



SCHOOL OF EARTH SCIENCES  
**SPECIAL SEMINAR**

10am

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January

Fritz Loewe Theatre, Earth Sciences

**The role of health co-benefits in the  
development of national climate change  
mitigation policies**

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Source: Climate and Health Alliance (2016). < <http://caha.org.au>>.

When considering the health (and other) impacts of climate change, world leaders are yet to commit to action on climate change commensurate to the likelihood and severity of risks, as outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Climate change has significant consequences for human health that are already being felt, and will be exacerbated if business as usual continues. Acting to mitigate climate change can result in many ancillary benefits (often termed co-benefits), including benefits to human health. For the past two decades, numerous modelling studies have predicted health outcomes (health co-benefits and health co-harms) from the implementation of mitigation measures. Such studies reveal that when accounted for, health co-benefits can partially, if not fully, offset abatement costs. Health co-benefits therefore provide a strong moral and economic rationale for ambitious climate change action. The policy impact of health co-benefits – and the literature that supports it – is unclear; some studies assert that health co-benefits have not attained the political traction they warrant, yet little research investigates the validity of this claim. To address this knowledge gap, this thesis will employ a political economy of health framework to explore how predicted health outcomes – co-benefits in particular – are considered and accounted for in the development of national climate change mitigation policies. With Australia, China and the European Union as case studies, this thesis aims to understand the relative importance of health co-benefits, and the various factors that influence whether and how they are incorporated into climate change mitigation policy.