



Treaties report on the Kyoto Protocol

The Chair of the Parliament's Treaties Committee, Kelvin Thomson MP, released the Committee's report into the Kyoto Protocol today. The report uses the most up to date scientific evidence to make recommendations about how Australia should approach the climate change problem in the post-Kyoto world.

"The Report shows that climate change is happening faster and at lower levels of CO2 than the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has been predicting. The scientific consensus is that it would be dangerous to allow the amount of carbon in the atmosphere to exceed 450 parts per million," Mr Thomson said.

"After examining the evidence, we have concluded that it is in Australia's interests to get global action delivering deep cuts in carbon emissions in order to stabilise greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at 450 parts per million or lower by 2050."

The Committee argues that the world cannot meet the 450 parts per million or lower figure unless the developed countries are willing to cut greenhouse gases by 80 per cent by 2050. "The Committee recommends that Australian Government be willing to adopt an 80 per cent target and take that target as a negotiating position to Copenhagen in December this year," Mr Thomson continued.

"If we were to endeavour to stabilise our carbon emissions by the end of 2010 and try to cut our emissions by two per cent every year after that, by 2050 we would be 80 per cent below where we are now."

The Committee has also recommended the Australian Government investigate using revegetation as an adaptation mechanism to reduce temperature and increase rainfall in applicable parts of Australia.

"Retaining native vegetation, and indeed re-establishing native vegetation, is something we can do in Australia to help our situation here - this is something we can do for ourselves," said Mr Thomson.

The Report contains other recommendations designed to help Australia achieve this goal, including:

- encouraging the development of high quality public transport systems;
- seeking accurate carbon accounting of forestry and biosequestration;
- reducing emissions from savannah burning; and
- better coordinating emissions reduction activities across States, Territories and local government.

Report 100 is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Media contact: Kelvin Thomson MP (Mr Anthony Cianflone) (03) 9350 5777
Background: Mr Jerome Brown, Committee Secretary (02) 6277 4622