

FOREWORD

Jason Kimberley's book, *Antarctica: A Different Adventure*, is informative, beautiful and fun. It is a book that will make you smile and make you laugh. However, there is also poignancy – Antarctica and the great Antarctic web of life surrounding it are bearing witness to profound climate change.

Ice cores sunk deep into the Antarctic ice shelf reveal the 'breathing' of the planet, the rise and fall of carbon dioxide and life itself, cycling with remarkable regularity over the last several hundred thousand years. These ice cores also reveal the equally remarkable rise in carbon dioxide following on from the industrial revolution and our exponential use of fossil fuels exacerbated by continuous land clearing.

In the Southern Ocean, dramatic changes are taking place. The ice shelves are melting and breaking away, destabilising the glaciers behind and raising the sea levels; and the ocean is slowly but surely acidifying as the carbon dioxide dissolves in the surface layers of the water. In addition, the numbers of krill – the shrimp-like crustaceans upon which so much life in and around Antarctica depends – are dropping by the day.

We humans are actively warming the planet and are partly if not wholly responsible, yet we may still have time to avoid the worst effects. It will require us as nations to act selflessly and to act in concert.

In this last great wilderness, Jason Kimberley's soul was touched. The question now for us all is will we protect our natural home – or will we continue to let it degrade?

GREG BOURNE
CEO WORLD WILDLIFE FUND FOR NATURE AUSTRALIA