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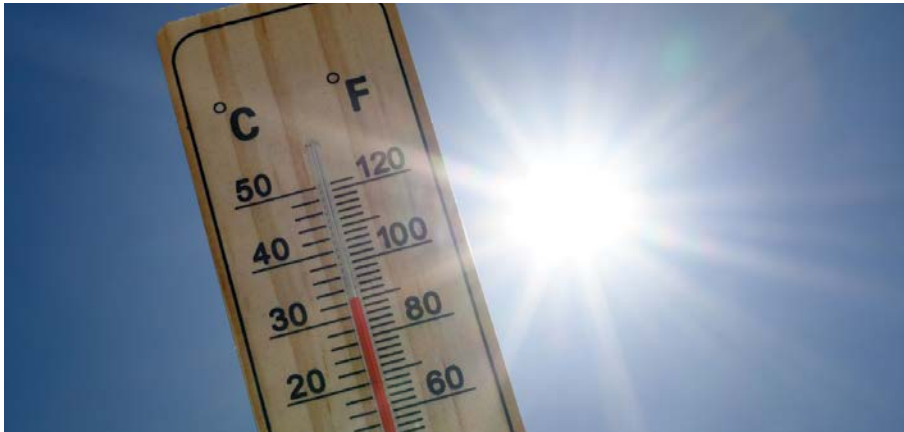
Ecolibrium



Earth angel

Passivhaus goes
mainstream residential.





Based in Brisbane, Graeme McLeish, Affil.AIRAH, is a senior consultant at QED Environmental Services.

Responsibilities

I advise customers in the eastern states on indoor environmental quality. Specifically, I help clients to manage risk by combining scientific knowledge with relevant regulatory information, striving to develop solutions that are innovative, compliant and pragmatic towards environmental sustainability of various commercial properties.

Specialty

My diverse background – working as a teacher, recruitment consultant and IEQ consultant in China for over 10 years – makes me more of an all-rounder than a specialist. That said, if sustainability is considered a speciality, I'd choose that. I'm always striving for the sustainable approach.

Passions

Besides striving for the sustainable approach, I believe in thinking differently. I'm a long-term thinker but also mindful of how the day-to-day impacts upon the future – it's the small steps that count towards making a lasting impactful change for good. That's the approach I took when studying Mandarin, as it demanded perseverance in order to progress – one character at a time!

Professional development

There's no single form for me, but rather a blend of different types, such as learning on the job from trained and experienced individuals to attending short courses or even just reading available literature, especially publicly available articles in journals.

My Chartered Manager course involved exercises in self-reflection on past scenarios in leadership and change management. It was surprisingly effective.

Future plans

I'm originally from the UK, so the next step is to obtain a permanent resident visa here in Australia. ■

The hottest of times

According to NASA, 2020 tied for the hottest year on record.

Earth's global average surface temperature in 2020 tied with 2016 as the warmest year on record, according to NASA analysis.

January 2020 was the hottest month on record globally.

Scientists at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) in New York say 2020's globally averaged temperature was 1.02°C warmer than the baseline 1951–1980 mean.

NASA scientists say 2020 edged out 2016 by a very small amount (within the margin of error of the analysis), making the years effectively tied for the warmest on record.

International record keeping began in most countries by 1870.

“The last seven years have been the warmest seven years on record, typifying the ongoing and dramatic warming trend,” says GISS director Gavin Schmidt. “Whether one year is a record or not is not really that important – the important things are long-term trends. With these trends, and as the human impact on the climate increases, we have to expect that records will continue to be broken.”

NOAA HAS MORE TO SAY

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) meanwhile, says that 2020 was the second-warmest year in their record, behind 2016.

NOAA scientists use much of the same raw temperature data in their analysis as NASA, but have a different baseline

period (1901–2000) and methodology.

NASA and the NOAA say the Australian bushfires, and the lockdowns and shutdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic impacted global temperatures, but the underlying trend remained upwards.

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a naturally occurring cycle of heat exchange between the ocean and atmosphere. It is also a large source of year-to-year variability in global temperatures.

“The previous record warm year, 2016, received a significant boost from a strong *El Niño*,” Schmidt says. “The lack of a similar assist from *El Niño* this year is evidence that the background climate continues to warm due to greenhouse gases.”

Earth's warming trends are most pronounced in the Arctic, which NASA says is warming more than three times as fast as the rest of the globe over the past 30 years.

BACK IN PARIS

One of US President Joe Biden's first actions in his new role was to re-enter the Paris Climate Agreement. In his inauguration speech, Biden said the US needed to respond to a “climate in crisis”.

“It's just a huge day to get rid of this myopic, benighted administration and welcome in a new president who manifestly is committed to strong, meaningful action,” says Todd Stern, who was the lead US negotiator in Paris. “Rejoining Paris is just the first step, but it's a big first step.” ■