

MEDIA RELEASE

28 JUNE 2022



Australia must prepare for regional food crises caused by climate change, says former ADF chief

Australia must urgently conduct a review of its food supply chains and how they will be affected by climate change, according to a [report](#) released today by the [Australian Security Leaders Climate Group](#).

Australia is not fully prepared for the impacts of climate-change driven food scarcity, which will contribute to instability and conflict in our region, according to former Chief of the Defence Force Admiral Chris Barrie (Retd).

Climate change will exacerbate rising food prices and shortages.. Food and water insecurity will increasingly become major drivers of global conflict and instability, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, and in strategically important areas in the Indo-Pacific, posing a security challenge to Australia.

Food scarcity has already become a contributing factor to major conflicts around the world, including the Syrian civil war.

Similarly, climate change and conflict can combine to make food even more expensive and scarce, as is the case with Ukraine's role as a major wheat exporter. Likewise record-breaking heat waves across south Asia have led India to ban wheat exports, and worsen the looming food crisis.

"It is clear that a lack of food - driven by war, climate change or a combination of both - can destabilise and lead to even more conflict," **said Admiral Chris Barrie (Retd), an executive member of the Australian Security Leaders Climate Group.**

"The war in Ukraine is one domino in a network of events, including climate change, impacting food supply and price, and peoples' capacity to survive in increasingly fragile environments.

"Food insecurity is a growing crisis brought into the spotlight by the invasion of Ukraine, and it is a crisis that Australia is ill-prepared for.

"A rapidly heating planet fundamentally threatens our ability to secure our food and water supplies. This is a global, a regional and a national problem. Australia should commit to strong emissions reduction and aim to achieve net zero emissions as close to 2030 as possible.

"There will be big consequences for Australia from climate change, both because Australia's own food growing systems will be disrupted, and because food insecurity in the region will drive political instability, conflict, and people displacement in ways that will significantly impact on Australia and the security of its people," **said Colonel Neil Greet, Former Colonel in the Australian Army (Retd)**

"To face this challenge, Australia's climate and security risk assessment should include an examination of the threat posed by climate change to our food, water, agricultural systems and supply chains.

Media contact: Luke Taylor, 0449 641 160 Media Assets & images: www.aslclg.org/media-assets

The [Australian Security Leaders Climate Group](#) is a non-partisan network of Australian security and policy professionals that is working to reframe the climate debate and make climate an immediate security priority in Australia, through assessing the full level of risk posed by climate change and building resilience for local and global protection.