

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

Australia needs a major move towards renewable efficient energy and clean transport. We sadly haven't seen any such move from the Labor Government.

The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) proposed by the Government is a badly designed scheme that will be worse than useless, because it has an unacceptably weak target, and a design which over-compensates polluters at the expense of the community and environment.

The CPRS target is to reduce Australia's carbon emissions to 5% below 2000 levels by 2020. That effort, if followed by the rest of the world, is a recipe for climate catastrophe. Far from the Rudd Government's goal, as stated in the legislation, of seeing global atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases stabilise at 450 parts per million, it will send the world past 550 ppm and trigger unstoppable feed-back loops. Scientists agree that developed countries like Australia need to reduce their emissions by between 25 and 40 per cent by 2020 if we are to avoid runaway climate change. Clearly, the target range of 5-15% is unacceptably low and must be urgently reviewed.

The CPRS as it stands is a pay-the-polluter scheme, not a polluter-pays scheme. By providing Australia's worst polluters with billions of dollars of compensation in cash and free permits to pollute, the CPRS will protect the profits of Australia's worst climate offenders at the expense of clean industries.

In addition to setting such a weak 5% target, the CPRS also fails to take into account voluntary emission reductions from the community.

Australia needs a mandatory renewable energy target, a renewable energy feed-in tariff, energy efficiency standards for homes and commercial buildings, fuel efficiency standards and investment in trains, buses and trams. Ending the logging of Australia's native forests would reduce Australia's emissions by substantially more than 5%. All these policies should be pursued regardless of the CPRS.

We must have emission cuts of at least 40% by 2020.

Please look at the science of this situation, not the politics, and certainly not the big industries who are doing all the damage! Listen to the experts who offer their advice to you during this inquiry, listen to the people of Australia and make the right decision in your recommendations - for the people of Australia, not just the industry bosses.

Climate Change Minister Penny Wong has described the CPRS as 'better than nothing', but she is wrong. It is worse than useless.

Australia needs a strong, ambitious and fair emissions trading scheme, not a plan that protects polluters and stands in the way of the change that is now desperately needed.

We voted for Labor because we were sick of the head in the sand attitude on climate change of the previous government but now we feel we are still in the same situation. Signing the Kyoto Protocol was a good but small first step. Now Kevin Rudd's government is trying to whip a tyrannosaurus rex into submission with a piece of spaghetti!

Not good enough. We voted for action and we'd like to see some.

Thank you.

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