

Submission for Federal Parliament Joint Standing Committee on Treaties: Inquiry into the Kyoto Protocol

Sutherland Shire Council's Initiatives in Reducing Greenhouse Emissions

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The Kyoto Protocol in December 1997 is an international endeavour to tackle the problem of global climate change. In Australia concerns about the adverse impacts of climate change have led governments to undertake policy measures to reduce greenhouse emissions at federal, state and local levels. Local governments can play an important role for reducing GHG emissions. It is shown in studies that the local governments possess the capability to reduce GHG emissions by 50% of the national emissions (ICLEI 1998-99). At the local level the government has initiated a campaign called the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) through Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) and International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). CCP is a powerful campaign to enable local government to reduce GHG emissions. Uptill now 70 councils have joined this campaign in Australia, which are around 34% of the country's population. (ICLEI 1998-99). This shows Australia's commitment in engaging all partners across the nation to act on climate change.

CCP promotes partnership between the local government and the community to act together in reducing GHG emissions by bringing about energy efficiency in their operations through a milestone framework. A community can benefit from GHG emission reduction in terms of improvement in air quality, health, traffic congestion, reduced travel time, reduced energy use and cost saving, provision of employment opportunities by investing in clean technology industries. Further, opportunities of partnerships can be created with industry, community, government at local, state and federal level. Sutherland Shire Council has joined CCP and is in the process of achieving first milestone. This involves developing an inventory of GHG emissions from council and community activities. It aims to set an emission reduction target and develop an action plan to achieve this target. This will be followed by implementation of action plan, regular monitoring and reporting on the progress on emission reduction.

Apart from this Sutherland Shire Council is actively involved in promoting energy efficiency in its building and fleet sectors. The council's administration building was awarded with a

best market practice 3-star Building Greenhouse Rating (BGR) by SEDA. Some of the steps taken by Sutherland Shire Council to bring about energy efficiency are as follows (State of Environment Report 1989-90):

- The council building is installed with 'Power Factor Correction', for more effective use of energy. Power factor gives an assessment of the extent of power delivered on site to the power actually used.
- Time clocks in exhaust fans of council building toilets have been fitted to save energy.
- Air conditioning in the computer room of council buildings has been upgraded to stand alone units. This allows the main unit to close down during out of work hours reducing the wear and tear cost
- The floodlights outside the council building as well as Engadine and Caringbah Leisure Centres have been replaced with more cost effective and energy efficient lighting.
- The Lucas Heights No. 1 landfill has developed waste-water treatment facility by installing on site sewage disposal system.
- Besides this there is solar water heating and solar lighting installed on roadways along Lucas Height No. 1.
- In Bath Road Depot and Caringbah Early Childhood Centre energy saving switches have been put in to save energy
- In the fleet sector the council aims to purchase new vehicles on CNG and LPG only.

References:

International Council for Local Environment Initiatives, (1989-99), *CCPTM 98-99 Cities for Climate Protection, Australia Program Report*, Australian Greenhouse Office and International Council for Local Environment Initiatives

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