

Dear Sir/Madam

The Labor Government's decision to cut greenhouse gas emissions (GhG) by a mere 5% of 2000 levels by 2020 is completely inadequate and out of step with promises made to the people of Australia prior to the election. The decision sends a terrible message to the rest of the world that we have no intention of contributing our fair share in reducing atmospheric carbon, but rather expect others to carry more than their fair share of the burden. In contrast, California will have a 20% energy reduction target completed by 2010 and 33% by 2020. Clearly if the 5% target is adopted Australia will not be taken seriously on this issue again.

Such a miniscule reduction could be achieved with a minimal increase in efficiencies. On a personal level our family has already (as of 2009, not 2020) reduced our GhG footprint by more than 50%. Industry could do much the same to increase its efficiencies in many areas but why bother when the target is minimalist?

Furthermore I would like to see the ceiling of a maximum 15% reduction by 2020 left open ended so that Australia can move if the rest of the world moves past our 15% target without paying huge, publicly funded compensation, to the worst emitters. It is clear that targets left as they are currently cannot meet the needs of the hoped for CO2 emissions target of 450 parts per million (ppm) that have been recommended if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Indeed many scientists including NASA's James Hansen regard this figure as much too high and he has indicated that we must not only arrest carbon emissions but actually draw down current levels of CO2 from the atmosphere if we are to avoid the most dangerous consequences of a warming world. He recommends CO2 concentrations of around 350ppm in the longer term. I believe our emissions strategy, if adopted world-wide, would cause a CO2 concentration of around 550 ppm - clearly far too high to avoid dire climatic changes.

One only has to look at the current breakup of the Wilkins Ice Sheet in Antarctica to see that urgent action is required and more ambitious targets than those sought by our Government brought to the fore.

Finally, it has been brought to my attention that any attempt I make to further reduce my carbon footprint under the Government's proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will simply be a waste of my money as any reductions I achieve will simply make it easier for the big polluters to pollute. Therefore on completion of my electricity contract with my power provider I will no longer spend my hard earned wages on green power as I have been, but will now simply buy coal fired power instead.

Please find a way of changing the legislation so that my emission reductions are extra to the scheme enabling me and people like me to once again contribute to reducing Australia's greenhouse emissions.

Thank you

Peter Fell