

Dear Secretary of Senate Select Committee,

I am writing to express my concern that current government efforts and the CPRS do not go far enough towards preventing dangerous climate change.

I believe it is obvious that the target of a 5% reduction in CO2 emissions under 2000 levels by 2020 will do little mitigate the onset of climate change. A comparatively weak target will also do little to encourage developing nations to cap and/or reduce their emissions, something they will find more difficult given their lack of wealth and resources. Indeed such a system seems equivalent to asking the poor to pay income tax while the wealthy avoid taxation.

With regard to terms of reference on whether an emissions trading scheme is the best way to reduce emissions at the lowest economic cost. I would hypothesize that the alternative (a large carbon tax), while cheaper to administer, is a non-starter because it would be political suicide to any government who introduced it. Economic modeling from the Treasury showed that even under ambitious reduction targets the cost to the economy was minimal, 0.1 or 0.2% which seems a fair price to pay to give climate change prevention a good chance of succeeding.

As Australia has one of the highest per capita emissions footprints at target of a 25% reduction under 2000 levels by 2020 will be necessary for Australia to play its part in combating climate change. We have both economic and moral reasons for this. Economically as shown by both the Garnaut report and Treasury modeling aggressive targets will save us money in the long term and I believe help Australia take a lead in creating "green jobs". Morally as a rich, high polluting nation we have a responsibility to lead the way in this issue and do all we can to prevent disasterous impacts on the poorest people, who are least responsible for this crisis but seem certain to suffer most.

I would urge the committee to see renewable energy as our main priority. Since so much of our emissions come from coal plants and Australia is well endowed with renewable options such as Solar and Geothermal (and the space to put them), promoting a shift from former to the latter would seem an effective option. As a secondary benefit much of the transport sector emissions can be removed once you have the renewable energy to power a large fleet of plug-in electric cars.

I appreciate the opportunity to have a say in the Senate Inquiry and urge the Government to take strong and swift action as outlined by the IPCC and recommended by the Garnaut report.

Yours sincerely,
Michael Clark