

**Preliminary Submission
to the Senate Committee on
The impacts on health of air quality in Australia**

Submission from
Doctors for the Environment Australia Inc.
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The following are members of our Scientific Committee and support the work of
Doctors for the Environment Australia

Prof. Stephen Boyden AM; Prof. Peter Doherty AC; Prof. Bob Douglas AO; Prof. Michael Kidd AM;
Prof. David de Kretser AC; Prof. Stephen Leeder AO; Prof. Ian Lowe AO; Prof. Robyn McDermott;
Prof. Tony McMichael AO; Prof. Peter Newman; Prof. Emeritus Sir Gustav Nossal AC; Prof. Hugh Possingham;
Prof. Lawrie Powell AC; Prof. Fiona Stanley AC; Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM; Dr Norman Swan;
Professor David Yencken AO

Doctors for the Environment Australia (DEA) is an independent, self-funded, non-government organisation of medical doctors in all Australian States and Territories. Our members work across all specialties in community, hospital and private practices. We work to prevent and address the diseases – local, national and global – caused by damage to our natural environment. We are a public health voice in the sphere of environmental health with a primary focus on climate change and the health harms from pollution particularly due to fossil fuels.

Doctors for the Environment Australia will be making a detailed submission to the Committee on many aspects of air quality and impacts on health. Our submission will cover wood smoke, bushfires, vehicle and coal pollution and coal seam gas as sources. We will be recommending more stringent air quality standards, accurate and independent monitoring, transparency of results and improved regulation of polluting industries as important preventive health measures.

The reason for this preliminary communication to the Senate Committee is to indicate that we are aware of a large number of community groups around Australia who will make submissions to the Committee and will wish to be heard. As the medical organisation concerned with pollution from coal mining and combustion of coal we have advised and helped many of these community groups over the past few years. We will be relating for the Committee some of the air quality issues experienced by these communities from our perspective but it is vital that they present their viewpoint and hopefully the Committee will see fit to visit some of the environments they experience.

The spokespersons of these community groups are dispersed across much of Australia and in addition to hearings in capital cities we hope the committee will be able to visit Port Augusta in South Australia, the Latrobe in Victoria, Newcastle and Muswellbrook/Singleton in New South Wales and the main coal and coal seam gas mining regions of Queensland where in addition to Brisbane we hope Mackay, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Yeppoon and Mt Isa will be included in the hearings.