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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
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Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Sent via email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

14 August 2019

Dear Committee Secretary,

Submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee 'Inquiry into the Coal-Fired Power Funding Prohibition Bill 2017'

1. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Coal-Fired Power Funding Prohibition Bill 2017 ('the Bill').
2. WWF-Australia is part of the WWF International Network, the world's largest independent conservation organisation. WWF's global mission is to '*stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature*'.
3. WWF-Australia has approximately one million financial and non-financial supporters.

Recommendations on the Bill

4. WWF-Australia supports the Bill.
5. WWF-Australia submits that the Commonwealth should not support – financially or otherwise – the refurbishment or build of a coal-fired power station. The Commonwealth should also not support the purchase, or assist the purchase or transfer of ownership, of a coal-fired power station.
6. WWF-Australia submits that any future Australian Government support for refurbishing or building a coal-fired power station is entirely inconsistent with meeting the existing Paris Agreement commitments made by the Australian Government in 2015.
7. WWF-Australia further submits that the Australian Government should not provide any future funding for coal-fired power stations, and should instead legislate for, and provide financial support for, the rapid transition to renewable energy.

Australia's commitment to meeting the Paris Agreement objectives

8. Climate change is one of the most significant threats to the people, species and places Australians love.
9. At the Paris climate conference in December 2015, 195 countries including Australia adopted the first ever universal, legally-binding global climate agreement. The governments agreed to:

- a. A long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperatures to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels;
 - b. Aim to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change;
 - c. The need for global emissions to peak as soon as possible, recognising that this will take longer for developing countries;
 - d. Undertake rapid reductions thereafter in accordance with the best available science.
10. The latest scientific predictions indicate that the world is moving towards a global temperature increase of 2.7 degrees or more, with a likely rise above 1.5 degrees in the next five years. A global and national shift is needed to keep warming below 1.5 degrees and return to a safe climate.
11. WWF-Australia submits that in order for Australia to meet the Paris Agreement greenhouse gas pollution reduction targets, the Australian Government should lead on reducing emissions below the 2005 Australian baseline:
- a. By 45-44% by 2025 (40-50% below present);
 - b. By 65-85% by 2030 (60-80% below present);
 - c. To 'net-zero' between 2034 and 2040, with the electricity/energy sector emitting zero emissions and the emissions of all other sectors credibly 'offset'.
12. The Australian Government should also end the construction or expansion of thermal coal mines, legislate for the closure of all coal-fired power stations by 2035 and provide structural adjustment assistance, reskilling and regional economic diversity plans for affected workers and communities.
13. Australian expert reports have indicated that the above emissions reductions are both technically possible and financially affordable.¹

Global transition away from thermal coal and towards renewable energy

14. A global transition away from thermal coal is already underway, and Australia is exposed to significant and rising social, environmental and economic risks if it does not make a well-planned 'just transition' away from its reliance on thermal coal.
15. Additionally, Australia is uniquely positioned to transform its economy into a renewable energy superpower. Australia's solar, wind, green hydrogen and supply of rare metals and minerals have the potential to transform Australia into a world leader in renewable energy and supply long-term employment to regional communities.
16. To support this transition, the Australian Government should create renewable energy targets of 100% renewable electricity by 2035, and 100% for the rest of the energy system (industrial etc.) by 2050.

¹ Climate Works (2014), Pathways to deep decarbonisation in 2050. How Australia can prosper in a low carbon world; McKibben Software Group (2015), Report 2: 2015 Economic Modelling of Australian Action Under a New Global Climate Change Agreement; Jotzo, F and Kemp, L (2015), Australia can cut emissions deeply and the cost is low, Centre for Climate Economics and pPolicy for WWF-Australia; Teske, S, Dominish, E, Ison, N and Maras, K (2016) 100% Renewable Energy for Australia – Decarbonising Australia's Energy Sector Within One Generation. Report prepared by ISF for GetUp! and Solar Citizens, March 2016; The Climate institute (2015), Growing the economy while reducing pollution: The economic impacts of climate policy, Factsheet September 2015.

If you require further information about any of the above, please contact Rachel Lowry, Chief Conservation Officer, WWF-Australia on _____ or _____

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Lowry
Chief Conservation Officer
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