

Some Comments on **Consultation Paper on Climate Change**

I was quite confused by the format of this draft Consultation Paper. What is the purpose within the Synod of such a long document?

As it stands it appears to be the outcome of a major academic assignment, but its format of a very long Executive Summary followed by nearly 50 pages of basic text makes it not a draft for academic publication.

I expected it to have a format that presents the Synod's position on the challenge of global warming-position that is to be shared with local congregations and to be sent to our political masters who in the end are responsible for how Australia responds socially and economically to this very serious challenge.

Accordingly I suggest a very much shorter document with say a 2 or 3 page summary and not more than 10 pages of background theological, scientific and social analysis. For local congregations it would be useful to have added a series of questions with some references for clarification and that also raise the question of active responses locally re personal and building energy audits and improvements.

To set out the issue I direct JIM to the very recent report from the *Commission for the Human Future (Professor John Hewson, Convenor)* entitled **Surviving and Thriving in the C**. Its few pages on global warming more than adequately sets out the main dimensions of the threat to human life as we know it and enough of the associated agreed science for the Synod's two purposes – local congregations and the political scene..

For these two purposes, it is important that the theological basis for the Synod (and hence the UC's wider internal and external actions) is succinct and leads (i) to a positive response from the widely diverse theological and biblical understandings among those of us who make up the UCA and (ii) to a position recognizable by politicians as a religious one.

The bases that seem to have some hope of positive agreement are as follows.

The responsibility to act on behalf of the fact that this challenge will disproportionately impact those members of our and Earth's societies that are already disadvantaged

The interdependence in God's creation of human and other living species and the biophysical conditions of Earth.

Peter Fensham