

Media Release

Sunday, March 8

Back to the drawing board!

Environment and community groups unite to call on the PM to send the CPRS back for urgent redesign



This morning, 26 environmental, aid, development and community organisations released an open letter to the Prime Minister, urging him send the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) 'back to the drawing board' for urgent redesign.

Organisations signing on include community groups, as well as Greenpeace Australia Pacific, the Australian Conservation Foundation, World Vision Australia and Oxfam Australia. The letter was facilitated by the peak non-government body on climate change, Climate Action Network Australia.

“There is an urgent need to respond to climate change here in Australia”, said John Hepburn, Climate Change Team Leader of Greenpeace Australia Pacific. “But the Government's proposed CPRS in its current form is flawed, ineffective and counterproductive”.

The open letter expresses deep concern at the Australian Government’s proposed 5 – 15% emissions reduction target range for 2020.

“The adoption of such a low 2020 target by Australia will seriously weaken the prospect of a strong global agreement in Copenhagen in December” said Tony Mohr, Climate Change Manager of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Next Tuesday, March 10, the Government will release its draft legislation to implement the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. However, the 24 environmental, development and community organisations say that the proposed scheme is significantly flawed.

“The flaws in the proposed CPRS include the excessive compensation that will be provided to the biggest polluters” said Jane Holden, Executive Director Climate Action Network Australia. “Another flaw is that, by including a price cap, the proposed scheme places an artificial limit on the cost of pollution”.

The complete letter and list of organisations that endorsed the letter can be viewed on the following page.

Contacts

- Climate Action Network Australia: Jane Holden, Executive Director, 0407 227 633
- Greenpeace Australia Pacific: John Hepburn, Climate Change Team Leader 0407 231 172
- Australian Conservation Foundation: Tony Mohr, Climate Change Manager 0408 806 206

An open letter to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

March 8, 2009

Dear Prime Minister Rudd,

We, the undersigned, representing over 26 NGOs and community organisations, urge you to intervene and send the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) back to the drawing board for urgent redesign.

We strongly support the rapid introduction of an effective scheme which is based on the polluter pays principle, will deliver the emissions cuts necessary to avoid catastrophic climate change, will provide long term economic security for Australia and will send a signal to the rest of the world that Australia is ready to show the leadership needed to reach a global agreement in Copenhagen.

However, there are significant and fundamental problems with the CPRS in its current form which prevent it from achieving this.

We are deeply concerned about the Australian Government's proposed 5 – 15 per cent emissions reduction target range for 2020. The adoption of such a low 2020 target by Australia will seriously weaken the prospect of a strong global agreement in Copenhagen in December. If adopted globally, this target would not avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

We note that in 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicated that developed countries, as a group, need to reduce their emissions by between 25 per cent and 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020 to help keep global greenhouse gas concentrations below 450ppm.

Leading climate scientists have recently indicated that the rate of emissions has increased in the past decade and cuts need to be deeper and faster if we are to avert catastrophic climate change and save areas such as the Great Barrier Reef and the Murray-Darling from permanent devastation.

There are significant design flaws in the CPRS which must be addressed, including:

- Providing compensation to the biggest polluters which is excessive and grows rather than shrinks over time. Requiring big polluters to pay their fair share would mean that auctioning revenue can be directed to building for the future including assisting developing countries adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change;
- Creating emissions permits as property rights and undertaking to pay big polluters for five years if a decision is needed to cut emissions more quickly than anticipated. This could require massive public payments;
- The inclusion of a price cap which places an artificial limit on the cost of pollution;
- Allowing unlimited trading of permits on the international market. This means that all emissions reductions can be outsourced to other countries, allowing business as usual in

Australia;

- Setting a limit on emissions reductions so that any voluntary action to cut emissions will simply free up permits and allow heavy industry to keep on polluting.

The proposed CPRS locks in failure for the next ten years. Half measures are not enough. The costs of inaction will be greater than the costs of action. We urge you to put the interests of current and future generations of Australians ahead of the interests of big polluters, and mandate strong emissions reductions now.

Signed:

- Australian Conservation Foundation
- World Vision
- Greenpeace Australia Pacific
- Climate Action Network Australia
- Oxfam Australia
- Environment Victoria
- National Parks Association of NSW
- Rising Tide
- Conservation Council of South Australia
- NSW Nature Conservation Council
- Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
- OzGreen
- Climate Change Balmain Rozelle
- Locals Into Victoria's Environment
- Moreland Climate Group
- North Shore Climate Action
- C4 Healesville
- Upper Yarra & Dandenongs Environment Council
- Women's Environment Network Australia
- Tarrangower Branch Mount Alexander Sustainability Group
- Dandenong Ranges Renewable Energy Association
- Ballina Climate Action Network
- Broadwater Community Dunecare group
- Epping Beecroft CAG
- Earthsharing Australia
- Greenleap Strategic Institute

About the Climate Action Network Australia

Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) is the peak non-government body working on climate change in Australia, and works as an alliance of 66 non-government organisations concerned about global warming from diverse sectors. These member organisations represent the faith, community, development and environmental movements, as well as the research community. CANA, in turn, belongs to the global Climate Action Network (CAN) which has representative groups in more than 80 nations, in every continent.

As the first comprehensive non-government voice on climate change in Australia, CANA has been working since 1998 to increase the understanding of climate change, and to encourage governments, businesses and individuals to undertake actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and their climate change impacts. For further information, visit www.cana.net.au. CANA's member organisations include:

Environment and Climate Organisations (international)

- [Climate Action Network - Global](#)
- [Friends of the Earth](#)
- [Greenpeace Australia Pacific](#)
- [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#)
- [WWF - Australia](#)

Environment Organisations (national)

- [Australian Conservation Foundation](#)
- [Australian Marine Conservation Society](#)
- [Australian Student Environment Network](#)
- [The Climate Institute](#) (Assoc. Member)
- [The Wilderness Society](#)

Environment, Human Rights and Youth Organisations

- [The Australia Institute](#)
- [Australian Youth Climate Coalition](#)
- [GetUp!](#)
- [Mineral Policy Institute](#)

Aid and Development Organisations

- [Aidwatch](#)
- [Caritas Australia](#)
- [Jubilee Australia](#)
- [Oxfam Australia](#)
- [Tear Australia](#)
- [World Vision Australia](#)

Faith-based Organisations

- [Australian Religious Response to Climate Change](#)
- [Catholic Earthcare Australia](#)
- [Edmund Rice Centre](#)
- [Sisters of the Good Samaritan](#)
- [Sisters of Mercy - Earth Link](#)
- [Social Action Office](#)
- [Uniting Church, The Justice and International Mission](#)
- [UnitingJustice Australia](#)

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organisations

- [Australian & New Zealand Solar Energy Society](#)
- [Moreland Energy Foundation](#)
- [Urban Ecology Australia](#)

Legal and Research Organisations

- Climate change research cluster, School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University
- [Environmental Defender's Office New South Wales \(Ltd\)](#) (Assoc. Member)
- [Institute of Environmental Studies, University of NSW](#)
- [Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney](#) (Assoc. Member)

Environment Organisations (state-based)

- [Cairns and Far North Environment Centre](#)
- [Conservation Council of South Australia](#)
- [Conservation Council of the ACT and Region](#)
- [Conservation Council of Western Australia](#)
- [Environment Centre of the Northern Territory](#)
- [Environment Tasmania](#)
- [Environment Victoria](#)
- [National Parks Association of NSW](#)
- [Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales](#)
- [Sustainable Living Tasmania](#)
- [Total Environment Centre](#)

Environment Organisations (regional)

- [Arid Lands Environment Centre](#)
- [Central West Environment Council](#)
- [Environment East Gippsland](#)
- [North Coast Environment Council](#)
- [Sunshine Coast Environment Council](#)

Environment and Climate Organisations (grassroots)

- [Association for Berowra Creek](#)
- [Bathurst Climate Action Network](#)
- [Climate Action Coogee](#)
- [Climate Action Newcastle](#)
- [Climate Action Newtown](#)
- [Climate Action Pittwater](#)
- [Climate Action Tomaree](#)
- [Climate Action Now Wingecarribee](#)
- [Climate Change Australia](#)
- [Climate Change Balmain Rozelle](#)
- [Climate Emergency Network](#)
- [Orange Climate Action Now](#)
- [ParraCAN \(Parramatta Climate Action Network\)](#)
- [Rising Tide Newcastle](#)
- [Wollongong Climate Action Network](#)

[Climate Action Network Australia](#)



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