

8th April 2009

Re: Senate Enquiry - proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS)

Dear Senators

I write this submission on behalf of our family of five (5), very concerned about climate change. I will keep it very brief.

During the 2007 Federal election lead-up, Kevin Rudd committed to taking action to address climate change, stating that "**Australia now stands ready to assume its responsibility ... Climate change is the defining challenge of our generation.**"

Mr Rudd, Ms Wong, Mr Garrett and others then attended Bali in 2007, and agreed a target in the range of 25% to 40% reduction.

What has changed since Bali ? Climate science has predicted worse scenarios since Bali!! Scientists at the recent International Scientific Congress on Climate Change in Copenhagen on 10-12 March 2009, scientists stated that: "***Recent observations confirm that, given high rates of observed emissions, the worst-case IPCC scenario trajectories (or even worse) are being realised***".

As well, recent reports of [melting perma-frost in the northern hemisphere](#) are alarming.

If you have not read about this and studied it, please, I implore you, do so. {refer for example: Spratt & Lawson (Nov 08) "Bubbling Our way to the Apocalypse" Rolling Stone Nov 2008}

I suggest the only material things that have changed since Bali 2007 are the economy (so we want green jobs in a low carbon transition) and the intensity of fossil fuel lobbying (powerful, but not aligned with a safe climate future).

The Rudd Government's draft Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) tabled on 10 March 2009, an emissions trading scheme promoted as Australia's central policy on climate change, is manifestly inadequate for reducing Australia's carbon emissions.

Its fundamental flaws are:

- The unconditional greenhouse target of 5% emission reductions by 2020 is far lower than the 25% to 40% target range flagged at the United Nations Bali Convention on climate change in 2008. It is not aligned with a safe climate future, as evidenced by the IPCC March 2009, the increasingly rapid loss of Arctic and Antarctic ice, and the perma-frost in the Siberian region.
- It encourages the growth of highly polluting Energy Intensive Trade Exposed (EITE) industries' (such as aluminium smelters) by allocating them 25% of permits free of charge, increasing to 45% by 2020. This is in direct conflict with the recommendations in the final Garnaut report.
- Permits are property rights instead of temporary licences. This means that polluters who get them will be paid compensation in the future if more stringent emission reductions are introduced.
- There is no limit on overseas offsets, so Australia's emissions could increase and emission permits bought from overseas to "offset" them. This will likely lead to double-counting, and erosion of Australia's credibility in the global effort.
- The high "cap" is also a "floor" so emission reductions by households will be simply on sold by power stations to other polluters, resulting in no actual emission reductions.

The CPRS legislation as it stands, fails to address climate change and for these reasons above, as in particular is not a sufficiently urgent response to the crisis we face globally. We do not support the CPRS in its current form.

We strongly urge the Australian government to build on a growing public desire for governments to act on climate change; remove implicit and explicit subsidies; reduce the influence of vested interests that increase emissions and reduce resilience; enable innovative leadership in government, the private sector and civil society; and engage society in the transition to norms and practices that foster genuine sustainability.

I note the increasing efforts of 150 nationally co-ordinated climate action groups to bring whatever political and non-political outcomes they can achieve on this issue, not for our time, but for future generations. I note that my local councils such as Whitehorse, Boroondara, Darebin, Port Phillip are being much more progressive in the transition to a low carbon economy. It would be far better if Australia could get on with the urgent changes required under a substantive CPRS, than seeking it through another electoral cycle at Federal level.

We ask you to show the required vision and leadership locally, as we act in accordance with Europe, New Zealand, even the Maldives, and others globally, to provide 'middle Australians' and 'future generations' with a **safe climate future.**

Yours faithfully,

Mick Nolan

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