

Australia needs effective climate action. Any action to introduce 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 is also the most expensive energy option. Since 2010, the cost of wind and solar PV has decreased by 70–90% while nuclear costs have increased by 33%. Nuclear power is the one energy source with a ‘negative learning curve’ – it has become more expensive over time, with profound intergenerational implications for Australians.

We have better options to generate energy. The increasing take up rate for the installation of solar PV systems in Australia on homes and businesses already shows that renewable energies have the capacity to contribute significantly to energy generation and these are very popular with the Australian people.

Introducing nuclear power is a slow process. It can take decades to build. Also, nuclear is dangerous. Either through human error, disaster, or as a military target the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear disaster would permanently pollute.

Most importantly, there is no proven solution for managing high-level nuclear waste produced in power reactors.

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 is unwanted by the general public. There is long standing popular opposition to nuclear power in Australia because of the issues above as well as the unsolved problem of nuclear waste and the link to nuclear weapons.

Alternatives like renewables, storage and energy efficiency are faster, cheaper and easier to deploy and enjoy much more public support.

Nuclear power could not in any way facilitate Australia’s energy transition – it could only delay the transition and make it more expensive and contentious. Nuclear power would unnecessarily introduce risks of catastrophic nuclear accidents and military or terrorist attacks. It would inevitably bequeath future generations with streams of high-, intermediate- and low-level nuclear waste.

We urge all politicians and political parties to focus on the transition to a low-carbon economy and to reject nuclear power because it is too slow, too expensive and too dangerous. Instead, we need to hasten the transition to a low-carbon economy with a focus on renewable energies.

Jo Bower
Secretary

Environment House

[REDACTED]

Bayswater WA 6053

[REDACTED]

<http://www.envirohouse.org.au/>