



Carbon Tax

Australian Christians believe we all have a responsibility to care for and manage the environment we share and to mitigate, where feasible, environmental changes and pollution.

Australian Christians supports the view of natural climate change. This may or may not be an impact from CO₂. The fact that there has been a pause in warming for 17 years suggests this claim need further scrutiny. Further, the pre-industrial age “Little Ice Age” and “Medieval Warming” periods indicates that climate and environment have been changing dramatically for millennia. For any conclusive analysis there need to be lot longer period to study the effects of CO₂ on weather patterns.

In summary, we hold that climate does change and catastrophic climate change is part of the historical narrative but carbon taxing in any form cannot be supported when the data and historical records are inconclusive. Australian Christians supports sensible pollution controls that do not unnecessarily and excessively burden businesses and increase the cost of living, especially to the poor.

THE FOLLOWING ARE 10 KEY AIMS WHICH FORM THE BASIS OF OUR LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY.

1. Recognising known pollution harms and adapting sensible and evidence based regulation that helps industry to implement best available technologies and practice in reducing toxins.
2. Land use management which enhances environmentally sustainable and cost effective development.
3. Protecting natural biodiversity and areas of significance that strikes a balance between flourishing economic communities, private property rights and sensible protection of natural resources.
4. Ensuring water and air quality for both human health and the living environment are valued and managed.
5. Managing vegetation and ensuring soil quality for agricultural production and long-term food security that does not harm the soil and food supply.
6. Improving waste management and waste recovery.
7. Protection and enhancement of shoreline, estuarine and riparian zones.
8. Ensuring both economically viable and natural sustainable resource development.
9. Moving towards sustainable and balanced production and consumption that does not require government subsidisation and onerously raises the cost of living.
10. Promoting but without ‘picking winners’ in technologies and initiatives which enhance improved energy and resource use

Energy is crucial to our modern way of life. Abundant, low cost energy meant Australia rose to attain one of the highest standards of living and a competitive manufacturing edge.

Irrespective of global warming, the Carbon Tax was a bad policy. It imposed more pain on every day citizens because energy producers could simply pass on rising costs to individuals and companies. Higher prices mean more economic stress. With profits reduced, jobs are destroyed.

The recent announcement by Prime Minister Tony Abbot to abolish the Carbon Tax with effect from 1 July 2014 was well received by AC. This will lower costs for Australian businesses and ease cost of living pressures for households.[1]

Carbon Tax does not help tackle the problem of climate change. We need better community plans not more taxes. The Environment Department's year-to-September 2013 figures show that overall emissions of greenhouse gases remain more or less unchanged since 2010.[2]

Most importantly, without China, India and other BRICS[3] nations agreeing to substantially reduce carbon emissions, it is simply wasteful and damaging. China and India have made it clear they will not compromise their economic development. Since the collapse of the 2009 Copenhagen conference, all the movement internationally has been away from any form of binding commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The hypocrisy of this tax is also evident in Australia's status as one of the world's largest coal exporters, much to the world's biggest polluters Japan, China and India.[4] Not to mention Australia's double discourse on uranium; denouncing nuclear production, while exporting eleven per cent to the world.

At present, large-scale renewable energy is not a viable option – practically or economically. It requires vast quantities of land, is beset with implementation difficulties.

Expenditure on cutting emissions has blown out to a budget of about \$4 billion a year.[5] Renewable energy receives favourable market treatment through three main sources of public funding: Mandatory renewable energy targets (MRET), carbon tax and tariffs. They are taxpayer subsidies that serve as a support for renewable energy to compete with coal and gas. From a purely economic perspective, renewables cannot compete with coal and hydrocarbons. The difference in generating costs makes them highly expensive and uncompetitive. Government reports clearly state that without subsidies, permits and carbon tax, renewable energy cannot survive. [6]

The world has more important priorities other than the likelihood of global warming, including pressing environmental issues: overfishing, irrigation, soil degradation, sea pollution, forestation, urbanization, poverty cycles and many more.

The energy market should compete in the real price market in an environment of limited regulation that does not seek to pick winners through disproportionate subsidisation.

All sources of energy should compete on the basis of price, quality and social factors (including environmental impact).

Energy environmental impacts should be conducted through a non-governmental scientific body without concern for censure or consensus.

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More detail can be found here:

[1] <http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/repealing-carbon-tax>

[2] The Clean Energy Regulator puts the 2012-13 emissions reductions at 0.1% with carbon taxes raising \$7.6 billion.

[3] BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

[4] <http://www.australiancoal.com.au/facts-and-figures.html>

[5] Alan Moran, The Australian, "Terminate the renewable scheme now". 14th Nov, 2013.

[6] www.dps.sa.gov.au Also see: "Intergration of renewable energy sources into the electricity market", Jovana Jovovic, pg. 5.