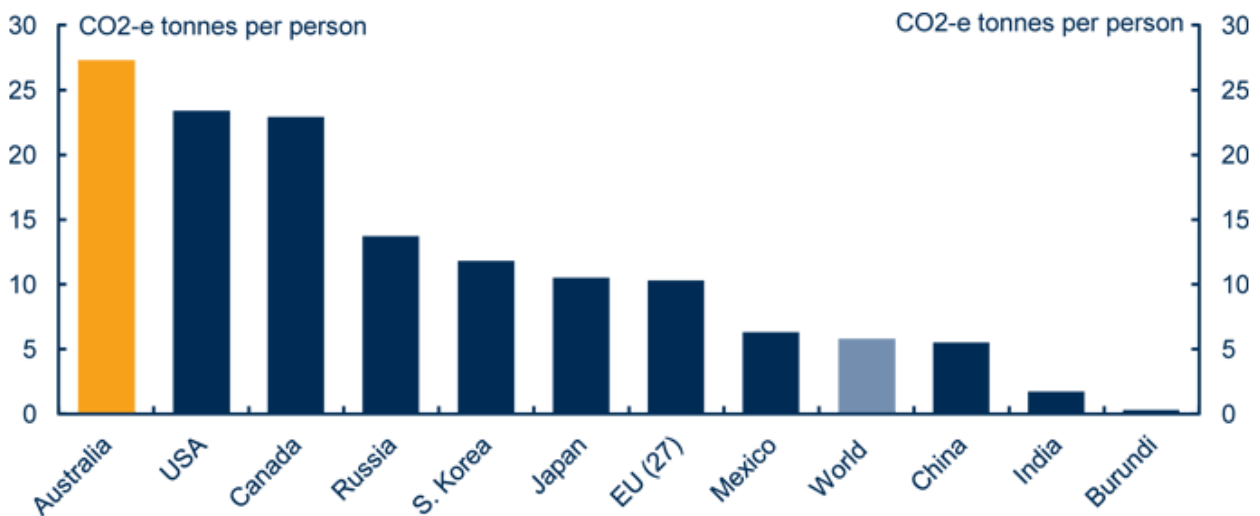




Climate Change Authority
Canberra
ACT 2600

29 November 2013

Submission on Targets and Progress Review



Global emissions per capita (Australian Government Budget papers 2011-12)

Queensland Conservation (QCC) welcomes the Climate Change Authority call for increased efforts to avert dangerous climate change through increasing Australia's current greenhouse gas reduction target. We agree that Australia is now falling behind on equitably addressing dangerous climate change, despite being one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of a changing climate.

We believe that Australia should move to a *minimum* 25% target by 2020.

QCC believes that the Climate Change Authority is correct. **Climate change is unequivocal** and that the human influence on the climate system is clear. If Australia is

to take this science and the below two degrees goal seriously, it needs to act now and continue this effort long-term.

We believe that a carbon budget approach is an appropriate and effective method of calculating and equitably distributing responsibility for carbon emissions and reduction targets. This must be based upon limiting warming to no more than a 1.5 degrees rise above pre-industrial levels. This is the level estimated by scientists as a safe level that will limit the extent of climate changes.

The conditions set for upgrading Australia's target have been met. Given the scale and pace of international, action should now be about pursuing a stronger target. As a nation particularly vulnerable to climate changes it is the only responsible course of action - **to take a leadership position on global emission reductions.**



Our State, Queensland, is particularly vulnerable and we have witnessed, and been badly affected by, extreme weather conditions in recent years. Climate change will mean an increase in such events. Failing to act to reduce emissions and encourage others to follow suit, simply condemns future generations to more extreme and difficult circumstances. The environment and our precious wildlife cannot adapt to these projected changes and need our intervention to protect and build far greater resilience to the impacts already locked in.

Australia as a country most effected by ozone depletion 20 years ago, took a leadership position in negotiations under the Montreal Protocol. This approach led to a successful outcome to reduce the use of chemicals such as CFC's. Australia should be pursuing a similar approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We note that according to the Climate Change Authority that ninety nine countries are acting on their emissions. These including Australia's major trading partners. They cover over 80% of global emissions and 90% of global economic output. Australia's 5% emission target reduction is now at the lower end of effort compared to other countries.

Whilst the Climate Change Authority considers that a minimum 15% by 2020 target would be consistent with meeting our equitable share, it also points that a 25% target would make a greater short term contribution and more equitable pace for an emissions reduction trajectory. We should not be passing on to our children a more difficult trajectory and expect them to fix up our failures.

A minimum 25% target by 2020 is a sensible approach. It encourages global efforts at emission reductions AND assists the Australian economy to transition to a new low emission future.

A country such as Germany has been very active in emission reductions and has now achieved a 20% emission reduction target (based on 1990 levels). As a result, German industry is more energy efficient and new industries, particularly in the renewables sector, are world-leading and employ considerable numbers of people. It is estimated that the renewables industry employs over 500,000 people in Germany.



Crisis has two meanings; problem and opportunity. **Emission reductions and positive climate action should be considered as an opportunity to build a new economy and future.**

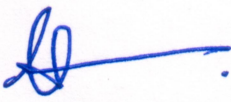
The Climate Change Authority have stated,

‘The Authority’s analysis shows that Australia can achieve a 15 or 25 per cent reduction target while national income and the economy continue to grow.’

The social, economic and jobs benefit of ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets are clear. They drive a modern and forward thinking nation. Emission reductions are significant for both the development of new industries and job growth for the future. They are an essential contribution to ensuring a safe and healthy environment.

QCC supports an independent body such as the Climate Change Authority having a role in shaping climate policy and monitoring progress on emission reductions.

We commend the Climate Change Authority for their report and urge the Commonwealth to take action by increasing Australia's emission reduction target.



Toby Hutcheon
Executive Director



QCC's Walk against Warming attracted over 10,000 people in Brisbane

Queensland Conservation is the 'peak' community environment organisation in Queensland. We represent over 50 community-based conservation, environment and sustainability organisations. They include:

The Wilderness Society, Australian Rainforest Conservation Society, Australian Marine Conservation Society, Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, National Parks Association (Queensland), Friends of the Earth (Brisbane), Cairns and Far North Environment Centre, North Queensland Conservation Council, Mackay Conservation Group, Capricorn Conservation Council, Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council, Sunshine Coast Environment Council, Gold Coast and Hinterland Environment Council (GECKO), Logan and Albert Conservation Association, Fraser Island Defenders Organisation, Householders Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE), Alliance to Save Hinchinbrook (ASH), Gladstone Conservation Council, Birds Queensland, Birds Southern Queensland, Protect our Bush Alliance, Beyond Zero Emissions