

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

I object to big polluters being given free rights to pollute, whilst smaller polluters have to pay. Isn't this the wrong way around?

I am deeply concerned that giving away pollution licenses occurred in Europe, and experts now agree this was a major problem in the emissions trading scheme. Hello, Australia, it's ok to learn from mistakes in other countries.

As an Australian I strongly object to my future, and the future of my children being traded away for nothing because some business (in a sector that has done extremely well out of the Australian environment) has a whinge about their profitability.

Put more resources into renewable energy; into existing options and into research and development. If jobs are the argument (pretty hollow Kev, Julia), put resources into training and retraining workers for the renewable energy sector. Find a way to pass on costs - of this transition and the use of the 'new' energy to consumers.

Taking away the ability of the general public to be proactive, to make a difference by a direct link between lifestyle choice and environment is simply wrong. I'm talking about how disempowering it is to realise that reducing your personal energy use has no effect because if YOU don't use that energy (and hence create the pollution) the environment does not benefit - the power company will simply sell your hard work (carbon credits) to someone else who will create the pollution for you. THAT is an incentive to make no effort to reduce energy use at all. It's out of my hands. I can no longer make a difference.

I suspect this system might work the same way as water licenses. Not everyone with a water license used their water allocation. It didn't cost for the allocation, and didn't matter if it did not get used - not all were. Introduce license buying and all the Jo Averages that weren't using them decided to sell their (free, allocated) licenses. To those who wanted them and would pay for them to actually use the water. Result - MORE water out of the Murray. Not the desired effect.

The 5% target is laughable. Why bother? We could do that as a community with education and gradual attitude shift by 2020. It's an insult to the Australian people, and reflective of a system easily distracted by shouting corporate bullies over steady intellect, considered scientific recommendation and community welfare.

Remember recycling? Does anyone remember recycling in the 70's, 80's? In the 1990's it became a broad social awareness. Now it's normal. With the communication options now available, the time frame is even faster.

Example, Earth Hour. It was started in Sydney in 2007. One city, small by world standards, in the middle of the ocean. 24 months later it is all around the world. Millions and millions aware and participating. Two days before the 2009 event Google records a search query for Earth Hour every 7 seconds. And we put a paltry 5% reduction target to the whole of Australia??

I really think no carbon trading system would be better than the proposed model. Penny, it is absolutely NOT better than nothing!! Either do it properly or don't do it at all.

Do something different. Say, phase out non-renewable carbon polluting resource use. Economically business will adjust. That's what business does! Provide a carbon allocation per industry, reduced annually. Not for all industry (polluting or not) in together. Keep greenhouse gases locked in where they can be - desist logging in high conservation value forests for a start. Build up, not out so that arable land is not buried under tonnes of concrete sprawl, leaving us space for carbon absorbing plants. Take lessons from other countries. For example, places like

Singapore who have planned all of their land use. There will be no unplanned urban sprawl into agricultural or conservation land there.

Pull our collective heads out of the ground because climate change cannot be stopped by a few hippies living on a commune - or a few percent in a the emissions target of a developed country like Australia.

We can only take so much water out of the Murray before it starts to die. And when a part of the web of life dies, the rest does not hold together so well, and the speed of decay is exponential until the River loses all life. Oh wait, that's already happening. Who was that scientist that warned of this some decades ago...?

We can only let the Earth warm so much before things start to become affected. And when a part of the web of life decays, the effect is cumulative and exponential. Natural cycles begin to fail, seasons falter, catastrophic climate events become more frequent, and strands of the web cannot survive. Oh wait, that's already happening too.

If this scheme in its current, spineless form goes ahead, we should also introduce an 'I didn't have a baby' bonus for those who can't bear the thought of putting kids through that.

Name: Meryn C