

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 113

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 7

Programme: Adaptation and Science Division

Topic: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

How much carbon does the IPCC think can be emitted before we go over 2 degrees? How much of that carbon has the world already emitted to date? What does this mean for reducing emissions in the years after 2020? Is there a danger of making the wrong investment decisions now and paying more after 2020?

Answer:

The Working Group contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report found that in order to meet the international goal of 2°C relative to the period 1861–1880, the likely (>66% probability) total allowable global emissions is about 1,000 billion tonnes of carbon from carbon dioxide emissions. The total allowable global emissions increases to 1,570 billion tonnes of carbon from carbon dioxide emissions for a lower probability (>33%) of meeting the 2°C target. An amount of 515 (445–585) billion tonnes of carbon was already emitted by 2011.

Globally, investment decisions will be made according to the policy frameworks in place in each jurisdiction. The Australian Government's Direct Action Plan will make available significant support for new low emissions investments in Australia.