

EDITORIAL

A Special Climate Change Issue of RRH in time for the Beijing Olympics!- A Call for Papers!

P Jones

Co Editor, Australasian Section, Rural and Remote Health

Submitted: 5 February 2007; Published: 6 February 2008

Jones P

A Special Climate Change Issue of RRH in time for the Beijing Olympics!- A Call for Papers!

Rural and Remote Health 8: 949. (Online), 2008

Available from: <http://www.rrh.org.au>

.....“t’s dry, all right,” said young O’Neil,
With which astute remark
He squatted down upon his heel
And chewed a piece of bark.

And so the chorus ran
“Its keepin’ dry, no doubt.”
“We’ll all be rooned,” said Hanrahan,
“Before the year is out”.....

From, “Said Hanarahan”, Patrick Joseph Hartigan, 1878-1952¹.

Talking and worrying about the weather has been an essential part of conversation in rural Australia since Colonial times. The “Bush Ballads” of Australian poetry of the late 19th and early 20th century eloquently describe the challenges that the often harsh climate of rural Australia presented to the early European settlers living in “The Bush” in Australia. “Said Hanrahan” is perhaps the best example of

the recurrent worries that go with the changeable climate of alternating drought and flooding rains that are part of life in rural Australia.

South Eastern Australia appears to be emerging from 7 long years of drought and continued concerns about domestic water supplies. The record run of hot and dry years that has marked the beginning of the 21st century has contributed to intensified community concern that exists in Australia about the potential impact of global warming and climate change. In Western and Southern Europe there have been bushfires and evidence of retreating snowlines and shortened ski seasons in the Alps. Ocean temperatures appear to be increasing leading to variable rainfall patterns across the globe.

As we enter the 21st century there is now an international focus on the reality that the climate appears to be changing and that the pollution and carbon emissions that are part of modern day life are more than likely contributing to Global



warming and climate change². Rural communities which rely on the environment and climate are potentially going to be the hardest hit by climate change if droughts and dry and hotter weather patterns with variable rainfall patterns continue.

What are the current and likely future impacts of climate change in rural communities around the world? The editors of RRH feel that it is timely to attempt to find some answers and opinions from its readership to this topical question. There is an imperative to look at and implement solutions within the next few years because there is growing fear that the damage to the environment may be irreversible if no action is taken now.

The editors would like to invite and challenge the readers of the journal to write scholarly articles on climate change and its current and potential impact on the rural areas of their respective countries. Although the scientific basis for climate appears to be strengthening there still a need for healthy debate about what is likely to happen in the immediate future and what are the options the international community has at

its disposal to change the projected path that will occur if Global Warming is allowed to continue unimpeded.

The articles should be no longer 3,000 words in length. Opinion pieces will be considered. The articles should be submitted to the Journal of RRH by April 30, 2008 with articles for the special publication to be chosen from each international region of the journal. The special edition is to be published as a special climate change issue of the journal in time for the Beijing Olympic Games in August!

References

1. Hartigan PJ, "Said Hanrahan", available at <http://www.cs.rice.edu/~ssiyer/minstrels/poems/1573.html> Accessed January 14, 2008.
2. Solomon S, Qin D, Manning M et al. 2007: technical summary. In: *Climate change 2007: The Physical Science Basis*. Contribution of the Working Group 1 to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Solomon S, Qin M, Manning M et al Editors. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.