

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy, It's time!

Set stringent targets for the carbon trade scheme of 40% from the outset and provide no , that's right ZERO incentives for carbon-based industries to pollute. Yes, this will send shock waves through our economy, yes jobs will be lost in those industries, yes share prices will plummet, yes the stock exchange indices will head South, but we have reached an opportune tipping point NOW.

It's time, rather than to invest taxpayer funds in concessions to polluters, rather than to pump-prime the economy with cash hand-outs, to invest in research and development aimed at making solar, thermal, wind and wave power base-load capable.

Am I daft? To me there is a beautiful simplicity to the relationship of the global economic crisis and the environmental catastrophe approaching. One solves the other.

If Rudd and cohort (including those pesky independents) provide base-load investment with the objective of achieving base-load alternative energy, where alternative energy industries become the major players of the 21st century economy, then jobs will be created and the stock market will once more be guaranteeing happy futures for the Macquarie millionaires – maybe even privately-funded superannuants. Win for investors; win for the environment.

Look, this isn't rocket science. In the first place, use the billions currently ear-marked to prop up old styles of industry, to establish state-run solar facilities. Go down to the banks of the Murray where all those farmers are no longer able to farm due to current levels of warming, salination and loss of water supply, buy their land and start erecting solar cells – billions of them. Or else ask the farmers to farm energy instead of cotton. The workers that are being sacked from carbon-based industries can work there! Don't manufacture t-shirts, manufacture solar cells. That's a tough re-deployment I know, but these are and will be increasingly tough times. Hell, I'll go down and work there if you need me to.

If that is done in concert with an injection of infrastructural support to alternative energy research facilities, then in ten years time, maybe less, these alternative energy sources, or perhaps ones not yet imagined, will become base-load capable.

The alternative is that in 2050, my 17 year-old son will be sitting in an apartment block reaching to the sky in a Blade Runner style future, using a respirator to breath, trying to condense drinking water from a container he filled in Port Phillip bay, and not breeding with his wife because he knows his generation will be the last on the planet.

It's time to act now. Stop bowing to the carbon lobby and make some forthright decisions for our children's future. I voted Labour at the last election not because I wanted a thousand bucks, but because I thought Labour was serious about two-things, industrial reform, and forthright action on the environment.

They have just about delivered on the first (thanks Julia), now all of you, please, be brave, lead us in a way that will not please the myopic, corporate big boys and that may cause untold pain; formulate bold policy with alternative energy as the centrepiece and carbon-trading as a transitional instrument.

- Carbon-based industries SHOULD NOT be making a profit from polluting the environment – alternative energy industry should.
- Carbon-based industry SHOULD NOT receive any pollution permits.

- Projected expenditure for pollution permits SHOULD be re-directed to positive initiatives such as alternative energy research and development.
- Stringent targets SHOULD be set – 40% is a good place to start; 5% would be laughable if it wasn't sickening.
- Major investment in alternative energy facilities and research and development SHOULD be started TODAY – allocate 20 billion TODAY.

What "ordinary middle income families" want is a sustainable future; that is what the Rudd government was mandated to do – so do it.

As a post-script, nuclear energy is not an option. The plants require enormous amounts of carbon-based energy to run and after all this time, scientists and nuclear energy executives have still no idea what to do with the waste produced.

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