

## White Paper puts climate change back on the table but fighting Australia's longest conflict has barely begun

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The Defence White Paper released today clearly acknowledges climate change has national security consequences for Australia. CPD welcomes this positive development. However, given the urgency of the climate security challenge and the global consensus on climate action displayed in Paris last year, this effort still falls short of the mark.

CPD's CEO, Travers McLeod, said

"Prime Minister Turnbull and Defence Minister Payne have made the right call by incorporating climate change into the latest Defence White Paper, just as the Rudd and Gillard Governments did. This is a far better launching pad for action than a vision ignorant of climate change, which the Abbott Government threatened."

"Australia's region is the most vulnerable to climate change. Seven out of ten of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change are in the Asia-Pacific. By 2030, approximately 879 million people will live in low elevation coastal zones vulnerable to storm surges and sea level rises, with 70% of these residing in Asia. The White Paper makes clear the Australian Defence Force stands ready to respond to future crises."

"The White Paper has language about reacting to climate change but is largely silent on what we must do to be prepared for the direct challenges it poses to Australia's national security. The *Implementation Strategy* promised by the Government within one month is the best opportunity for Defence to demonstrate its seriousness about climate security."

Rob Sturrock, CPD Policy Director and lead author of CPD's 2015 report, *The Longest Conflict: Australia's Climate Security Challenge*, said

"The White Paper correctly states that climate change will impact our defence estate. But it will in fact impact all ADF capabilities, including energy supply chains.

"We have a long way to catch up to our main ally, the United States. They've had almost ten years of strategic planning on climate change and just launched their first fleet running on alternative fuels. We've barely acknowledged climate change has security dimensions."

"The *Implementation Strategy* should adopt CPD's recommendations in *The Longest Conflict*, including the creation of an Advisory Council on Climate Security to develop a Climate Security Strategy. This Council should report directly to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Defence and the Environment."

**CPD's CEO Travers McLeod and Policy Director Rob Sturrock are available for interview. Media contact: Shivani Nadan 0409 010 818**

CPD's 2015 Report, *The Longest Conflict*, is available [here](#). Further background is [here](#). Defence White Paper Expert Panel report, which quotes CPD's submission, available [here](#).

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