



You are here: [Home](#) > [BusinessDay](#) > [Carbon Economy](#) > [Peter Hannam](#) > [Article](#)

Search here...

Business

Search

Limiting the impact of climate change action

June 26, 2013

Read later



Peter Hannam

Carbon economy editor

[View more articles from Peter Hannam](#)

[Follow Peter on Twitter](#) [Email Peter](#)

[Tweet](#) 37 [Recommend](#) 1 [Share](#) 0 [Share](#) [Pin it](#) [submit](#)

[Email article](#) [Print](#) [Reprints & permissions](#)



Renewable-energy projects should not soak up government funds, according to one analyst. *Photo: Nicolas Walker*

Advertisement

HITACHI
Inspire the Next

GET THE ANSWERS.
→ **CLICK HERE.**

SOCIAL INNOVATION
**IT'S OUR
FUTURE**

Governments should avoid costly subsidies for renewable energy and businesses ought to be investing to limit the impacts from extreme-weather events.

• [President Obama's climate plan](#)

These are the two key recommendations from two leading analysts with quite different careers.

Admiral Dennis Blair, formerly US Director of National Intelligence for President Barack Obama and commander of US Pacific forces, said climate change was "becoming a specific issue ... in the security planning of all countries".

Admiral Blair will outline the "future global security agenda" at the [National Business Leaders Forum](#) on Sustainable Development on Thursday in Canberra. He cited the unrest in Syria and Egypt as related to more extreme weather and predicted greater pressure on water resources, including in Asian nations reliant on seasonal flows from the shrinking Himalayan ice cap.

He supports placing a price on carbon, while recognising such a policy was unlikely to win backing in the US and faces the threat of being repealed in Australia if the Coalition is elected in September.

"We're just not going to be able to get a big-bang solution," Admiral Blair said. "I know of very few businesses who will volunteer to make their products more expensive because of something that might happen in 20 or 30 years."

The retired admiral's comments come as President Obama is expected to reveal in the US his long-awaited climate change action. Rather than seeking congressional backing for a price on carbon - a battle he lost during his first term - Mr Obama is likely to use regulatory powers to curb emissions from coal-fired power plants, spur renewable-energy investments on public lands, and provide incentives to increase energy efficiency.

"I don't think the US is a puppet master that can pull all of the strings," but a big example for the rest of the world "would make a difference," Admiral Blair said.

Admiral Blair argues that if governments are to spend money in this area, it should be in research and development, such as in universities, rather than to pour subsidies into favoured industries. "It creates bubbles that are unsustainable, and when government subsidies are finally pulled out, there's some sort of crash that discredits what otherwise might have been a good idea."

Director of the CSIRO's Climate Adaptation Flagship Paul Hardisty said it was up to companies to make investments to limit the effects from the expected increase in wild weather on their businesses.

Dr Hardisty, whose former roles include global director for sustainability at mining services company WorleyParsons, will tell this week's forum there is a "huge upside" in investing in programs with "no regrets" - steps they should take whatever their view on the seriousness of global warming.



Taking the stress out of shopping

Help is at hand for men who hate to shop for clothes - or who don't know how to.

All Men Are Liars:

The ladder of addiction

At what point does the odd sneaky dabble in your chosen vice become a destructive habit?



Performance Matters:

Just stop and breathe

The most natural physiological function can also be one of the hardest to master.



Strive:

Is your smile holding you back?

In certain occupations, wonky or stained teeth can stunt career progress.



Featured advertisers



The Italian Job:

A complete home reno in five days



Reg Mombassa

Limited editions

Preparing for extreme heat, for instance, can involve simple improvements to insulation and adaptive-cooling systems, resulting in big energy savings, and protecting the health of employees.

Recent floods in Australia have also shown firms that "retrofitting" is a lot more expensive than building in resilience at the outset, not least because cost pressures are fiercest when many firms seek to recover at the same time. While some firms are undertaking risk assessments, many are not as prepared as they should be, Dr Hardisty said.

15 to choose from
Hand signed by Reg
Own yours now

Today's Solar Rebate Value

Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Perth
\$4,255*			
Government Rebate For 5kW Solar Power System			