



The Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 260

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Committee, on policies relating to climate change.

We are a community organisation involved in supporting Tasmanians to make householder and community changes that support sustainability. Our work over the last few years has been largely in the context of climate change and we engage with households and community groups who are seeking to reduce their own carbon footprint and looking for government leadership nationally and internationally.

In relation to the terms of reference, here are our responses:

- a. the choice of emissions trading as the central policy to reduce Australia's carbon pollution, taking into account the need to:
 - i. reduce carbon pollution at the lowest economic cost,
 - ii. put in place long-term incentives for investment in clean energy and low-emission technology, and
 - iii. contribute to a global solution to climate change;

Emissions trading with a robust carbon price signal will assist us to move to a low emissions future but the proposed CPRS legislation has serious shortcomings in its current form. Some of these are addressed below. We do not believe the legislation in its current form will deliver an effective, efficient and equitable process for reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

- b. the relative contributions to overall emission reduction targets from complementary measures such as renewable energy feed-in laws, energy efficiency and the protection or development of terrestrial carbon stores such as native forests and soils;

We support a strong national feed-in tariff as an important part of a speedy transition to renewable energy generation and also a National Energy Efficiency Target of zero energy growth by 2010 with an annual 1.5% reduction to 2020. This is the cheapest and most immediate form of carbon reduction. The energy efficiency initiatives of the Australian Government as part of the current 'stimulus packages' are welcome and should be expanded. There is huge scope for energy efficiency measures within all of the stimulus windfalls and opportunities are being lost for value-adding, for example in school building projects. It is essential that Australia's native forests be protected and restored to maximise their carbon storage capacity.

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- c. whether the Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme is environmentally effective, in particular with regard to the adequacy or otherwise of the Government's 2020 and 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in avoiding dangerous climate change;

The target of 5-15% by 2020 proposed in the draft legislation is completely inadequate in the light of current scientific understanding of the accelerating climate change impacts. The economic cost of catastrophic climate change in the future will dwarf the current costs of emissions reduction. The lack of a robust target exposes the other weaknesses in the draft legislation which gives compensation to major polluters and delays major action.

- d. an appropriate mechanism for determining what a fair and equitable contribution to the global emission reduction effort would be;

We were all proud when the PM signed Kyoto finally on our behalf and now in our community workshops, participants frequently comment on their sense of embarrassment at Australia's role in international forums on climate change. We must take a strong target to Copenhagen, at least matching the USA, if we expect to have any credibility with developing nations.

- e. whether the design of the proposed scheme will send appropriate investment signals for green collar jobs, research and development, and the manufacturing and service industries, taking into account permit allocation, leakage, compensation mechanisms and additionality issues; and

The limit on emissions reduction means that voluntary actions by households and SMEs will make it easier for the high level emitters. This is already discouraging grassroots commitment to change and will put a break on the growth of 'green collar jobs'. Voluntary actions must be recognised in the legislation as additional.

- f. any related matter.

We reiterate our sense of urgency and expectation of national leadership. The proposed CPRS legislation does not respond adequately in any way.

This submission is not confidential.

Margaret Steadman
Executive Officer

8 April 2009