

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

We don't live in isolation.

The whole world is looking to its neighbors as they develop their climate change policies. It's not just the direct effect that Australia's CPRS will make to the climate but arguably the effect that we have by example on other nations be they larger net carbon polluters than Australia or smaller. As they form their own climate policies.

An emissions trading scheme is one of many ways Australia can reduce its emissions. A well designed scheme can help move us toward a low carbon economy by setting a strong target but a poorly designed scheme will not only prevent us from doing our fair share to reduce emissions but will prevent us from growing our own renewable energy industries and we will be forced to import technologies and skills from countries that have made the decision to support and encourage their renewable industries.

A good example of this would be Germany, 15 years ago they introduced a generous PV feed in tariff, Germany a country with half the sunshine of Australia now has 200 times the solar production capacity. And is world leader in solar energy.

We need to make a lot of changes to become a low carbon economy delaying this will not only be disastrous for the climate but also for the Australian economy, we need to embrace the new industries of renewable energy and a low carbon economy. We are already a long way behind the rest of the world.

Why can't Australia be a proud world leader on climate change policy we are starting to see that we are one of the countries most affected by climate change.

Targets below the rest of the world

The CPRS as proposed by the Government if adopted will see Australia way behind the rest of the world. While the rest of the world are aiming at reductions of 20-45% the CPRS proposed target range of 5-15% will make Australia the laughing stock of the rest of the world, and in future years when there is pressure from the rest of world for Australia to lift its target to a level comparable to other countries. They will have developed their renewable industries and the skills of their work force and we will be forced to import both not having developed our own.

Large carbon emitters

Compensating large polluters with cash payments and free permits to pollute can only have negative effects. The experience in Europe was that the power companies were given 90% of their permits free of charge but still included the cost of permits in the price of the electricity they sell there by making the consumer effectively pay twice.

It is argued by some that this compensation will protect jobs (obviously only in the short term) in high pollution industries however this will be at the expense of growing new jobs in the low carbon / renewable industries.

With rising unemployment and a slowing economy now has got to be the best time to create an environment for the growth of renewable / low carbon industries and investing in public transport and not pour money into industries that don't have a long term future.

Recognition of individual and community action.

There is a large and rapidly growing grass roots movement toward sustainability. We should be encouraging the efforts of local communities and individuals in reducing their carbon emissions there must be formal recognition of this action in the CPRS.

The current CPRS has a fixed amount of carbon emissions which means that any additional voluntary action undertaken by individuals or community groups will not contribute to Australia's overall emissions reduction.

For example an individual installing solar PV system and reducing there electricity consumption will make it easier for coal fired power stations to meet their targets and thus reduce the demand and cost of carbon permits, making it cheaper for other emitters to obtain carbon permits and increase their emissions. And perversely have no net reduction in Australia's carbon emissions.

Such a significant disincentive for local communities and individuals to take action on climate change will be counter productive to Australia's ability to achieve future reductions in our carbon emissions.

There needs to be a mechanism where measurable reductions by individuals/community will reduce carbon caps above business as usual levels, there by restoring incentive.

Finally this policy can't be driven by politics, but must be driven by the science there is no second chance, we are told that if the climate reach's certain critical points the climate will tip over into expediential change with catastrophic results.

A mediocre climate policy will not be better than nothing but will have the same effect as doing nothing the climate policy **must** be based on the science there is no other course we can take.

As a father of 3 young children living in drought affected central Victoria we are acutely aware of how vulnerable we are to climate change. I urge you to think of our children and future generations and not short term politics.

Thank you for listening.

David Kirby