

ICRR Seminar Series:

Professor Christopher Wright



Title: Confronting the fossil fuel hegemony in an era of climate crisis: The politics of mitigation, adaptation and suffering.

Climate change is the most critical issue now facing humanity. As global temperatures rise, floods, fires and storms are becoming more intense and frequent. People are suffering. Yet, despite over 30 years of international climate negotiations, emissions continue to increase and as the UN Secretary-General António Guterres has bluntly stated, “We have a choice. Collective action or collective suicide. It is in our hands.” This seminar presentation provides an overview of how corporations, governments, and civil society organisations have organised past and present climate responses in terms of mitigation, adaptation, and suffering. This has occurred within what we term a “fossil fuel hegemony” in which exponential growth of the capitalist system has been based upon a capital-state nexus which ensures the continued dominance of fossil energy. However, this hegemonic position is now coming under threat as new and innovative social movements have emerged, including the fossil fuel divestment movement, Fridays for Future, Extinction Rebellion and others. In exposing the inadequacies of current climate policies and pointing to the possibilities of new social and economic systems, we highlight how the worst impacts of climate change might be avoided.

Speaker Bio:

Christopher Wright is Professor of Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney Business School where he teaches and researches organisational change, management innovation and sustainability. He is also a key researcher at the Sydney Environment Institute, where he heads a group examining corporate climate transition. His current research explores organizational and societal responses to climate change, specifically in regard to corporate environmentalism, organizational justification and compromise, risk, and future imaginings. His research has appeared in a broad range of leading journals including: The Academy of Management Journal, Organization Studies, Journal of Management Studies, Research Policy, Environment & Planning A, Human Relations, and the British Journal of Sociology. As well as chapters in edited collections, he is the author of several monographs including *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations: Processes of Creative Self-destruction* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and most recently *Organising Responses to Climate Change: The Politics of Mitigation, Adaptation and Suffering* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

📅 7 May 2024

🕒 10:30am - 12:00pm

🏢 Climate Change Research Centre Seminar Room

📍 Level 4, Mathews Building, UNSW Sydney