

It is imperative that Australian parliament recognise the impending climate crisis, which poses a national security threat to Australia as well as to the livelihood of farmers, the safety of rural communities [from bushfires] and our part as global citizens and global leaders in what needs to be a global response to climate change. Australia is a global political leader, and a global technology and financial leader with one of the largest economies. For leadership alone, it is imperative to not only match other nations' commitments but to exceed them, to overdeliver on what is a crisis and a great opportunity.

There are great opportunities at stake for nations who dive head first into the climate crisis. To pick one example, nations such as China have made large and profitable export markets by scaling up production of renewables as they are a crucial part of an energy transition to net zero emissions. Australia is the both windiest and the sunniest continent on earth, and so we have enormous natural resources which can be harvested for use both domestically and internationally. The energy transition must rely in large part in electrifying industries that currently rely on fossil fuels (such as transportation or steel production), and making electricity production renewable-based.

To this effect, the electricity sector should be held to a much higher standard of decarbonising than the rest of the Australian economy, with a deadline of perhaps 2035 or 2040, compared to 2050 for all of Australia. Similarly, Australia has such an abundance of renewable energy that it should seriously be considered how best we as a nation can export that energy to other countries. Industries such as hydrogen production through electrolysis, aluminium and steel production, are effectively ways of embodying energy into materials, then shipping high energy materials to partners overseas. Especially hydrogen production would be a very effective use of surplus grid power (from sources such as photovoltaics). These industries are endorsed by Simon Holmes à Court. Rapidly scaling renewable energy to 100% of grid and then rapidly exceeding this threshold will help many economies transition quickly, as well as providing Australia with a unique and lucrative export market. It is likely that this sort of energy export will be the new Oil Rush. Constructing such a magnitude of renewable energy would also create a local manufacturing and technology development industry, that could also grow to international prominence for exports.

For these reasons, it is imperative that the government set manageable but ambitious 5 year targets, with 5 year plans to accomplish them. The expectations should also be made for each individual industry and sector, with the electricity and automotive sectors having the strongest targets. The Australian government should therefore not only set goals and objectives, in a transparent and predictable manner, it should establish restrictions and regulations (such as fuel emissions standards) well in advance so that industry has the time and resources to respond. To crucial responses, such as the electricity sector or new export industries, it may be necessary for government to invest directly. Government-led programs tend to react and be developed faster than private industry ones – yet everyone wins. It is unlikely that the aerospace industry would be as developed as it is today without the investment of WWII planes, and the US Apollo Program, both of which were immense costs at the time but have produced enormous dividends, for government, for the taxpayer, and for private industry. Similar commitments and programs are now required at this time.

Thank you for considering my suggestion.