

From:
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Lismore floods
Date: Friday, 8 April 2022 11:35:32 AM

Dear flood enquiry,

I am writing to make a submission because my home was significantly damaged in the Lismore floods.

I know that I live in a flood zone and in the past floods have actually always been an exciting event, while we get flooded in the surrounds, my family home has always stayed dry, up above the flood waters, and has always felt like a safe place. It is an old house and stands on very large stilts above the 1974 flood level.

However, this flood changed everything, and i will never be able to look at floods in my community the same way again. They will now always be associated with the trauma and the fear that I experienced in witnessing my home go under.

I evacuated from my rental to stay at my family home during the floods. My rental was flooded over the roof, destroying everything I own including precious art supplies and expensive camera equipment. At 3 in the morning it became clear that my family home was also going to flood, for the first time ever. I had to wake up my little sister and tell her to gather what she could. I had to swim under the house in floodwater to retrieve the boat so it would not get stuck between the underneath of the house and the rising floodwater. I watched my dogs stand on furniture bewildered as the flood water rose above my waist level. I could hear my neighbours, who knew we had a boat, calling to us for help in the dark.

Even though I had been up all night preparing and putting belonging into the ceiling, when we finally left the house in the boat at first light we found that almost every person who lived on our street were stranded on their roof, trying to wave us over even though our little tinnie was full of my family and our direct neighbours. After taking them to safety, I continued with my dad to rescue everyone on our street, and then neighbouring streets. I had to help my neighbours cut their way out of their flooded ceiling. I had to help my friend get his 92 year-old mum and disabled brother out of a window. This was unlike anything i have ever experienced, I tear up just thinking about it.

If I could make myself believe that this was a freak event, a 1 in 100 year flood, i could sleep at night. But I haven't had a good sleep since the flood, which was over a month ago. Exactly a month after the first flood, it happened again. I packed everything up again, we evacuated again. I know that this is not a 1 in 100 year flood. This is what flooding looks like with climate change. And during the hours i spent late at night, refreshing that BOM radar and watching the rain fall, I saw that this isn't even the worst that the rain can get. It can and it will get worse in my lifetime, and that's why I can't sleep.

No levvy is going to protect my town. That kind of mitigation is a blatant denial of the reality of what is happening. This is climate change. This is my future. I am turning 25 in 2 days, and I am terrified. I joined the RFS after the recent bushfire season, after forests I love burned down. And while at first we celebrated a wet summer, we ended up with our hoses cleaning out people's flood-destroyed homes. It feels like this will never stop, this is the new normal.

I feel heartbroken and let down by our government, refusing to look at the bigger picture, refusing to take real action on climate change, refusing to care about anything beyond the next election cycle. I have very little hope for the future. My house no longer feels safe.

But I can't run away from it, because climate change is global.

The best thing that the government can do if they want to help flood victims is to take real, urgent action on climate change. I can survive this disaster, but I can't keep doing it, my resilience will wear thin. I can't face the chaos of climate catastrophe.

Please, please listen to us.

All I want is to grow old without watching my community and planet fall apart before my eyes. There is no time. There is no time for this government's inaction.

Please don't let your greed take my future from me.

Take action on climate change while we still can.

This is what I want this inquiry to do.

Please look at the bigger picture.

Or this will only happen again, and worse, over and over.

Thank you.