

Tuesday, 7th April 2009

The Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

Dear Senators,

Thank you for inviting submissions to the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy.

Experts from around the country are speaking out with valuable information and timely warnings. With this in mind, I urge you to listen to Australia's best climate scientists and think of the future we are leaving for our children. Let us not seek who to blame, but let us take responsibility, now, and make the changes that are so absolutely necessary.

Please, think of the image we are presenting to the world. If the rest of the world followed the Rudd Government's weak and pitiful targets to cut greenhouse pollution by just 5-15% by 2020, we would face catastrophic and irreversible Climate Change – with more deadly bushfires¹, costly floods and horrific cyclones. If we say to the world that “this is enough”, then what we are showing is a complete lack of respect to our own beautiful country.

Australia needs to champion an effective global agreement if we are to avoid devastating effects on our precious environment and hence, our fragile economy. We need to set a strong climate change policy before the crucial Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December.

This is the best – and possibly the last – chance the world will have to solve the climate crisis.

There is no more time for treading lightly around the issue, no more time for thinking it over, no more time for beauracratc time wasting. We must act now, with strength and conviction – the evidence is there, the research is there and the Australian public is willing and ready. We simply ask that you lead us, as you are in the position to do.

Australia needs to lead by example and increase its weak 2020 target to at least 30%, moving to 40% in the context of a global agreement. Delay now and we will not get another chance; it is time.

It is my request that your committee recommend policies that make strong cuts in Australia's carbon pollution; make Australia an energy smart country and drive investment in renewable energy to make it cheaper and more accesible to the public and industry alike. The time for unsustainable and narrow minded coal power is over – we must move forward.

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Strong action on climate change will create millions of new “Green Collar” jobs, not destroy them as the big polluters would claim.² Our consciousness must be focussed on new ideas for the future, not relying on old habits of the past.

In 2007, Australia voted for strong action on Climate Change. Now, in 2009, I urge you to use your important role to recommend Australia makes a response to the climate crisis that future generations will thank us for.

Please do take my submission, plus those of others, into consideration, and do what is right for our country, our world and our future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samantha Patterson', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Samantha Patterson

¹ A joint CSIRO/Bureau of Meteorology study of the impact of climate change in bushfires found parts of Victoria faced up to 65% more days of extreme fire risk by 2020 and 230% more by mid-century.

² According to CSIRO economic modeling, 2.7 million new jobs will be created in Australia by 2025 if we set course to become carbon neutral by 2050.