



Dissenting Report—Australian Greens

The Australian Greens do not believe the Malaysia Australia Free Trade Agreement should proceed and note the continuing reluctance of the Government to provide any analysis of the social impacts of free trade agreements.

The Australian Greens are concerned that bilateral and plurilateral free trade agreements are predominantly being used as tools of diplomacy at the expense of the consideration of the economic, social and environmental impacts.

Without a proper independent evaluation process in place it is difficult for the outcomes and impacts of these agreements to be analysed.

This Committee has consistently called for further analysis that takes into account both the economic and social impacts of free trade agreements. The Australian Greens agree with this approach and call for greater transparency of negotiated outcomes, so the implications of free trade agreements can be appropriately debated by the Australian parliament and community.

The Productivity Commission Research report, *Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements*, released in December 2010 provides an important contribution to this debate and its recommendations about independent evaluation and transparency shouldn't be pushed aside by Governments when considering trade agreements.

The negotiation of trade agreements necessarily involve trade-offs that can have far ranging impacts on individuals who are employed in certain industries and on Australia as a whole. Enhanced transparency of negotiations and independent analysis would allow informed debate about whether these trade-offs are in Australia's interest.

