



**The Hon Greg Hunt MP**  
**Minister for the Environment**



MC14-034623

8 DEC 2014

Dr Dennis Jensen MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear ~~Dr Jensen~~

I refer to your letter of 24 November 2014 concerning a petition received by the Standing Committee on Petitions regarding climate change emissions targets.

The Government is committed to its unconditional target to reduce emissions by 5 per cent below 2000 levels by 2020. This target represents a substantial effort – the Government’s modelling indicates that business-as-usual emissions will reach 17 per cent above 2000 levels by 2020. On a range of indicators, Australia’s 5 per cent target is comparable with most other advanced economies. The Government will track progress towards Australia’s target through its national emissions inventory.

The Government’s priority is to implement its Direct Action plan – with the Emissions Reduction Fund as the key element to deliver on this 5 per cent commitment. The Government will review Australia’s international targets in 2015. The review will focus on the extent to which other nations, including the major economies and Australia’s major trading partners, are taking real and comparable actions to reduce emissions.

The Emissions Reduction Fund will provide incentives for cleaning up our environment through activities in Australia such as revegetation, investing in soil carbon, cleaning up power stations, capturing gas from landfill and increased energy efficiency. The Senate passed legislation to put in place the Emissions Reduction Fund on 31 October 2014, and the House of Representatives passed the legislation on 24 November 2014. Unlike the carbon tax – a Government imposition that penalises the nation as a whole – the Emissions Reduction Fund is a market mechanism that will allow Australia’s emissions target to be met at the lowest cost to the economy and the community. In addition, the Government will provide targeted funding to support the uptake of solar energy and the revegetation of land through the 20 Million Trees programme.

The Government's approach to climate change is to focus on practical responses which provide positive local environmental outcomes.

Yours sincerely

Greg Hunt