

May 27, 2026

Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy

Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for the Environment and Water

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, Minister for Science

Dr. Doug Hilton AO, CEO, CSIRO

An Open Letter to the Australian Parliament and CSIRO Leadership

We write to you with great alarm as we witness significant staffing and budget cuts to the critically important climate science conducted at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). According to a recent [Guardian](#) article, a third of the CSIRO scientists working to develop and improve the Australian Community Climate and Earth System Simulator (ACCESS) model have been fired. These latest losses come on top of previous cuts and endanger not only the capability of CSIRO to conduct world-leading climate modeling, but also the ability of Australians to understand the risks of and adapt to fossil fuel-caused climate change.

As scientists based in the United States, we understand firsthand the damage these kinds of actions have, as we work to challenge the Trump administration's relentless attacks on U.S. climate science agencies like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). We urge you to take immediate action to reverse these staffing and budget cuts and to protect the resources and personnel at CSIRO.

ACCESS is one of the world's premier climate models. It plays a critical role in international assessments of climate change and is unique for its focus on southern hemisphere processes. While scientists have a strong understanding of how the world's climate will evolve under increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, major uncertainties remain about regional impacts, such as increased drought and wildfire risk in Australia. ACCESS is also important for understanding the impacts of accelerating sea level rise for neighboring Pacific Island nations. In fact, this is the time when we most need climate models like ACCESS: societies require regional projections to prepare for and adapt to the ever-growing perils of global climate change. Cutting the positions of scientists responsible for developing and improving a critical model like ACCESS would leave Australia dangerously unprepared for these impacts.

Australia has been a world leader in climate science for decades. Since the 1980s, Australian scientists have helped sound the alarm on the risks of climate change. With the development of ACCESS in the 2000s, Australia's scientific community became an increasingly important

contributor to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's international assessments. ACCESS is not a short-term project or niche research effort; it represents decades of accumulated Australian scientific expertise that impacts international collaboration efforts around climate change. The end of ACCESS would undermine Australia's standing as a global leader on climate science and is especially ironic in a year when Australia will be co-chairing COP31, the next annual UN climate talks.

We call on the Australian Parliament and CSIRO leadership to ensure that funding for ACCESS and the scientists that develop and maintain it remain robustly supported. A world without ACCESS would not only upend decades of invaluable scientific research, but would also signify an abdication of Australian involvement in climate research on the world stage.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gretchen Goldman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Gretchen T. Goldman, CEO, Union of Concerned Scientists

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin D. Santer". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Dr. Benjamin D. Santer, climate scientist and member, U.S. National Academy of Sciences