

What can we say?
About minds that are troubled
As climate change grows
And CO2 doubles

We've heard about droughts
And floods and fire
But how will minds cope
With the climate's planned ire

Mental problems are common
Just look round the room
1 in 5 in a lifetime
Suffer worry or doom

The mind and the climate
Are in some ways the same
Rhythms and balance
Keep the seasons sane

But push too hard
And the system recoils
Our minds are disturbed
When the atmosphere boils

When we fill the sky
With gases that trap
The earth will heat up
No ones safe on the map

For our elders so wise
In nursing homes hot
A heat wave can kill
If the air con is shot

And our first Australians
Must think we are mad
Cooking the planet
Must surely be bad

We must dreaming
To think all is fine
We could learn a thing or two
From ancient dreamtime

Don't get me wrong
Hope is not lost
But we have to start counting
The mental health cost

We already spend
5 billion a year
To help people cope with
Sadness and fear

Were working hard
To make mental health fair
Money for doctors
And psychologists' leather chairs

But its hard to attract
People with letters
When the coffee in the city
Is oh so much better

Add a drought and a flood
And a fire to boot
And a country practice
Seem so much less cute

And though country folk,
Are tough as we know
They're not immune
When the water won't flow

Or a cyclone blows
And the trees they succumb
It's a tough gig
When there is nowhere to run.

And Ausi's freak out
When one boat does arrive
And women and children
Just try to survive

Will Christmas Island be full?
When the sea starts to rise
And a 1000 boats from Asia
Arrive or capsize

Desperate peoples
In search of a home
When their patches of land
Sink under sea foam

Fairy tales wont allay
Our bright children's fears
They're wondering if
This will all end in tears

They're watching the telly
And facing the book
And they know we're not joking
From the way that we look!

Like nuclear war
When the kids were so spooked
The kids, they have realized
Al's not just a kook

Well poems are great
To keep you all awake
But what says the science
About what's really at stake?

When researching mental health
And what the climate may do
We've only one earth
So random trials are quite few

Keep one earth cold
And the other reheat
And count how many people
Are looking down beat

Another glitch to consider
In research of this kind
Just which tear is sadness?
And which is climate defined?

Mental probs are so common
Who can say what is what
Is it just life's harshness
Or a climate too hot?

So the best we can do
To predict peoples fate
Is to look at our data
And extrapolate!

We know for example
Disasters make minds sick
Straight away or much latter
With distress post traumatic

And losing your job
Aint good for your soul
Its another way climate
Takes a mental health toll

And conflict of course
Is bound to arise
When everybody's thirsty
And the well, it is dry.

I'm just a GP
As the patients say
But an apple a day
Won't keep me away

I love our sunburnt country
Our droughts and flooding rain
But climate change may change things
And this would be a shame

Australians are so clever
And always big of heart
To preserve mental health
The climate's a good start

Grant Blashki Sep 2011

Also, useful paper can be found at: <http://www.ijmhs.com/content/pdf/1752-4458-2-13.pdf>