

The Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

Dear Senators,

Thank you for inviting submissions to the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy.

I am writing to voice my concern as to the lax carbon emissions cut set by the Rudd government.

I am a Rudd supporter and in my opinion his government has achieved a massive amount in the last two years by comparison with the eleven years of stagnation under Howard. One of my greatest concerns was the lack of attention paid by Mr. Howard to the issue of climate change. Now Mr. Rudd has demonstrated that although he is willing to tackle the issue of climate change, he is still treating it as a political issue rather than what it really is: a matter of severe urgency.

If climate change is not addressed, rises in temperature will cause heatstrokes similar to those experienced in Europe in 2003 will become common place in Australia. It must be noted that this is one of the forecasted consequences of climate change in Australia. It must also be noted that in Europe in 2003, over 50,000 people were estimated to have perished in that summer due to heat related stress.

Another projection relating to climate change is the cycle of El Ninos to La Ninas. At present, the La Nina is the dominant cycle, bringing rain to Indonesia and Eastern Australia and allowing cold water to flow up the Humboldt current of South America, increasing nutrients in the water and aiding ecosystems and the fishing industry there. The El Nino, is when Pacific winds subside, Australia and Indonesia experience drought and South America experiences flooding.

These are just two concerns which are noted and accepted outcomes for climate change and will both have big impacts on Australia.

I voted for the Greens first, and then Labor at the last federal election because this strikes me as a very high priority for the world as a whole. We must start to move away from the archaic idea that the focus of life should be profit at the expense of the planet. I have faith that Kevin Rudd will see this and make the right decision, but as Prime Minister, he must be bold and take the same stance on climate change as he did with the stolen generation, education in Australia (which means a lot to me being a teacher in training) and a national broadband campaign.

Australia needs to champion an effective global agreement if we are to avoid devastating effects on our environment and economy. We need to set a strong climate change policy before the crucial Copenhagen climate change conference in December. This is the best – and possibly last – chance the world will have to solve the climate crisis.

Australia needs to lead by example and increase its weak 2020 target to at least 30%, moving to 40% in the context of a global agreement.

I ask that your committee recommend policies that make strong cuts in Australia's carbon pollution, make Australia energy smart and drive investment in renewable energy to make it cheaper than coal power.

Strong action on climate change will create millions of new Green Collar jobs, not destroy them as the big polluters claim.²

In 2007, Australia voted for strong action on climate change. In 2009, I urge you to use your important role to recommend Australia makes a response to the climate crisis that future generations will thank us for.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel McDonald

¹A joint CSIRO/Bureau of Meteorology study of the impact of climate change in bushfires found parts of Victoria faced up to 65% more days of extreme fire risk by 2020 and 230% more by mid-century.

²According to CSIRO economic modeling, 2.7 million new jobs will be created in Australia by 2025 if we set course to become carbon neutral by 2050.