

Information Sheet for the Long-Term Future of Australia

By Michael Lee, Founder of the Institute of Futurology

Key elements for the remainder of the 21st Century for Australia include:

- A generation of far-reaching social change lies ahead as Australia develops a socially inclusive Asia Pacific society transcending historic racism
- Expect during this time of change a period of rising social tension, lasting a decade or two, including political polarisation and conflict
- Increased activism among Aborigines will see them gain further legal and constitutional ground until Australia fully reconciles with its indigenous people
- Australia will scientifically define its ecological carrying capacity and maximum sustainable population and base its population policies on its findings as the continent adapts to climate change and intensified El Niño-La Niña cycles and their impact on water security and agricultural production
- Australia will become a Republic well before mid-century
- Australia's population growth rate is forecast to decrease from 1.19% to a very low 0.44% by 2050 and its total fertility rate will also stay below population replacement levels between now and 2050
- Its population will age markedly as the median age rises from 35.4 years old in 2000 to 43.4 years old by 2050
- Its working population will shrink from 62.8% of the population in 2000 to 53% by 2050
- A long-term geo-political shift of power to China in East Asia will represent a strategic challenge to Australia in its current capacity as a military ally of America, while its Trans-Pacific partnerships with China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and other Asian neighbours will deepen throughout the century

Read Michael Lee's scenarios for Australia: The "Queen's Land" Future, the Kangaroo Leap Future, the Overshoot Future and the Uluru-Ayers Rock Future in his essay "Call of the Wild: Decoding Australia's Long-Term Future" at www.futurology.co.za

About Michael Lee

Michael Lee is a futurist who founded the World Future Society's Southern African Chapter and the Institute of Futurology. He is CEO of the ATM Industry Association (www.atmia.com), a non-profit trade association with more than 3,500 members in 60 countries. Lee is a member of the World Future Society (www.wfs.org), the International Society for the Study of Time (www.studyoftime.org), the Royal Institute of Philosophy (www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org) and the Institute of Physics (www.iop.org). He serves on the Board of Directors of the global ATM Industry Association and the US-based Benefit Corporation Standards Institute (<http://www.bcorpoinstitute.org>). His book *Knowing our Future – the startling case for futurology* will be published in November 2012 - http://www.infideas.com/pages/store/products/ec_view.asp?PID=1804. The book is also available on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1906821984>