Mr Greg Saunders  
Director  
Governance and Risk Management Section  
Department of Environment  
GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Saunders,

We respond to the letter from Mr David Williams Ref: B13/340 regarding the application of the Climate and Health Alliance for entry to the Register of Environmental Organisations.

The advice from Mr Williams was that the Department was not satisfied the Climate and Health Alliance meets the principal purpose test.

The Climate and Health Alliance wishes to seek Ministerial consideration of the application.

The objects of the Climate and Health Alliance as stated in its Rules and its application clearly demonstrate the principal purpose of the Alliance is “the restoration of a healthy and ecologically sustainable natural environment for all species, including humans.”

The work of the Climate and Health Alliance centres on advocacy for policy and research on the impacts of climate change, and highlighting the benefits of climate action and environmental protection.

It does so through the lens of human health as a valid and effective method of highlighting environmental concerns. This approach is supported by peer reviewed climate and environmental communications literature, which demonstrates that by framing climate change and environmental harm in the context of health and wellbeing, it is possible to build support for policies to reduce climate and environmental risks more effectively than by using an environmental frame.¹

The work of the Climate and Health Alliance is widely respected around the world, and the work it is doing is making an important contribution to understanding the complexity of the relationship between

the natural environment and people. Given humans constitute the greatest threat to the natural environment; shaping the behaviour of humans in ways that reduce environmental harms is the most effective strategy available to us to reduce risks to the natural environment. Many scientists believe that building a greater awareness about the dependence of humans on fragile and vulnerable ecosystems is vital if we are to effectively halt the destruction of the natural world.2

I provide a revised brief description of CAHA’s activities in support of this application.

This summary clearly demonstrates approaches taken by CAHA to engage organisations and individuals, locally and internationally, to respond to the risks from environmental degradation and climate change. This is our core business.

CAHA’s activities fall into three main categories:

1. Advocating for effective public policy and community responses to promote a healthy ecology and society through the development of reports, briefing papers, submissions, and position statements
2. Collaborating with others to promote a healthy environment and environmentally responsible practices
3. Engaging with and informing others to encourage environmental protection through events, campaigns and public outreach
4. Sharing information and resources about health and the natural environment through a website and regular publications

The Climate and Health Alliance asserts that addressing climate change and environmental degradation is its principal purpose and respectfully requests the Minister approve its application to join the Register of Environmental Organisations so it can expand its work and leadership in global environmental protection.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Armstrong

CAHA Convenor

convenor@caha.org.au

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