

# **Australian Counselling Association**

## **Statement of Commitment on Climate Change**

Scientists have ascertained that climate change is considered one of the biggest threats to humankind. The Australian Counselling Association acknowledges that, based on the available evidence, the planet is warming, greenhouse gas emissions are increasing, and sea levels are rising.

The counselling and psychotherapy profession can play a significant role in supporting and assisting people experiencing mental health issues in relation to climate change and post-disasters. Our profession can contribute positively by providing flexible and individualised support to individuals and families experiencing mental health issues in relation to climate change and post-disaster events such as bushfires and floods.

Moving forward, we strongly recommend that counsellors and psychotherapists acquire specialist skills and knowledge to assist in providing effective culturally responsive counselling and psychotherapy for work related to climate change and post-disasters. In addition, it is vital to understand the importance of social justice advocacy as an important aspect of the counselling and psychotherapy work. For the sake of everyone and future generations, we all need to demonstrate leadership in our workplaces and in our communities, behaviour that supports the science of climate change. This means that where possible everyone actively engages in reduction action such as reducing their carbon footprint by reducing energy use, switching to renewable energy and reduce the demand for fossil fuels, reducing waste, reducing personal transport emissions, purchasing carbon offsets and monitoring their carbon footprint.

The counselling and psychotherapy profession have an important role to play in addressing mental health issues in relation to climate change and post-disasters. The Australian Counselling Association calls upon our members to play their part.

The Australian Counselling Association's specific contribution to reducing the carbon footprint is to donate a tree for every new member registering for level 1, 2, 3, and 4 membership. The monthly donation is made through the Carbon Neutral Charitable Fund, helping to minimise the impact on the environment.