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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission from Climate Action Moreland Paris Agreement Ratification

Thankyou for this opportunity for discussing the Paris Agreement as an international Treaty negotiated under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that has been tabled in the Australian parliament and is presently before the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties.

Our grassroots group of citizens in the City of Moreland, Victoria, endorses early Australian ratification of the Paris Agreement and argues it is in the national interest for Australia to be a foundation party to this agreement.

Although imperfect in some ways, we think this treaty is important for Australia and other nations, containing important science based goals and an international framework to achieve those goals.

Our direct concern is not with the treaty itself, but with actions by the Australian Government since the treaty was agreed on December 12, 2015 which appear to run counter to the treaty or the COP21 decision.

Our concerns with recent Australian government actions and policy decisions can be summarised as:

- Use of Kyoto carryover credits against the recommendation of the COP21 decision
- Rapid reduction and peaking of Australia's emissions under Article 4
- Reduction in key climate research under Article 7
- Reduction in Technology development under Article 10
- Present climate targets are not based on the science or equity in reducing emissions for achieving the global targets set by the Paris Agreement.

Our Concerns that Australia is already acting in bad faith

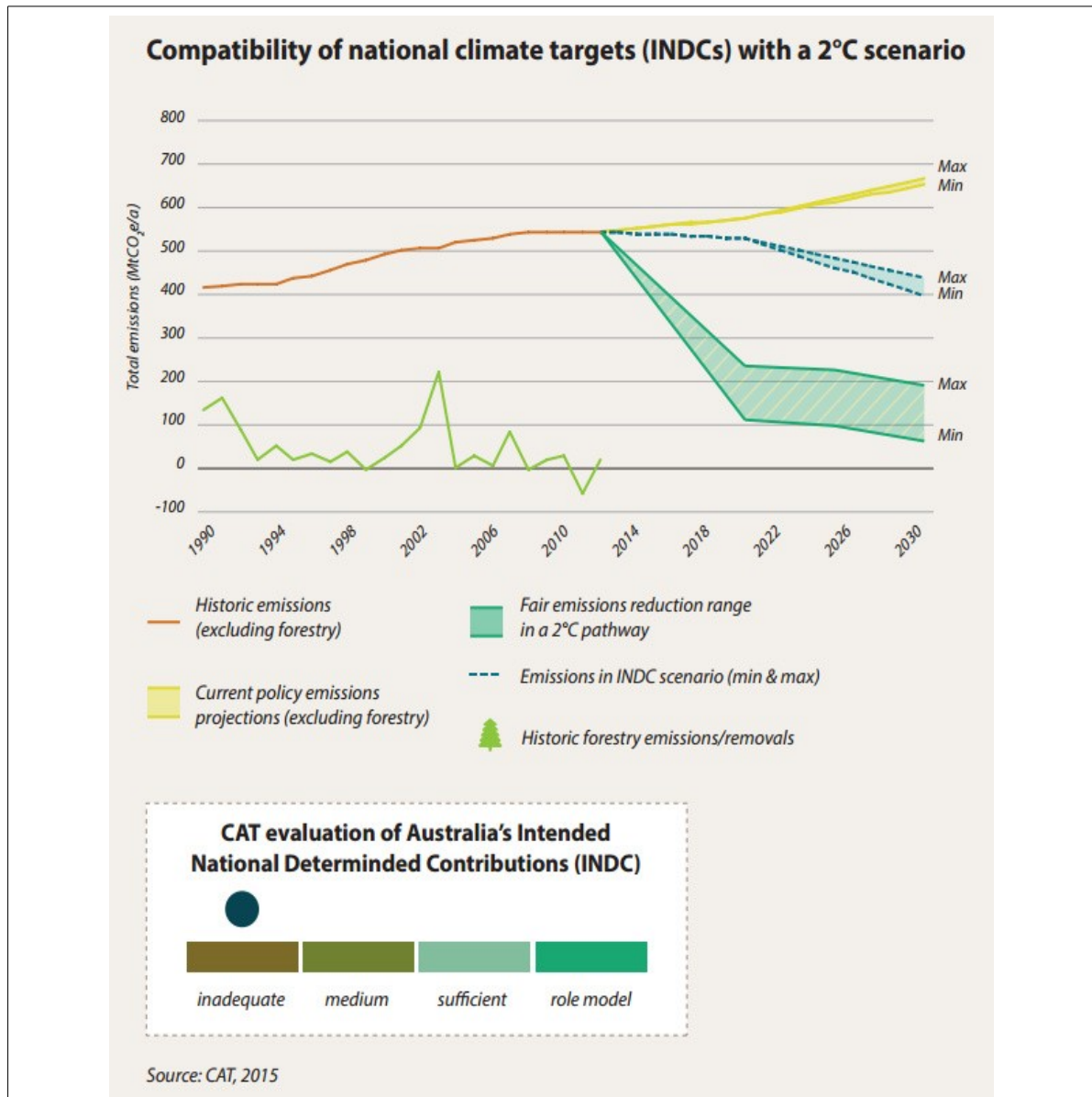
- **Kyoto carryover credits** - Malcolm Turnbull announced at COP21 that we would "meet and beat our 2020 emissions reduction target." But our target is so low - 5% on 2000 levels and he neglected to say we are using Kyoto carryover credits from the first commitment period to meet this target.

Although legal to do this the Paris COP decision explicitly states at 107: "Encourages Parties to promote the voluntary cancellation by Party...of units issued under the Kyoto Protocol" Several European countries, which exceeded much tougher targets, announced cancellation of these credits.

- **Axing CSIRO climate science jobs breaches article 7** - The Abbott Government cut \$112 million from CSIRO budget in 2014. Turnbull promised \$90 million in December 2015 to support innovation and increased commercialisation of research. A further \$28 million was allocated to market innovation policy.

CSIRO CEO Larry Marshall announced staff cuts in two key climate research divisions. This undermines Australia's commitment in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement: "Strengthening scientific knowledge on climate, including research, systematic observation of the climate system and early warning systems, in a manner that informs climate services and supports decision-making;". More than 2900 climate scientists signed an open letter opposed to these cuts.

- Rapid reduction and Peaking emissions ASAP** - In article 4 it says that "Parties aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible". Australia's emissions, after a decade of year on year reductions, in 2015 rose by 1.3% and within that a 3% rise from the electricity sector. Energy analyst company Reputex estimates emissions growing to 4 per cent above 2000 levels by 2020 and that trend continuing with Australian emissions unlikely to peak before 2030. This trend at strong variance to that called for in the Paris Agreement.



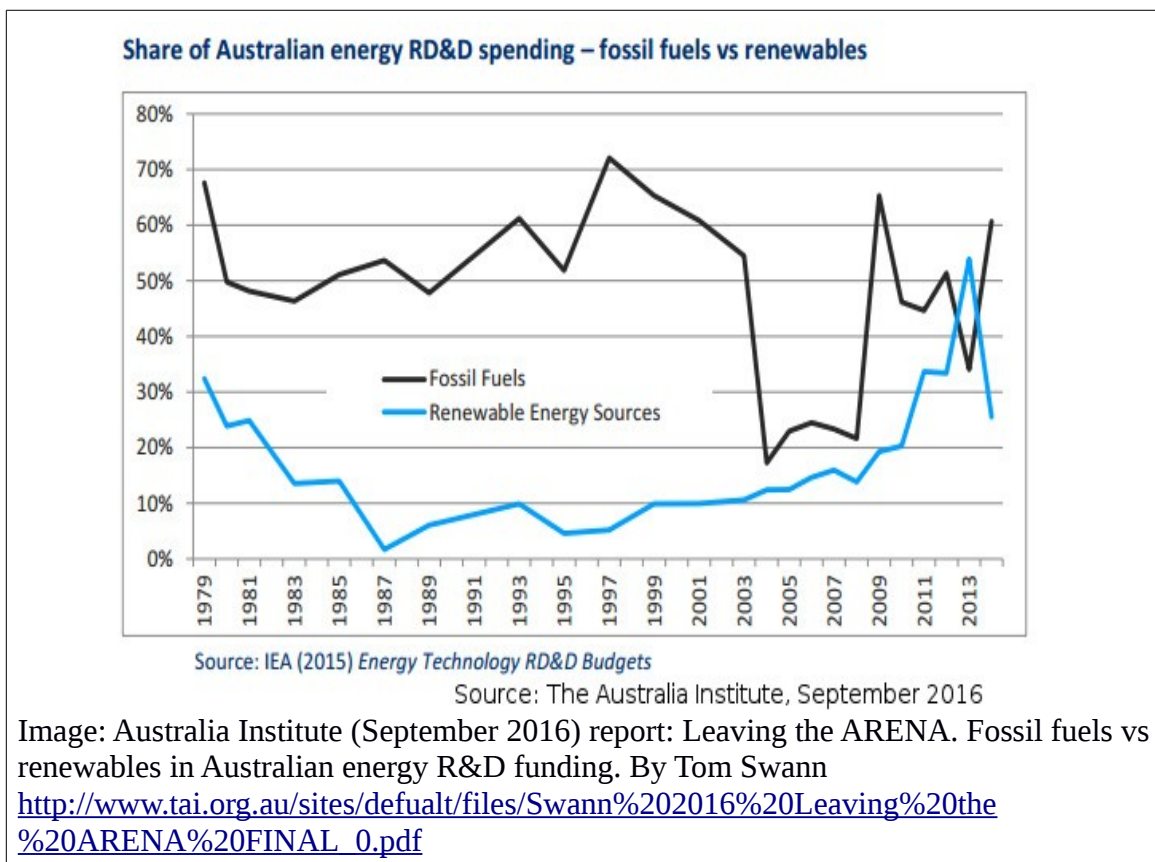
Climate Action Tracker (2015) analysis of Australia's INDC showing projected rise in emissions, INDC scenario and 'Fair' emissions reduction for 2C pathway.

(<http://climateactiontracker.org/countries/australia/2015.html>)

Image by Climate Transparency G20 report (2016) <http://www.climate-transparency.org/g20-climate-performance/g20report2016>

- **Technology Development** Article 10 of the Paris Agreement emphasised “fully realizing technology development and transfer in order to improve resilience to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” In Australia ARENA and CEFC forms an important part of early stage renewables investment cycle to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Yet Industry and Science Minister Christopher Pyne announced on 24 February 2016 funding of a Fossil fuel growth centre while silence remains on Australia's Mission Innovation commitment to clean energy development technologies.

We also view the reduction in ARENA's 5 year budget funding of \$500 million, announced in September 2016, as very concerning and counter to the energy transition to a zero carbon economy required to meet the Paris Agreement goals. The chart below shows the disparity in funding in Australian energy R&D spending between fossil fuels and renewables.



Climate Action Moreland was one of the many community groups that made submissions to the Prime Minister and Cabinet UNFCCC Taskforce review for Australia's future climate targets in 2015, arguing for strong climate targets compatible with science and the need for including international social equity. Our submission can be read here:

<https://www.dpmc.gov.au/taskforces/unfccc/public-submissions/climate-action-moreland>

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on behalf of
Climate Action Moreland