

Parramatta Climate Action Network Submission to Energy White Paper

Parramatta Climate Action Network believes that a major overhaul of Australia's existing energy policy is required, as the current policy:

1. Fails to recognise the substantial role that renewable energy can play in reducing Australia's emissions;
2. Fails to map out a clean, renewable energy future for Australia;
3. Fails to drive substantial investment in renewable energy;
4. Fails to promote investor certainty and confidence in renewables; and
5. Fails to encourage our renewable energy experts to remain in Australia.

We note that the Energy White Paper process has tremendous potential to facilitate a 'paradigm shift' in Australia towards 100% renewable energy.

We believe that a dramatic shift in energy policy would enable Australia to deal coherently with the dual threats of climate change and the global financial crisis. In particular, a new renewable energy policy would provide major employment growth opportunities over the next decade and would re-invigorate major infrastructure investments in our energy demand and supply systems as well as our public transportation systems.

This submission outlines xx recommendations to reform energy policy in Australia and facilitate a shift towards 100% renewable energy.

ParraCAN thanks the Energy White Paper Secretariat for taking the time to consider our views in this crucial area.

Recommendations – ParraCAN Calls on the Secretariat to:

1.1 Urgently appoint additional renewable energy experts and renewable energy industry representatives in the areas of solar thermal, solar PV and wind power to the high-level consultative committee. Also appoint a community climate representative NGO such as Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) or Greenpeace.

1.2 Prepare an energy implementation plan, as part of the Energy White Paper, including detailed analysis of a rapid transition timeline for 100% renewables as soon as is possible and no later than 2030.

1.3 Work closely with COAG to facilitate the preparation and implementation of a National Energy Efficiency Strategy within the next 12 months, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

1.4 Exclude native forest 'wood waste' from all definitions of renewable energy, across all energy sector legislation.

1.5 Clearly specify in the Energy White Paper that Nuclear Power will NOT be used as part of the energy mix in Australia.

1.6 Recommend implementation of mechanisms to ensure that costs of new, renewable energy technologies are as cost-neutral as possible to energy consumers.

1.7 Prepare a detailed strategy as part of the Energy White Paper to rapidly phase-down Australia's consumption of oil so that Australians won't have to pay the high price of oil as it becomes scarce and won't be contributing to

Greenhouse Gas emissions as they have clearly enunciated to the Rudd government.

1.8 Mandate that all design, development planning and urban renewal programs take into account proximity to public transportation systems, including walking/cycling paths and park-and-ride facilities.

1.9 Produce a discussion paper for public consultation on options to reform urban public transportation systems in Australia, with the primary goal of facilitating major investment in upgrading and expanding public transportation systems (including electrified rail, bus, cycle ways and footpaths) and increasing public transport usage.

1.10 Produce a discussion paper for public consultation on options to reform interstate and rural public transportation systems in Australia, with the primary goal of facilitating major investment in upgrading and expanding interstate and rural public transportation systems (particularly railways).

1.11 Mandate new fuel efficiency standards for all new motor vehicles, trucks and buses, commencing from 2012 or earlier.

1.12 Implement tax incentives to improve the competitiveness and financial viability of alternative fuel vehicles as well as help to establish a viable market here in Australia.

1.13 Set a mandatory zero emissions vehicle target of at least 5% of our total new car fleet, commencing in 2015. This target should then be doubled every 5 years.

1.14 Cancel the fringe benefits tax concession for company and leased cars.

1.15 Replace prohibitions / deterrents to cycling and walking to secondary and tertiary education facilities with appropriate infrastructure upgrading and education programs.

1.16 Prepare, as part of the Energy White Paper, a detailed national review of existing coal-fired power plants, with a view to preparing comprehensive phase-out plans for each plant over the next ten years. Many of them are old and will have to be closed down soon. When they close down they must be replaced by other energy sources such as geothermal or solar thermal power plants. These can be used as baseload.

1.17 Recommend that any Government assistance to coal-fired generators be conditional upon the ten-year phase-out plan for these generators.

1.18 Recommend that no more power stations be privatised and that where possible state or federal governments buy back power stations so that they can be run with the intention of reducing the coal burning component and implementing thermal solar as an energy source, instead of them having as their goal to make the most amount of money despite environmental consequences.

1.19 Recommend a legislated ban on all new coal-fired power stations in Australia.

1.20 Recommend an urgent moratorium on: 1) new coal exploration and mining; 2) the expansion of existing coal mines; and 3) the expansion of coal infrastructure, so that coal can be phased out as an energy source.

1.21 Recommend that all subsidies, tax incentives and financial support to the fossil fuel industry (including any taxpayer funded plans to expand coal infrastructure) be urgently suspended.

1.22 Recommend that most of the Government funding/support for CCS be redirected into promoting and advancing renewable energy technology, energy efficiency, public transport and land management practices that foster carbon sequestration.

1.23 Recommend MRET and existing State and Territory FIT's be replaced with a Gross National FIT modelled on the German FIT by 1 July 2010 or if the MRET stays it should be increased to 50% by 2010.

1.24 Recommend, as part of the Energy White Paper process, Government funding of at least \$100 million for community renewable energy projects.

1.25 Recommend that residential solar PV rebates not be changed for at least 2 years, unless the changes are to increase and / or improve the rebate such as allowing people who install PV panels on their roofs to pay them off out of their electricity bill over ten years.

1.26 Recommend major investment in an 'intelligent' grid over the next decade, thereby improving energy efficiency and lowering the carbon intensity of the grid.

This submission is based on the submission of the combined submission of the Climate Action Groups. ParraCAN thanks Tracey Tipping and any other individuals who did all the work to put that submission together.