



Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water



16 MAR 2010

Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Irwin *Julia*

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2010 concerning a petition of the Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange submitted for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions regarding climate change.

Australia is helping to shape a global climate change solution by working actively and constructively to forge a global climate outcome that is effective, fair and efficient.

Last December, in Copenhagen, the world came together under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to agree a path forward on climate change. The Copenhagen Accord is an important step along that path. Australia formally registered its support for the Accord at Copenhagen and is encouraging its fast and full implementation.

The Accord is the first time there has been agreement under the UNFCCC to hold any global temperature increase to below 2 degrees Celsius. It is also the first time that developed and developing countries have committed to specify what they will do, side by side, to realise this objective. Australia will play its full and fair part in implementing the Accord, and is actively encouraging others – in particular all major economies – to do the same.

Countries were invited to submit information on their emission targets and actions to reduce emissions pursuant to the Accord by 31 January 2010. On 27 January 2010, Australia submitted our emission reduction target range to the Copenhagen Accord: 5 per cent on 2000 levels by 2020 unconditional, with up to 15 per cent and 25 per cent both conditional on the extent of action by others. If the world agrees to an ambitious global deal capable of delivering stabilisation of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at 450 parts per million or lower, Australia will reduce its emissions by 25 per cent on 2000 levels by 2020. On a range of indicators, this target is comparable to or more ambitious than any announced national targets for 2020. This concentration would reduce the risks associated with severe climate change and is consistent with the goal of limiting global temperature increase to no more than 2 degrees Celsius.

Australia plays an active and constructive role in the UNFCCC negotiations. Throughout 2009, Australia continued to drive international debate on the post-2012 legal architecture and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD), including through our innovative “national schedules” proposal and comprehensive proposals on a forest carbon market mechanism. In Copenhagen, Australia joined with France, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States to announce USD 3.5 billion of fast-start financing for REDD, including a USD 120 million contribution from Australia. Australia also coordinates and represents a core group of developed countries in our role as chair of the “Umbrella Group”.

Tackling climate change requires sustained ambition over the long-term. Australia supports continued negotiations under the UNFCCC to deliver further international climate change actions and will continue to work towards a legally-binding outcome. Australia will work diligently with other countries towards a strong outcome in Mexico at the end of 2010.

Thank you for bringing this petition regarding climate change to my attention

Yours sincerely

~~Penny Wong~~