



The Hon. Dr David Kemp
Minister for Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

March 13, 2003

Re: **Consultation on the Climate Change Forward Strategy**

Dear Minister Kemp,

The below signed organisations are members of the National Environment Consultative Forum (NECF) and/or the Climate Action Network Australia (CANA). All of our organisations are keenly aware of the dangers facing Australia due to climate change and feel that the Commonwealth is backing away from its national and international obligations to respond to this threat.

We write specifically in relation to the Howard Government's Climate Change Forward Strategy. As a long-term plan to address climate change we feel that there are several policies that must be included in order to make this Strategy worthwhile – these are listed below. We also have concerns about the process of consultation to develop this strategy and how it will be framed.

This letter seeks the Government's assurance, in writing, that these policies will be addressed in the Climate Change Forward Strategy, otherwise we are unable, in good conscience, to participate in the formation of the Strategy.

The environment groups represented by the NECF and CANA are extremely disappointed that this process has reached this unfortunate point. We would like to be engaged in the development of policies to reduce Australia's ever growing greenhouse gas pollution, and we are certainly willing to provide ideas and analysis on strategies that go to the heart of the problem. These include:

- Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and a legislated mandatory target for national reductions in greenhouse gas pollution below 1990 levels,
- A legislated increase in the renewable energy target to a level equivalent to the emerging international benchmark of 10% real renewables by 2010,
- An end to broadscale landclearing, which contributes around 12% of Australia's greenhouse pollution,
- A policy commitment to a pathway of 60-80% cuts in greenhouse pollution, similar to that set out by the UK Royal Commission into Environmental Pollution,
- A strategy to assist in the transition for communities dependent on fossil fuel-based industries, as we begin to substitute them with clean power,
- Introduction of an economy-wide pricing mechanism for carbon emissions to finance initiatives in demand-side management and energy efficiency.

We do not come to this position easily. Our commitment to the millions of members represented by our two networks is to protect the environment and we fear that our involvement in this process as it stands currently may be perceived by the community as legitimising another decade of inaction. Given the two previous, and as-yet unfulfilled

National Greenhouse Strategies plus the unkept promises of the Prime Minister's Safeguarding the Future commitments we have little reason to believe that this planning process will result in real change in our emissions profile.

This lack of faith in the process' ability to deliver on the substantive outcomes above has been reinforced by problems with the consultation to date and your own representation of the Climate Change Forward Strategy. If one was to search Hansard and read the government reports about this process one would think the NECF and CANA are fully engaged in the process, whereas the opposite is true and even determining its terms of reference has been difficult for us.

The intention to develop the Climate Change Forward Strategy was launched in July in the lead up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. At this time, media references were made to consultation with the NECF prior to any notification being given about the intention to even embark on a new strategy formation. This was followed by a major consultation held with the business community in August, several months before any meeting was held with the community sector.

And then in a speech made in Parliament on the 5/12/02, before any details for meaningful engagement had even been suggested by the AGO, you reported that:

"In developing the Climate Change Forward Strategy, the Government is working with all State and Territory Governments, a wide range of business and industry groups and the National Environmental Consultative Forum representing peak environmental organisations."

We acknowledge that a possible consultation process with NECF and CANA member groups had been discussed at the mid-November 2002 NECF Greenhouse meeting, but when you spoke in Parliament, we had spent two weeks chasing the relevant decision-makers in the Australian Greenhouse Office to get commitments for a consultation process. We were struggling to get a process agreed upon before Christmas, while the process that you had facilitated for industry working groups had been going for three months. We did not reach an agreement on how to attempt to engage until two weeks later, following a meeting with Howard Bamsey (19/12/02).

We feel that all of this is indicative of the problems with the Commonwealth's approach to global warming. There are many other signs such as the ongoing opposition to ratifying Kyoto and the delay in launching a review of the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target, which the Prime Minister once described as "the largest and most far-reaching package of measures to address climate change ever undertaken by any government in Australia".

As a result, until the government commits to addressing the policies listed above as part of the Climate Change Forward Strategy, and until there is a equitable process to allow environment groups genuine input on these issues, then we cannot be party to it.

Yours sincerely

Kate MacMaster, for:

This position is supported by the following member groups of the NECF and CANA:

Aidwatch

Alternative Technology Association

Arid Lands Environment Centre

Australian Conservation Foundation

Australian Marine Conservation Society

Conservation Council of South Australia

Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra

Conservation Council of Western Australia

Environment Centre of the Northern Territory

Environment Victoria

Friends of the Earth Australia

Greenpeace Australia Pacific

Moreland Environmental Foundation

National Parks Association of NSW

Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Queensland Conservation Council

Sunshine Coast Environment Council

Tasmanian Conservation Trust

The Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies

The Wilderness Society

World Wide Fund for Nature Australia

CC: The Hon Ian McFarlane

Mr Howard Bamsey, AGO

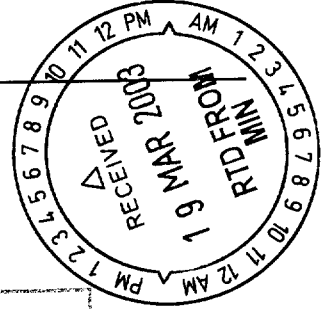
Ms Jackie Shannon, AGO

Mr Mathew Maliel, AGO

Mr Paul Purdon, AGO



The Hon. Dr David Kemp MP
Minister for the Environment and Heritage



Ministerial Correspondence – Action Advice

The attached correspondence is referred for the following action:

- Reply for signature of Minister
- Reply for signature of Parliamentary Secretary
- Reply for signature of Chief of Staff/Senior Adviser/Adviser/Assistant Adviser/DLO
- Covering brief
- For appropriate action
- For advice/minute
- For departmental reply
- Campaign _____
- For information (no reply necessary)

| Group | Recipient | Response Type |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| AGS | K. | Min |
| Keyword _____ | | |

The Ministerial is in the following category:

- Representation by a Commonwealth Minister or Member of Federal Parliament
- Representation by a State Minister or Member of State Parliament
- Representation by constituent in Minister's electorate
- Other

Comments:

Date: 19/MAR/03 ~ (

Adviser: _____