

# Climate expert Clive Spash 'heavied' by CSIRO management

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**A CSIRO economist whose research criticising emissions trading schemes was banned from publication said last night he had been subjected to harassment by the senior agency management.**

Clive Spash also accused the agency of hindering public debate and trampling on his civil liberties by preventing the research being published in British journal *New Political Economy*.

Dr Spash defended the paper, *The Brave New World of Carbon Trading*, saying it was a dispassionate analysis of ETS policies and was not politically partisan.

He was told in February he could publish the work if it were peer reviewed. But in July, CSIRO management said it could not be published after it was cleared for publication.

This month, he was informed he could not publish it even in his private capacity, because it was "politically sensitive". Within 24 hours, he also received a letter outlining a list of trivial instances in which he was accused of breaching CSIRO policy, for example not completing a leave form properly.

Dr Spash said he believed the letter was intended to, and did, intimidate him and denied him due process. None of the matters were raised with him prior to the letter being sent and each of the alleged misdemeanours could be explained.

"We are not members of the Defence Department, we are scientists who are supposed to be discussing research in an open forum. How do you advance knowledge if you stop people from publishing their work?"

"I am totally happy to have my work criticised and debated but I'm not happy to have it suppressed."

Dr Spash said it was impossible to publish research in his field that did not have an impact on government policy. "The idea that you cannot discuss something like ETS policy when you're working on climate change as a political economist seems ridiculous," he said.

The gagging of Dr Spash's work is embarrassing for Science Minister Kim Carr, who defended academic freedoms in opposition and last year trumpeted a new CSIRO charter he said would give scientists the right to speak publicly about their findings.

Yesterday, Senator Carr told *The Australian* he supported the publication of peer-reviewed research, even if it had negative implications for government policy. He said he had not tried to gag the research.

Last night CSIRO chief executive Megan Clark said the organisation would work with Dr Spash on his paper.

"There is some important science in the paper and we will now work with Dr Spash to ensure the paper meets CSIRO internal review standards and the guidelines of the Public Research Agency Charter between the CSIRO and the federal government," she said.

"I encourage CSIRO scientists to communicate the outcomes and implications of their work and one of the underlying core values of CSIRO is the integrity of our excellent science."

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/climate-expert-clive-spash-heavied-by-csiro-management/story-e6frg8gf-1225793717744>