



AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Honorable Christopher Pyne, Minister for Industry, Innovation & Science
The Honorable Greg Hunt, Minister for the Environment
The Honorable Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Commonwealth of Australia

Dear Ministers Pyne, Hunt, and Bishop,

The American Meteorological Society, an international scientific and professional society of approximately 13,000 members that serves the atmospheric and related sciences and is headquartered in the United States, is deeply concerned following various news reports on the decision to eliminate the climate research component of CSIRO. The climate research section of CSIRO has been a crown jewel for Australia and of great importance internationally, with an incredible resource in its scientific staff.

While it has been reported that these cuts will not jeopardize some key long term climate observing stations, including the “baseline” atmospheric measuring station at Cape Grim in Tasmania, the analysis of those observations and the fate of other observing systems under the CSIRO umbrella are less clear. Any reductions of observational capabilities that would potentially interrupt climate monitoring datasets that make it possible to understand and respond to weather and climate events would threaten public safety.

Further, CSIRO has been a leader in providing world-class climate modeling, and it is the primary Southern Hemisphere facility doing so. While university researchers play an important role in these modeling efforts, it is research institutions like CSIRO (which is one of just a few worldwide) that ensure long term continuity and maintenance of these models. International efforts aimed at assessing climate change, and at mitigating and adapting to climate change, as called for under the recently negotiated Paris Agreement, depend on the modeling efforts and other important scientific contributions that have historically come from CSIRO.

The international community monitoring climate change and working toward solutions to minimize its negative impacts on society have depended on CSIRO’s climate science component for decades, recognizing the importance of the Southern Ocean and the Austral-Asian region to global climate variability and change. Losing the contribution of CSIRO has the potential to somewhat mute the voice of Australia in the climate change dialogue internationally.

We hope that Australia will commit to and strengthen its role within the climate community, and that every effort will be made to ensure full continuity of the climate monitoring systems that have been maintained by CSIRO, as well as minimizing the loss of climate modeling capacity by the Australian scientific community.

Sincerely,

Keith L. Seitter
Executive Director