use the broad term “environment”—that is, us, our surroundings, our buildings and our natural environment.

However, some things have been happening. The Rural Business Development Corporation provided funding to develop a climate adaptation assistance scheme in the north east agricultural region, which ran through to 30 June 2013. Unfortunately, that scheme no longer exists. Farmers are certainly the people most affected by climate change because it is a moveable feast and a variety of issues now face us. The drying of the south west has had a significant effect on farmers. There are also effects of climate change in areas around Geraldton due to the movement of geographic boundaries of climate impacts. I take my hat off to a number of farmers in the Geraldton region who have proactively dealt with the drying environment in that area. We, as a unit of government, need to do more to support people in those areas. Although the climate adaptation assistance scheme has ceased operating, we should continue down that path because processes are changing all the time and

we should ensure that those people are available to government, the community and industry to provide the advice that is needed. It will affect the economy of the state, farming communities and, interestingly enough, there are some positive spin-offs to the pastoral industry with some of the areas in the north west getting wetter and providing better feedstock. We need to develop our plans on the basis of where it is now projected we are going to go. I and a bunch of greenies are not coming up with these projections; they are projections from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Stanford University, the Climate Commission, the Bureau of Meteorology and, indeed, the budget. In fact, the budget papers state at page 794, under the Department of Parks and Wildlife —

Western Australia has a unique and highly significant biodiversity that faces constant threats and complex challenges ...

The potential movement of *Phytophthora* is an issue with the introduction of a different climatic regime. In fact, in some areas the work that has been done by the old Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia into the movement of *Phytophthora* associated with different impacts—one of those is climate—was very useful. We also need to know how the Department of Parks and Wildlife is dealing with the enhanced delivery of nature conservation and forest management when dealing with climate change. Some of the plans and guidelines established for some parks and nature reserves have not taken into account the drying environment, the wetting of the environment, the significant increase in storms and lightning storms, and many other factors.

My time is limited so I will quickly refer to the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility document which talks about climate change adaptation management and which identifies protected climate change refugia. It states that refugia areas are in landscapes that are buffered from extreme weather by features such as dense canopy or heterogeneous topography. Hon Mark Lewis will remember the work we did many years ago in the rangeways program that looked at areas of various land forms and tried to work out the best areas for the pastoral industry, mining and conservation. It is that sort of broad-scale work that needs to be done, especially in refugia, for many of our species and in species management. I hope that out of this debate we can get not a “he said, she said”, but an idea where we all need to go in terms of budgets and direction to be able to deal with climate adaptation whilst at the same time minimising our climate impacts. Touching on the latter point, I note some recent statements that have been made about energy consumption and the direction in which that is going. That issue and indeed the direction in which the community is moving to a large extent were discussed recently in the energy debate. The Grattan Institute recently identified that there had been a 7.5 per cent reduction in Australia in energy consumption over recent years because the community was using less energy and turning to renewable energy sources. Programs initiated by government and through government to fast-track that, whilst they will not deal with the adaptation issues, will minimise impacts into the future.

HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan — Minister for Mental Health) [11.07 am]: The Minister for Environment has provided some notes in answer to the matters raised by Hon Robin Chapple, and they focus on three areas. They do not necessarily address all the matters raised by Hon Robin Chapple, but they are points that the minister felt were worthy of making particular note in this debate.

Hon Robin Chapple: I thank the minister for that because that is what I am trying to entice, rather than various people’s ideas of where we are going on this.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Firstly, in May this year carbon dioxide concentrations measured at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii reached 400 parts per million for the first time. That is highest concentration of carbon dioxide recorded since measurements began at the Mauna Loa Observatory in 1958. The measurement that the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported for 9 May 2013—namely, 400.03 parts per million—was for a single day. Carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere tends to peak in May each year and then decrease by June with renewed vegetation growth in the northern hemisphere. Four hundred parts per million is an arbitrary milestone; however, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are continuing to increase.

The second point the minister wants to emphasise concerns ocean warming. In 2007 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change noted that over the period 1961 to 2003, global ocean temperatures rose by 0.1 degree Celsius—that is, 0.10—from the surface to a depth to 700 metres. Global ocean heat content observations show considerable variability on the longer-term trend. Relative to 1961 to 2003, the period 1993 to 2003 has high rates of warming but since 2003 there has been some cooling. There has been a gradual warming of about 0.02 degrees Celsius across the Western Australian coast since the 1950s. During the summer of 2010–11 the waters off Western Australia experienced an unprecedented warming of more than more than three to 4.5 degrees Celsius above average seasonal temperature. This was most significant in the midwest and Gascoyne regions. This marine heatwave event coincided with an extremely strong La Niña event and a record strength Leeuwin Current. This created a major temperature anomaly in addition to the underlying ocean warming trend.

Recreational fishers observed tropical fish such as Spanish mackerel had extended further south. The heatwave was also responsible for some spikes in recruitment for commercial prawn species in Exmouth Gulf and Shark Bay and of tropical fish species at Rottnest Island. Both the Shark Bay saucer scallop and blue swimmer crab stocks suffered a severe recruitment failure—I do not know what a recruitment failure is.

Hon Robin Chapple: Breeding.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Right. Why did he not just say breeding then? Those species suffered a severe recruitment failure and a high mortality of adults in the months following the heatwave.

The third point that the minister makes is around the development of the Western Australian climate change strategy linking to national policy and actions. The Australian government's Clean Energy Act 2011 included the introduction of a carbon price, which commenced on 1 July 2012 with a starting price of \$23 per tonne, rising by 2.5 per cent a year in real terms for the first three years and then moving to an emissions trading scheme in 2015. The state government has supported national initiatives developed through the Council of Australian Governments such as the National Strategy on Energy Efficiency and the 20 per cent national renewable energy target to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. The Western Australian government's view is that decisions on the design, implementation and timing of the regulation of greenhouse emissions are primarily matters for the commonwealth government and the federal Parliament. The state has a role in adapting to potential future temperature increases and other impacts of a changing climate and it is for this reason that the strategy provides a framework and role for government leadership in adaptation. The government's role includes measures that protect Western Australia's biodiversity from the impact of climate change, including the establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of reserves. The reserve system, as well as conserving representative biodiversity, provides for increased resilience and community awareness of the importance of biodiversity through managed opportunities for tourism and visitors.

They are the comments that I have received from the Minister for Environment on this particular matter.

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [11.14 am]: Labor will support this motion. It is good to have the spirit of seasonal Christmas goodwill break out in this place and I am sorry to cast a little shadow over that because I have to say that we find it a bit sanctimonious to hear anyone from the Greens standing and talking on a motion of this type. The Greens had their chance to make history on the issue of climate change and they failed. They failed dismally in 2009 when they walked away from their fundamental commitment to an emissions trading scheme and instead decided to play cheap politics with the issue. It is not overdramatising the situation to say that in so doing they changed the course of Australian history and the way in which this country deals with climate change. It is a bit rich to hear Hon Robin Chapple move a motion such as this and speak, as he always does, quite eloquently on the subject when a very large question mark hangs over the whole issue of the commitment of the Greens to get an outcome on these important issues. I preface my remarks with those comments about the mover of the motion and his party.

Having said that, of course, we need to talk about climate change and this is exactly what the motion that we are debating today requests —

This Council debate the directions needed for this state to adapt to and mitigate current and projected impacts of climate change and take proactive action to decrease climate change emission into the future in terms of its responsibilities on the impact on the community, health, biodiversity and economy of our state.

I think that the time will come in the not-very-distant future when we do not refer to “climate change” anymore, but something like “catastrophic climate breakdown”, because that is what we are experiencing now. That is the view of not only the activist left and the centre-left parties in Australia, but also some of our most conservative and traditional scientific institutions the world over. Reference has already been made in this debate to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report that was released a couple of weeks ago. Every time one of these reports come out, we see a mixture of reactions from the centre-right of politics through to the extreme-right, including a slightly embarrassed sort of turning away and a clear wish that somebody would change the subject as it is all a bit uncomfortable. I am sorry to use unparliamentary language, but I am quoting the now Prime Minister of the country when he said that climate change talk is “crap”. Whenever we see a report of this kind, the response from the right ranges from the kind of slight discomfort and embarrassment and the wish that someone would change the subject through to the loony concoction of conspiracy theories, such as, as one commentator put it recently, that we will all get rounded up into camps and forced to crochet our own bicycles.

The reality is that the IPCC is a very conservative mainstream institution. This is not a few scientists sitting in a back room and concocting things to scare the pants off us all. The report had nearly 2 000 contributors. It is very important that honourable members in this chamber and in this Parliament and in Parliaments all over Australia,

and indeed the world, understand exactly what the IPCC does. Nothing gets into an IPCC report unless it is agreed by nearly 2 000 people. This is not 2 000 people on the Clapham omnibus, but 2 000 people who count themselves as scientific experts in climate change. It is very hard to get 2 000 experts in anything to agree. The only things that get into IPCC reports are the things on which there is absolutely unanimous consensus.

That means, of course, that nothing gets into an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report unless it is very mainstream, centrist theory. Surely that means that we have to take seriously what IPCC reports say. This is exactly the point that I want to make this morning. What did the latest IPCC report say? Did it come up with any kind of backtracking on previous findings? No; it absolutely methodically reinforced every prediction that has been made for the last couple of decades about the catastrophic effect of climate breakdown, which is what we are living through at the moment. I will read into the record a quote from a British newspaper commenting on the IPCC report that was released a few weeks ago. It states —

What the report describes, in its dry, meticulous language, is the collapse of the benign climate in which humans evolved and have prospered, and the loss of the conditions upon which many other lifeforms depend. Climate change and global warming are inadequate terms for what it reveals. The story it tells is of climate breakdown.

This is a catastrophe we are capable of foreseeing but incapable of imagining. It's a catastrophe we are singularly ill-equipped to prevent.

That quote was from a blog by George Monbiot writing in *The Guardian*.

We are talking about a range of phenomena, including increases in temperature, decreases in ice bodies around the world, rising sea levels and an increase in the number of days when Western Australia has the new catastrophic fire warning. Other members who contributed to this debate have talked about the fact that bushfire threat is something that all governments should hammer home to people. This subject needs only the slightest flicker of interest from a member of Parliament to get it on the front page, because it is such a real threat to our lifestyle in Western Australia.

I will quickly go through a couple of those things that I think are really important, although they have been well canvassed in this debate. The number of days on which we have catastrophic fire warnings is increasing. With the increase in rainfall, we have this slightly counterintuitive phenomenon whereby increased rainfall leads to increased risk of bushfires, because there is more growth of material that then becomes fuel for bushfires. The whole of our state is at risk from these phenomena. It is time that we put aside some of our partisan differences. I have already made it clear that for a number of years I have been very critical of the way that the Greens party has conducted itself on this issue. I would be happy to sit down with people such as Hon Robin Chapple and some of his colleagues to talk about how we move forward on this issue. But the most important thing is that people from the centre right to the far right of politics must get over the terribly chequered history that they have carved out for themselves in dealing with this issue. It is a threat to the lifestyle of every single Western Australian. If we as a Parliament continue to shirk our responsibility to put adequate policies in place, to mitigate the risk and to deal with the consequences thus far, we will go down in history as having failed the community of Western Australia to the most spectacular extent.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [11.23 am]: I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate today. I see the motion in two parts. The first part is about the preparation that the state must make for changing climate patterns, and the second part is about the impact of human-generated emissions on the environment, which may cause some of those changes in weather patterns. I was quite surprised that Hon Robin Chapple concentrated a lot on fire mitigation, changing agricultural practices and preparing for a change in climate, and did not focus that much on the second part of the motion about emissions. I will concentrate on the second part for a moment. I, like many members of this house, attended the annual conference of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia a month or so ago. I was very interested in a presentation made by Professor Bob Carter on climate change. He is a very enthusiastic person who put forward a very good argument that climate change is a natural phenomenon and that we do not have a static climate; our climate and weather patterns change. White settlers have been in Australia for only a couple of hundred years. We do not know whether these weather pattern cycles are 20-year cycles, 50-year cycles or 200-year cycles. We have seen floods after long droughts; when everybody said that we would never see rain again, suddenly we had flooding rains. There is a host of different arguments about whether we are experiencing changing weather patterns through natural phenomena or through carbon emissions. In fact, Professor Bob Carter suggested that we could double our carbon dioxide emissions tomorrow and it would make a difference of something like 0.03 per cent in temperature. Those who were at the conference would have seen the great map he put up that showed that there was quite a lot of greening across the world from the extra carbon dioxide, which plants obviously feed off. A lot more work needs

to be done on whether carbon emissions do in fact make a difference to our climate or whether we are just faced with changing climatic patterns.

On the second part of the motion, there is no doubt that we have changing weather patterns and we need to prepare for those changing weather patterns. I think that we as a Parliament and as a government need to look at the installation of Doppler radar in agricultural regions to give people a better understanding of how those weather patterns may affect them in years to come and to provide the farming community with more infrastructure and more ability to determine what weather patterns it may be faced with so that it can obviously take the appropriate action.

Hon Robin Chapple also focused a lot on fire mitigation. There is no doubt that fire mitigation is very important in protecting the community, but it is nothing new. From day one, Australia has had problems with fires. Even the early records from the 1800s show a lot of very large fires on the east coast that had devastating effects. We need to continue to make sure that we have the skills, the infrastructure and the facilities to combat fires, particularly with rotational prescribed burning, which has always been undertaken in this state but which we are well behind in. In fact, recent estimates report that less than 40 per cent of our scheduled prescribed burns have been conducted this year. There is more work to be done in that regard.

I will close with that, other than to say that, sure, we have changing climate weather patterns and we need to prepare for those things, but it is yet to be determined whether the science has actually concluded that carbon emissions are the cause.

HON COL HOLT (South West — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.28 am]: I will make a brief contribution and make some observations. I will concentrate on the second part of the motion put forward by Hon Robin Chapple about the responsibilities for the impact on the community, health, biodiversity and economy of our state. Obviously, it is a bit of a double-edged sword in addressing or mitigating climate change. Although we recognise that changing weather patterns or long-term changing climatic patterns will have potentially serious impacts on our community, our health, our biodiversity and our economy, some of the mitigation that we do will have some great impacts on our community, our health, our biodiversity and the economy of our state.

I think one of the obvious hotspots to talk about in the south west is Collie, with its continuing reliance on the coal industry. My view is that we cannot just switch off the Collie coal power generators, because that will have a devastating impact on the economy of that community. I recently commented to the owners of some of the coal companies in Collie that we need to carefully consider how the coal in Collie is used into the future. I do not see any advantage in allowing massively increased overseas exports of Collie coal that will be burnt in a relatively short time; the reserves will be depleted, and where will that leave the state and the Collie community? That is just one example of how the potential mitigators of climate change, as talked about by Hon Robin Chapple, could have negative impacts. Finding a balance will be the biggest challenge for the community and the government.

As a bit of a sidenote, I have spoken in this place before about what brings about change in communities and people—what makes people change their attitudes or behaviour. I am talking about change at not only an individual level, but also the community or governmental level. What are some of those factors? It is clear to me that one factor is pressure to change—some sort of critical event that makes people say, “Actually, we have to do things differently now.” If we look at the drying climate in the eastern wheatbelt and the responses of farmers and the changes made to their farming systems, I think they are almost at a point of being pressured to change what they have been doing —

Hon Robin Chapple interjected.

Hon COL HOLT: I agree with Hon Robin Chapple. I think they have come to the point of being unable to continue doing what they have been doing, and they are going to have to look at ways of maintaining their businesses and productivity under the new environmental conditions in the eastern wheatbelt. I am sure they will still get good years, but there will probably be more and more hard years and they will have to think about what they can do differently. Even at a local community and business level there has to be some real pressure to change. Take the new catastrophic category fire warning; that is probably another signal that there is real pressure to do things differently.

What should the government’s response be? That is a tricky thing, and it is trickier to get the balance right from the government viewpoint when it has to consider the economy, people’s jobs and employment, and communities thriving so that they can invest in the right things. On the conservation side, we need thriving businesses, communities and governments to invest in things that are maybe not so economically driven, such as biodiversity. We still have to make sure that we drive the things that will deliver better conservation outcomes as well as changes outcomes. We have some examples of areas where there is real pressure to change, but from a

Hon Robin Chapple; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Rick Mazza; Hon Col Holt; Hon Mark Lewis

whole-of-government perspective, I think we are still getting there. I think some realisations need to be had that we really need to do some things in a different way. Hon Robin Chapple brought on this motion to say, “Come on, guys, let’s start thinking about how we might do things differently.”

Another part of that change equation, if you like, is the need for some skills and the capacity to adapt. I think we have been really, really good in this country and in this state at adapting. If we look at where we have come from—I will again use agriculture as an example—over 100 years of agriculture in this state, we see that farming systems have changed dramatically in response to the poor soils, limited rainfall, the poorer soils that will come and climatic change. I think agricultural systems are starting to evolve. Some investment was made into the water-for-food initiatives, using water from the dewatering of mines, especially in the north—the Pilbara and the Kimberley—and I think that will grow because of the need to respond. Our traditional food growing places will need to respond to ensure they make the most of the opportunities presented in an agricultural sense. We need to use the limited resource of water wisely to meet not only our own food needs, but also those of the world. I think we are pretty good at adapting, realising opportunities and trying to do things differently to make sure that our economy grows and our community is supported.

What is our first step in the change equation? We have the pressure to change and we know we can do it because we have the skills, brains and capacity to do it. But what do we do first to make sure that we are on the road to overcoming the problem of mitigating climate change and adapting our systems, communities and industries to that climate change? What are those first steps? This motion is really about provoking those first steps. I think Hon Robin Chapple is right; we need to start thinking as a community and as a government what those first steps along that long road are going to be. There will be some ups and downs caused by catastrophic or critical events, if you like, that will speed up or slow down our responses, depending on what they are. We really need to take the first steps on the road to the vision of a sustainable community economically, socially and environmentally. I thank Hon Robin Chapple for bringing the motion to the house.

HON MARK LEWIS (Mining and Pastoral) [11.36 am]: Very quickly in the time left on the motion, I thought I would respond with some facts.

Hon Robin Chapple interjected.

Hon MARK LEWIS: Okay; I will just take a minute anyway.

I thought I would respond to what Hon Sally Talbot said about the centre right people making some claims about climate change. I have just very quickly pulled up the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, which reads —

In summary, the current assessment concludes that there is not enough evidence at present to suggest more than low confidence in a global-scale observed trend in drought or dryness (lack of rainfall) since the middle of the 20th century ... Based on updated studies, AR4 conclusions regarding global increasing trends in drought since the 1970s were probably overstated. However, it is likely that the frequency and intensity of drought has increased in the Mediterranean and West Africa and decreased in central North America and north-west Australia since 1950.

I have 32 seconds left to talk about floods. The latest IPCC report states —

In summary, there continues to be a lack of evidence and thus low confidence regarding the sign of trend in the magnitude and/or frequency of floods on a global scale.

I thought I would bring that to the attention of the house. I have quoted directly from the IPCC report, and I will leave it there with about six seconds to go.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.