

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (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.

The vulnerable Maldives pledges to go carbon-neutral in a decade by installing a new renewable electricity generation and transmission infrastructure. This clean energy would not only power houses and businesses, but also vehicles. It is estimated that the scheme would pay for itself because it would no longer be necessary to import oil products for electricity generation, transport and other functions.

Norway is aiming to be zero-carbon by 2030, but this scheme allows a large slice of domestic emissions to be offset by investments in forestry schemes overseas.

With other countries setting such examples, why cannot Australia with its enormous resources of wind, sun and tide, aim for a target well in excess of 5% below 2000 levels by 2020?

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