

John Hawkins
Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy
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Dear Mr Hawkins

I wish to raise some concerns regarding the direction of Australia's climate change policies.

Voluntary actions under the CPRS

Under the currently-proposed scheme, voluntary measures, such as the purchase of GreenPower by households, free up carbon permits, making it cheaper for industry to pollute. This renders redundant the efforts of those who choose to do the right thing.

The CPRS needs to recognise the leadership demonstrated by these voluntary measures. It should not angle the scheme only towards carbon-intensive businesses that have little enthusiasm for emissions reduction. Such an approach consigns us all to mediocrity, particularly when our greenhouse gas emissions target is so low. It is an affront to those who are taking the initiative without needing a purely economic imperative.

Carbon-intensive industries under the CPRS

I have heard the CPRS referred to as the 'Conspicuous Polluters Reward Scheme'. The proposed CPRS needs to move away from free permits for carbon-intensive industries, particularly in that it will continue to extend free permits for companies that do not reduce their carbon intensity. There should also be no space for additional exemptions for future carbon-intensive industries.

2020 greenhouse gas emissions target

The announced greenhouse gas emissions target of 5-15% by 2020 is not sufficient. The Garnaut Review, which was intended to guide our Government's climate change policy, points out that the best outcome for Australia would be stabilisation at 450 ppm.

We should set an emissions reduction target that aims to achieve stabilisation at 450 ppm, or a 25% reduction against a year 2000 baseline by 2020. International agreement on an ambitious 450 ppm target will require developed, carbon-intensive economies such as Australia, Canada and the United States to lead from the front, rather than bringing up the rear and expecting others to pick up their slack.

Subsidies for the fossil fuel industry

Fossil fuel industries are government subsidised to the tune of \$9 billion per year. These funds should be withdrawn and/or redirected in full into the energy efficiency and renewable/clean energy industry.

Feed-in tariff

A renewed push for a national feed-in tariff, applicable to the gross energy production of all renewable, distributed energy (not just the residential and community sector), needs to occur. The current collection of state-based systems is confusing, and net feed-in tariffs are ineffective and inequitable.

Solar access rights

A legal framework is required to protect solar access rights, and needs to be established before it becomes a significant problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Healey
(Renewable energy engineer and sustainability consultant)