



program details

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Sponsored breakfast briefing

TIME: 7.45am to 8.45am
LOCATION: Lumina

Australian climate change science

PRESENTER: Malcolm Turnbull, the Australian Minister for the Environment

Important aspects of the Australian environment and economy will be affected by climate change. The Australian Government is investing heavily in scientific research on climate change to underpin its policy making. This briefing, by Australian Minister for the Environment, Malcolm Turnbull, will highlight recent research areas such as:

- understanding the impact of climate change on habitats like the Great Barrier Reef
- developing low emission technologies such as geothermal and solar power
- investigating geological storage of carbon dioxide
- adapting to climate change in the Australian context.

Limited seats available.

Sign up at the registration desk or contact: Jahda Swanborough, (0439) 645 454, Jahda.Swanborough@environment.gov.au

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Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Water Resources
Australian Greenhouse Office

Sponsored breakfast briefing

TIME: 7.45am to 8.45am
LOCATION: Savoy 2

Visit Europe in 2008 for ESOF and PCST

Hosted by ESOF and PCST

Join the organisers of the:

- 2008 Public Communication of Science and Technology Conference in Malmö and Copenhagen in June;
- and the 2008 Euroscience Open Forum in Barcelona in July.

Find out about plans for these two exciting science communication events over breakfast with members of the organising committees of both events – including:

- Clive Cookson, science editor, Financial Times
- Philip Campbell, editor in chief, Nature
- Ruth Francis, press officer, Nature Publishing Group

Limited seats available.

Sign up at the registration desk.

Hosted by



Sponsored breakfast briefing

TIME: 7.45am to 8.45am
LOCATION: Savoy 3

New Zealand, new thinking

Kiwifruit, biodegradable surfboards, bird-scaring grass, brain repair and more

Meet the New Zealand delegation over breakfast and learn about New Zealand's new thinking in science and technology.

Limited seats available.

Book at registration desk or contact: Deb Prior, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, (0412) 129 855, Deborah.Prior@nzte.govt.nz



program details continued

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Wednesday session

TIME: 9.00am to 10.15am
LOCATION: Savoy 1

Reporting climate change

PRODUCER: Simon Torok,
CSIRO Marine and
Atmospheric Research

CHAIR: TBA

SPEAKERS: Kevin Hennessy,
CSIRO and lead author,
Australia and New Zealand
chapter, IPCC Working
Group II
Geoff Love,
Bureau of Meteorology and
vice-chair, IPCC Working
Group II
Ian Lowe,
president, Australian
Conservation Foundation

PANEL: Chris Mooney,
Seed Magazine (US)
Simon Torok,
CSIRO Marine and
Atmosphere Research

Climate change has evolved as a media story over two decades, from a debate about whether the Earth really is warming, through an acceptance that climate is changing due to human influences, to today's discussion of how society should respond.

With the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report's first two Working Groups having released their key findings in February and earlier this month, how accurately has the climate change story been covered?

And with the Third Working Group soon to release its findings on responses to climate change, how should the story be framed? Join a panel of senior IPCC authors and of science commentators to discuss the reporting of climate change in an increasingly political environment.

Wednesday session

TIME: 11.00am to 12.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 1

Poles apart but together in science for International Polar Year

PRODUCERS: Peter Calamai,
Toronto Star (Canada)
Sandra Zicus,
Antarctic Climate &
Ecosystems Cooperative
Research Centre

CHAIR: Veronika Meduna,
New Zealand Broadcasting
Corporation (New Zealand)

SPEAKERS: Louis Fortier,
Laval University (Canada)
Kathy Conlan,
Canadian Museum of Nature
(Canada)
David Hik,
University of Alberta
(Canada)
Steve Rintoul,
CSIRO Marine &
Atmospheric Research
Patti Virtue,
Institute of Antarctic &
Southern Ocean Studies
Michael Stoddard,
Australian Antarctic Division

Launch International Polar Year by visiting the coldest places on Earth with a panel of distinguished Canadian and Australian scientists. Explore the similarities and differences of the two hemispheres, and found out why the poles play such a significant role in global climate.

Wednesday session

TIME: 11.00am to 12.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 2

Wildfire: friend or foe? Lessons from a dry continent

PRODUCER: Barbie McKaige,
CSIRO Sustainable
Ecosystems

CHAIR: TBA

SPEAKERS: Ross Bradstock,
University of Wollongong
Dick Williams,
CSIRO Sustainable
Ecosystems
Kevin Hennessy,
CSIRO Climate Impact Group
Garry Cook,
CSIRO Sustainable
Ecosystems
Peter Christophersen,
CSIRO Sustainable
Ecosystems
John Schauble,
Country Fire Authority,
Victoria

PANEL: Kevin O'Loughlin,
Bushfire Cooperative
Research Centre

Australia is a dry and flammable continent and has been for millions of years; its wildlife is well-adapted to fire. Many other countries will face increased fire risk as climate change takes hold.

Few issues in Australia raise as much passion as wildfire. That's because most people live along the coast and in the sprawling cities of southern Australia. Some of the choicest real estate is on the fringes of suburbia where city meets the bush. Here, a lack of knowledge and understanding of fires can be fatal. Even in farming areas, hot dry winds fan furious blazes. It's the making of disasters that happen again and again. Climate change and more frequent droughts could make living in this fire prone landscape even more challenging.

Yet for most of the continent—the sparsely populated outback and north—fire is not an infrequent horror, but a natural part of the environment. Indeed conservation of Australia's biodiversity depends on wise fire management, and wildfire is now being examined for its role in greenhouse gas abatement.

Australian research on wildfire has resulted in a complete change in attitude to coping with bushfires, where people are encouraged to make their own decisions about managing their property — leave early or stay and defend a well prepared property. Join a group of researchers and fire-fighters and learn more about the Australian approach to living with wildfire.

Please note: These details are subject to change. There will be additional speakers in some sessions, for instance. Any alterations will be made available at registration. If a country is not listed the speaker is from Australia.

Wednesday session

TIME: 11.00am to 12.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 3

Climate change and the spread of disease

PRODUCER: Deborah Smith, Sydney Morning Herald
CHAIR: TBA
SPEAKERS: Tony McMichael, Australian National University
Alistair Woodward, Auckland University (New Zealand)

Global warming poses an increasing risk to human health. Higher temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, sea level rises and more extreme weather events, will have a serious impact on the lives of many people.

The toll will be both physical and mental. Yet this threat, and its associated social and economic costs, has not received as much attention as many other aspects of the climate change debate. Already, human-induced climate change is claiming more than 150,000 lives each year, according to the World Health Organisation.

The spread of infectious diseases such as malaria, dengue fever and diarrhoea will be profoundly affected by climate change. And many of the poorest nations could be hardest hit.

Heatwaves have become more severe, a problem exacerbated by the heat island effect of living in large cities. As the thermometer continues to climb, the very young and very old, as well as those with cardiovascular disease or respiratory conditions, will be among the people most affected.

Floods, droughts and hurricanes bring death, destruction and displacement, and are likely to increase in intensity in a warmer world. Exposure to disasters has serious psychological consequences for many of those involved. Extreme weather events also interrupt the delivery of services and health care, and have an impact on food production and supply.

How best to address these new risks is one of the biggest practical and ethical challenges facing the world. In this session population health specialists will examine the latest research findings on health risks, possible responses, and the challenge of reporting on the uncertainties in this area.

Wednesday session

TIME: 11.00am to 12.30pm
LOCATION: Connaught

Science versus business – a clash of cultures?

PRODUCER: Melissa Trudinger, freelance science writer
CHAIR: TBA
SPEAKERS: Rebecca Wilson, Buchan Communications
Clive Cookson, Financial Times (UK)
David Blake, Bioshares

In technology-based industries—such as biotechnology, medical devices and nanotechnology—an understanding of the science is integral to understanding the business.

But there is a divide between the reporting of science and of technology-based businesses. Stories from the health and medical sciences rarely mention the companies behind the development of innovative new drugs and treatments, while the business pages are overly concerned with the bottom line and ignore the science that may be at the heart of a company's success or failure.

Are the two mutually exclusive? What do science and medical journalists need to know about the business of biotechnology and other technology-driven industries? Should business reporters make sure they understand the science underpinning the industry they are reporting on? In this session, a panel of science and business journalists will discuss these issues with representatives of the biotechnology industry and the media relations advisors who work with them to get their messages to the media.

Sponsored lunch

TIME: 12.30pm to 1.30pm
LOCATION: Lumina

Coming in from the cold: a call to action a scientifically literate society

A two course sit-down lunch presented by the Australian Science Media Centre and the South Australian Government

The challenges that face society at local and global scales make it abundantly clear that knowledge of science and technology is no longer a luxury. It is a necessity. How do we build a more proactive scientifically literate society? It's time for science to come in from the cold.

In this stimulating lunch dialogue, Professor Tim Flannery, Australian of the Year will address this challenge. He will be joined by the Hon. Paul Caica MP, Minister for Science and Information Economy, South Australia, who will outline a unique strategy based on the ideas from Baroness Professor Susan Greenfield's time as 'Adelaide Thinker in Residence'.

Board and Science Advisory Panel members from the first of these ideas, the Australian Science Media Centre, will join journalists for this event.

Chaired by the Director of the London-based Science Media Centre, Fiona Fox.

Limited seats available.

Sign up at the registration desk or contact: Marilyn Arnold, (0409) 909 580, marnold@aussmc.org

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**Government
of South Australia**

program details continued

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Sponsored lunch briefing

TIME: 12.45pm to 1.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 2

Pharmaceutical research down under

Presented by Medicines Australia:
pick up your lunch and join us in Savoy 2

Medicines Australia represents the innovative research-based pharmaceutical companies who discover, develop and manufacture prescription medicines.

Join us for a briefing from a leading industry representative telling a global story about the pipeline of research, development and delivery of medicines. The pharmaceutical industry is a major driver, utiliser and deliverer of global science and there will be major companies on hand to talk about initiatives and projects being conducted within Australia.

Limited seats available.

Sign up at the registration desk or contact: Diana Terry, diana.terry@medicinesaustralia.com.au

Sponsored by



Sponsored lunch briefing

TIME: 12.45pm to 1.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 3

Some secrets of breast milk revealed?

Presented by Macquarie University:
pick up your lunch and join us in Savoy 3

Most mothers are aware that breast milk helps boost their baby's immune levels, but up to now it has been thought that it is mainly because of the mother's antibodies found in human milk.

New preliminary research suggests that complex protein/sugar structures within human breast milk may bind to harmful bacteria in a baby's gut, allowing it to then be flushed out. If this is the case, it may soon be possible to synthesise these structures and add them to cow's milk or formula so that mothers who are unable to breastfeed – due to malnourishment, for example - can ensure their babies are still well protected against disease.

Professor Nicki Packer of the Biomolecular Frontiers research group at Macquarie University believes this defence may have evolved in humans but not cows because of our different physiology – after all, cows have four stomachs and only eat grass!

Come along to hear Packer discuss her theory, and how glycoproteins can help us detect cancer and drug use by athletes.

Limited seats available.

Sign up at the registration desk or contact: Greg Welsh, (02) 9850 7383, greg.welsh@mq.edu.au

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Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 1

Coal: fuel of the future

PRODUCER: Michelle Riedlinger, Econnect Communication

CHAIR: Bernie Hobbs, ABC Science

SPEAKERS: Peter Cook, CO2 Cooperative Research Centre

Doug Holden, Australian Coal Association

Ian Lowe, Australian Conservation Foundation

Journalist (TBA)

We are yet to develop a viable substitute for petroleum as a transport fuel. And coal is still the cheapest, most readily available energy source for many large economies, including USA, China and India. So it is difficult to envisage a future without continuing reliance on fossil fuels for many decades to come.

On the one hand, researchers around the globe are developing carbon capture and storage systems and 'clean' fossil-fuel technologies; on the other, influential bodies such as the European Commission have called for 'a new industrial revolution', promoting renewable energy and nuclear power to replace fossil fuels and combat climate change.

Coal is one of Australia's most valuable exports, and a pillar of the economy. But Australians are increasingly purchasing Government-accredited GreenPower (from sun, wind, water and waste) in the belief that they are eliminating the emissions produced by coal-based generation of electricity.

With the cleaner coal-burning power stations at least 10 years away and critics of carbon offsets saying tree planting will never be enough and could even have damaging effects, should we be pursuing fossil fuels as an energy source into the future?

Can fossil fuels—coal, gas and petroleum—ever be carbon neutral? Do they need to be? And what will be the cost for the consumer?

Without massive reform of energy production, transport and planning, will those who are poor be forced to make harsh sacrifices while those with cash simply buy the right to wastefully pollute?

Explore these questions and concerns with fossil fuel supporters, critics and researchers.

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Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 2

Coral reefs: going, going, gone?

PRODUCER: Louise Goggin, NSW Dept of Environment and Conservation
CHAIR: TBA
SPEAKERS: John (Charlie) Veron, coral reef scientist
Daniel Gschwind, Queensland Tourism Industry Council
Paul Marshall, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Coral reefs cover less than one per cent of the earth's surface but are one of the most diverse and valuable ecosystems on our planet. It is estimated that they support at least a million species of animals and plants, and provide food for approximately one billion people in Asia alone. The Great Barrier Reef is a particularly special reef; it is the world's largest natural feature, stretching more than 2000 kilometres along the east coast of Australia.

Join us as we discover how climate change will affect these incredible ecosystems and the industries that depend on them.

We will also explore the role of the media in communicating the likely impacts.

John (Charlie) Veron is an international expert on coral reefs and will describe how our reefs will change as the world's climate shifts.

Daniel Gschwind will talk about how these changes will impact the industries that depend on coral reefs. And Paul Marshall will look at how we are managing the Great Barrier Reef to build up resilience, and how these strategies can be applied to reefs around the world.

Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 3

Life and death in 2020: how will science respond? (Part 1)

PRODUCER: Susannah Elliott, Australian Science Media Centre
CHAIR: Rob Morrison, Flinders University
SPEAKERS: Abigail Thomas, ABC Science
Caroline McMillen, University of South Australia
Ashley Bush, University of Melbourne

What will be shaping our lives and health in 2020? Many challenges will be facing us as individuals and societies—an increasingly aged population, chronic ailments such as cancer, diabetes and dementia and, of course, external influences such as climate change and the next revolution in the way we communicate and receive information. How will they interplay and what role will science play?

In part 1 of this session, some of Australia's top experts will take us into the future, highlighting the opportunities, challenges and options.

In part II, a lively roundtable discussion chaired by "Scientific American" editor, John Rennie, will build on the keynote presentations in Part I with a panel of discussion catalysts and audience participation to debate the challenges for science in 2020.

Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Kensington

Evaluating clinical papers

PRODUCER/CHAIR: Ruth Armstrong, Medical Journal of Australia
SPEAKERS: David Vaux, La Trobe University
David Henry, Media Doctor
Martin Van Der Weyden, Medical Journal of Australia
PANEL: Chris Del Mar, Bond University
Julie Robotham, Sydney Morning Herald
Ruth O'Halloran, Pfizer Australia

Doctors and researchers often complain that when the results of medical research reach the public via the media something is lost in the translation. Writers and journalists may well retort that this criticism fails to appreciate the impenetrable way in which some researchers report their results, and the differing agendas of the media and the scientific community.

This session aims to equip medical writers with some of the skills needed to evaluate medical research papers, and create a dialogue between some of the stakeholders.

Three short presentations will be followed by a discussion of your questions by an expert panel.

Martin Van Der Weyden is editor of the Medical Journal of Australia. He believes most research reflects knowledge evolution, rather than revolution.

David Vaux is the molecular biologist who first showed the significance of cell death (apoptosis). His mission is to improve the quality of data reported in scientific publications.

David Henry is head of clinical pharmacology at the University of Newcastle, and co-founder of Media Doctor, a website dedicated to improving the accuracy of news stories about new medical treatments.

program details continued

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Lumina

Seducing gatekeepers: getting more science past your editor

PRODUCER: Tom Noble,
NoblePR
CHAIR: Peter Calamai,
Toronto Star
SPEAKERS: Deborah Smith,
Sydney Morning Herald
Garry Linnell,
News Director,
Nine Network

If you are an Australian journalist covering science, getting prominent coverage can be a problem.

Traditionally in Australia, science doesn't get a big run in the media. The reason usually given is that science is boring, dull or complicated, and the public is not really interested. It is often said that senior media executives – the gatekeepers of media organisations – remain unconvinced that science sells.

But there has been a good deal of research showing if science is presented in the right way people are fascinated. And science certainly seems to sell in many other countries.

So where is the roadblock? Why is science not more widely reported? Or does science get the coverage it deserves?

In this session we confront some key gatekeepers and ask them what it takes to get better coverage into the mainstream media. We'll ask what tempts the gatekeepers and why.

Wednesday session

TIME: 2.00pm to 3.30pm
LOCATION: Connaught

Introduction to science editing (Part 1)

A workshop presented by the
Society of Editors

PRESENTERS: Janet Salisbury,
Biotext
Meg Heaslop,
Biotext
Eve Merton,
Biotext

This interactive workshop will involve a mixture of presentations, group discussions and exercises.

The two sessions are aimed at those who prepare science publications, either for a technical or lay audience. They will cover:

- what editing involves and where it fits into the publication process;
- what is special about science editing — such as the kind of material science editors work on, the skills they need, and common issues;
- big picture editing — revising the substance and structure to achieve a logical flow;
- the basics of style editing — ensuring consistency of issues such as capitalisation, spelling, use of technical terms and units;
- tables and figures — the major pitfalls; and
- editing for clarity — the main challenges for science editors, such as saying what you did and what happened (instead of what was 'performed' or 'observed to have occurred'); activating weak verbs and nouns to make your writing clearer and more direct; and avoiding other pitfalls of scientific writing such as overuse of jargon and passive voice.

N.B. This session is in two parts at 2pm and 4pm. Participants are asked to sign up for both parts.

Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 1

Water wars

PRODUCER/CHAIR: Jenni Metcalfe,
Econnect
SPEAKERS: Tim Flannery,
Australian of the Year,
Macquarie University
Asa Wahlquist,
The Australian
Mike Young,
CSIRO Land & Water
Mike Rann,
Premier of South Australia

After one of the hottest and driest summers on record, and with severe water restrictions in place in almost all the major cities, the world's driest continent, Australia, has to look seriously at its use of water. Join a panel of experts in the search for solutions for Australia and the world.

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Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 2

Using science to influence decision makers for action

A workshop presented by the ASC

PRESENTER: Toss Gascoigne,
Council for the Humanities,
Arts & Social Sciences

SPEAKERS: Michael Hartmann,
Cooperative Research
Centres Association

Fiona Poletti,
former ministerial staffer

Kathy Williams,
general manager of Bunker
Freight Lines and deputy
chair of the Collections
Council of Australia

How do researchers influence Government decisions? What sort of advice and assistance do governments want from research bodies, and what is the best format in which to provide it? This dynamic workshop will look at practical solutions open to research organisations, and explore the merits of writing letters, seeking meetings, or chaining yourself to the doors of Parliament House.

Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Savoy 3

Life and death in 2020: How will science respond? (Part 2)

PRODUCER: Susannah Elliott,
Australian Science
Media Centre

CHAIR: John Rennie,
editor in chief, Scientific
American

SPEAKERS: Richard Head,
CSIRO Preventative Health
Flagship

Roger Short,
University of Melbourne

Christina Scott,
science journalist and
broadcaster
(South Africa)

In Part 2 of this session, a lively roundtable discussion chaired by Scientific American's John Rennie will build on the keynote presentations in Part 1 with a panel discussion and audience participation to debate the challenges for science in 2020.

The discussion catalysts include:

- Richard Head – Science has coped and will again!
- Roger Short – Forget demographics: will the human race survive climate change?
- Christina Scott – HIV and the shaping of Africa's future

Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Kensington

World Federation of Science Journalists General Assembly

The Federation will report on its achievements since Montreal, and will elect its committee and office holders for the next two years. Each member association has one voting representative.

program details continued

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Lumina

Controversies in evidence-based medicine

A workshop presented by the Australasian Medical Writers' Association

PRESENTER: Chris Del Mar,
Bond University

Seemingly exciting research 'breakthroughs' are often far too preliminary to have direct influence on people's lives, whatever promise they hold. On the other hand much dull-sounding research may impact thousands of lives. Medical writers have a responsibility to understand this, and amplify or insert suitable dampeners in stories that they report.

More than that, a lot of research is simply unable to deliver what it promises—the quality has to be suboptimal simply because of the design of the study. Clearly, there is a minefield of irrelevant and badly-performed research to report.

Evidence-based medicine (EBM) is the process of putting research information into clinical practice. Understanding its principles is important for medical writers because it enables them to measure the relevance as well as the quality of news stories.

This workshop expounds the essence of EBM. The 4 steps are:

1. Asking (formulating the question being addressed by the research into its essential components);
2. Accessing (finding the research or related research in electronic databases);
3. Appraising (measuring the quality of the research found); and
4. Applying (seeing how the research will affect the lives of readers, or the public).

Each of these steps will be outlined.

The session will be interactive, with attendees having the ability to interject and provide examples from their own experience. There will be examples of how EBM works, showing how previously reported research has been not just incorrect, but completely wrong, and enabling writers to ask researchers penetrating questions.

Wednesday session

TIME: 4.00pm to 5.30pm
LOCATION: Connaught

Introduction to science editing (Part 2)

See Part 1 for description

Social function

TIME: 6.30pm to 8.30pm
LOCATION: The Theatre of Science
Bio21 Institute
The University of Melbourne
30 Flemington Road

Evening reception

Science and theatre will creatively merge in the spectacular glass atrium of the Bio21 Institute.

A new Science magazine will be launched. Three talented journalists of the future will be honoured.

Drinks and canapés will be provided. Prepare for enjoyment.

Buses will leave from the Hyatt Hotel at 6.15pm and 6.20pm.

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Social function

TIME: 8.30pm to 10.30pm
LOCATION: Observatory Café
Royal Botanic Gardens
Birdwood Avenue
South Yarra
(directly opposite the Shrine)

A night with the Southern Stars – cocktail function

Be guided in your viewing of the southern stars by leading astronomers from the University of Melbourne.

Telescopes will be set up on the lawns at the historic Melbourne Observatory in the Royal Botanic Gardens, once a leading facility for mapping the stars.

Meet Professor Rachel Webster and share in the vision for a new telescope that will probe the origins of the Universe. Enjoy drinks, canapés and entertainment in the Observatory Café.

Transport will be provided from the Theatre of Science reception at Bio21.

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