

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia's security review shows climate risks require stronger action to reduce emissions and support neighbours

The Australian Security Leaders Climate Group (ASLCG) has welcomed the incorporation of climate-related security risks into the review of Australia's security posture as a first step but needs greater priority.

In 2021, the ASLCG initiated a campaign for incorporation of climate risks into security analysis, which resulted in Labor making specific commitments in the lead up to the 2022 federal election and subsequently commissioning a climate and security risk assessment by the Office of National Assessment, which was delivered to the government in late 2022.

"After a decade of delay and denial by the Liberal and National Parties, the Albanese government has recognised that climate disruption will have a major impact on global, regional and human security", said former Defence Force Chief Admiral Chris Barrie (Ret'd).

"Pacific governments, the UN Secretary General, US Defence Secretary and the Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen all agree that climate breakdown is an existential risk. This requires increased capacity to deal with the immediate consequences of extreme climate events in the region, but also a plan to accelerate the move to zero emissions in Australia, and more support for neighbours to both mitigate and adapt", Adm. Barrie said.

The risks are far greater than currently climate policy suggests. The UK's premier security think-tank, Chatham House, warns that cascading climate impacts will "drive political instability and greater national insecurity, and fuel regional and international conflict".

"On current warming trends, our region will face a severe and destabilising food and water crises, driving conflict and forced migration. The security landscape will be far different from that which exists today. New initiatives for stronger regional cooperation in the face of this greatest threat to the human future are urgently needed."

According to the ASLCG, which includes former Defence Force Chief Admiral Chris Barrie (Ret'd), former Defence Director of Preparedness and Mobilisation Cheryl Durrant and Former Deputy Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force Air Vice-Marshal John Blackburn (Retd) Australia's greatest and most urgent security threat is posed by climate change, not China, and the Federal Government has an ongoing duty of care to the Australian people to fully assess, disclose, prepare for and respond to climate security risks.

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The [Australian Security Leaders Climate Group](#) is a non-partisan network of Australian security and policy professionals 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.