

Submission

I am a concerned Australian citizen, doing everything possible to reduce carbon pollution; support clean, low-emission technology; and influence others. I am trying to model behaviour and to influence others to likewise reduce their carbon footprint and to argue for a change in mindset that will lead to a reduction at the global scale and to a sustainable future for our planet, for our children and grandchildren and for our flora and wildlife.

Our family has voluntarily moved to one fuel-efficient car; maximized our travel by bicycles and public transport; limited our air travel to no more than one journey per year; installed energy-saving electric lights and other appliances; and purchased at great expense solar panels so that we are now feeding electricity into the grid equivalent to three times what we use.

It is against this personal background that I wish to make a plea for real action by the Australian Government – action to significantly cut emissions in Australia ; to encourage a rapid transition to the use of renewable energy; and to set an example to help lead the rest of the world into a sustainable future. I am sure that many Australians, like me, want real leadership from the Government and not token policies that continue the practices from the past. I want action to take us into the future, to support individuals and clean industries that are trying to address the challenge, and to rapidly force the big polluters to change their old ways.

We need the Government to:

1. Set high targets for reducing carbon emissions, so that the soaring increase in the concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases is stabilised and eventually reduced. Revise the proposed target of 5% reductions by 2020 to at least 25%.
2. Set the framework for future investment decisions early, clearly and unequivocally.
3. Focus on incentives to householders and clean industries to do even more to reduce their pollution. Minimise the compensation to polluters to continue with their past practices. Get serious on this issue.
4. Stimulate green industries and alternative sources of energy – solar, wind, tidal and geothermal. Take real action to make Australia a leader in the new green technologies.
5. Set meaningful, firm, binding targets for:
 - a. Feed-in tariffs for those who add clean energy to the grid
 - b. Electricity consumption by hungry domestic appliances such as television sets
 - c. Electricity use by commercial buildings that use excessive lighting for extended periods each day

- d. Use of fuel for travel, including significant carbon taxes on air tickets in order to rein in the current excessive air travel at dangerously low prices (to the detriment of the environment)
 - e. Increased patronage of public transport and travel by bicycles and on foot
 - f. Ending the logging of old-growth forests, which are important storehouses for carbon
6. Argue in international forums that real action must be taken globally, based on the example of real, meaningful action that is occurring in Australia. Work with other countries to share technology and to take global action to give us hope for a sustainable future.

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