

Dear Madam/Sir,

I hereby lodge my submission to the 2022 Senate Inquiry into Nuclear Power. The ban on nuclear power in Australia must remain in place. I support the ban and ask the Senate Standing Committees to support the continuation of this ban. I am concerned that further nuclear promotion risks delaying the action Australia needs to address the challenges, and maximise the opportunities, of meaningful climate action.

Nuclear power plants are vulnerable to threats which are being exacerbated by climate change. These include dwindling and warming water sources, sea-level rise, storm damage, drought, and jelly-fish swarms. Nuclear engineer David Lochbaum states: "You need to solve global warming for nuclear plants to survive." Australia does not want or need a nuclear reactor under these conditions as the country is already affected by climate change and we can see that it is progressively worsening.

Nuclear power programs have provided cover for numerous weapons programs and an expansion of nuclear power would worsen the situation. Former US Vice President Al Gore neatly summarised the problem: "For eight years in the White House, every weapons-proliferation problem we dealt with was connected to a civilian reactor program. And if we ever got to the point where we wanted to use nuclear reactors to back out a lot of coal ... then we'd have to put them in so many places we'd run that proliferation risk right off the reasonability scale." Nuclear reactors are pre-deployed military or terrorist targets. The current situation in Ukraine illustrates the risks: electricity supply necessary for reactor cooling has been repeatedly disrupted by military strikes, posing serious risks of nuclear core meltdowns. Prior to Russia's recent attack on Ukraine, there have been numerous military attacks on nuclear plants. Examples include Israel's destruction of a research reactor in Iraq in 1981; the United States' destruction of two smaller research reactors in Iraq in 1991; attempted military strikes by Iraq and Iran on each other's nuclear facilities during the 1980 - 88 war; Iraq's attempted missile strikes on Israel's nuclear facilities in 1991; and Israel's bombing of a suspected nuclear reactor in Syria in 2007. Having a nuclear reactor opens the country up to the possibility of making Australia a target. Australians would never want or desire this.

Australia needs effective climate action now but nuclear power would slow the transition to a low-carbon economy. It would increase electricity costs and unnecessarily introduce the challenges and risks associated with high-level nuclear waste management and the potential for catastrophic accidents, with profound intergenerational implications for Australians.

Nuclear power is dangerous, expensive, slow and unwanted. Our energy future is renewable not radioactive.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

For the only planet we have.

Jessica Wysser