“The One Legged Stool”.

A Submission from:

The Carbon Sense Coalition
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in response to the Government Green Paper on
The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.
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Submitted to the Department of Climate Change at:
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The Green Paper states that the Government's climate change strategy is based on three pillars:

- Reducing Australia’s greenhouse emissions.
- Adapting to climate change that we cannot avoid.
- Helping to shape a global solution.

It should thus be judged on the soundness of these three legs.
Pillar Number 1 – Reducing Greenhouse Emissions.
Questions: Can we control global temperature by reducing man-made carbon emissions? Are we in danger if we do not?

This is a question of science and evidence, but the following observations are relevant:

1. The warming ability of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere is limited and, at its current level, is almost exhausted. Even a doubling of (CO₂) in the atmosphere would have an imperceptible effect on global temperature.


2. The current trend of global warming started well before man began burning large quantities of oil and coal. Earth’s climate has warmed dramatically since the last ice age ended about 11,500 years ago. Man had nothing to do with the warming.


3. There have been several eras within historical times in which global temperatures have been higher than now, the most recent ones being the Egyptian Warm period (3,300 years ago), the Roman Warm Period (2,100 years ago) and the Medieval Warm Period (1,000 years ago). There is no evidence to suggest that man’s activities since the industrial revolution have affected global temperature trends.


4. The record of the twentieth century provides no evidence to support the view that CO₂ drives global temperature. During the Great Depression, when man’s emissions of CO₂ were cut dramatically, temperatures rose. Then during the post war boom, when CO₂ emissions rose strongly, temperatures fell. Newspapers of the day predicted the start of a new Ice Age. (Ref. Newsweek, 28th April 1975, “The Cooling World”). And in the decade ending 2008, while emissions rose strongly with the booms in Asia, temperatures have been level and now appear to be falling. Correlation between emissions and temperature does not prove that emissions control temperature. However LACK of correlation does prove that emissions are not important in causing temperature changes.


5. A close study of past trends in CO₂ content of the atmosphere shows that temperature rises usually precede rises in the level of CO₂. This is not surprising as the oceans are the big store-house and stabiliser of CO₂. Oceans emit CO₂ as they warm and absorb CO₂ as they cool.


   “Carbon Dioxide causes warming like wet roads cause rain.”
6. If carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was a significant cause of global warming, there should be evidence of a “hot spot” in the upper atmosphere. There is no evidence of such a hot spot. And despite the expenditure of over US$50 billion on climate “research” in recent years, no credible evidence of a human cause of global warming has emerged. (This is despite the fact that much of this money was spent by protagonists aiming to find such “proof” or building models which assume a human driver and are then tinkered to reproduce the past climate.).

7. The IPCC is frequently quoted as evidence that we risk a global warming crisis if we do not reduce man-made emissions of CO₂. However, the IPCC has produced no independent evidence to support their opinion, and a very large and growing number of scientists and informed observers reject their assertions. The only basis for the IPCC claims are a number of complex computerised Global Circulation Models which do not agree with one another and have never successfully forecast global temperature even a few years ahead, let alone the 50 or more years quoted in various government scare stories.

8. In papers presented by Garnaut and Wong, we are warned in dire terms that climate change threatens the Great Barrier Reef. Climate change has always affected coral reefs, but corals are tough little critters that have existed for hundreds of millions of years – the Devonian era (500 million years ago) is often referred to as “The Age of Corals”. Individual reefs may die but the coral species is not fragile – it is remarkably adapted to coping with climate change – if the oceans heat up, corals move towards the Pole, leaving their dead reefs behind; when the ocean cools down again, corals move towards the equator, leaving their houses behind; if sea level rises, corals build up their reefs; if sea levels fall, corals move out to sea and start a new reef. Coral atolls are built from island fringing reefs that got drowned as sea levels rose – the land is now far below the water. Coral cays are built of sand and dead coral eroded from reefs that were exposed as sea levels fell. Corals cope better with rising sea levels and shallow warm seas – they move into the new shallow water. They have more difficulty if, during ice ages, sea levels fall and oceans retreat to deep water off the continental shelf. Thus, like humans, corals thrive best in the warm periods, and have more trouble with Ice Ages and shrinking seas.

9. “Extinction of species” is given as yet another urgent reason for action to curb carbon emissions. Life on earth is not a still life – it is a moving picture. Species are always replacing other species as climate changes. 99% of all species that ever lived on earth are now extinct, and man had nothing to do with killing off most of them. Like weeds in the garden, vigorous new species are always colonising new environments and threatening existing species. Those that survive the encounter are stronger for it.
10. We are also warned that rising sea levels will destroy sea-front real estate. Sea levels are always rising and falling, and there is nothing man can do about it except adapt. The sea has swallowed land and later retreated from the land many times in the past. And man has always learned to cope with the changes. If sea levels rose, he moved to the hills, built dykes, migrated, or took to the sea in boats. Since the last glacial maximum, 20,000 years ago, sea levels have risen by about 130 metres. The Great Barrier Reef is a recent addition to our tourism assets – where trees, pastures and giant kangaroos once roamed, sea grass and corals now rule. Sydney Harbour is a drowned Valley and salinity and dugongs have invaded our coastal land in a big way. Land animals adapted by migration.

However, before we panic about losing sea front land, there is no evidence of unusual rising of sea levels. Moreover, an examination of long term temperature cycles suggests that lower temperatures and lower sea levels are more likely from here. Those blocks of sea front real estate may yet turn into inland hobby farms.

11. We are also warned that unless we mend our carbon consuming ways, droughts will become more extensive and worse. Again no evidence is presented for this statement, except . . . . yet more models. Logic however, is again against the models. Warm periods always result in more evaporation from oceans and lakes. More clouds must form, and more moisture must be precipitated somewhere. The pattern of rainfall may change, but warm periods will also be wetter periods. At the poles, the moisture content of the atmosphere is extremely low and thus precipitation there must be low. What we have to fear are the cold, dry periods.

Droughts are a regular feature of our continuously changing climate. Droughts plagued biblical times, caused worries to the Pharaohs, blighted the new Commonwealth with the Federation Drought and caused the American dust bowls of the 1930’s and revisited Australia at the Millennium. Warmth, if it occurs, may at least bring storms - what we need to fear most is cold and drought.


12. The real scare mongers among the Warmist fraternity tell us that unless we act INSTANTLY and DECISIVELY the world will reach a “tipping point”, and go into irreversible warming. Again they produce no evidence to support this, but logic opposes it. We have had periods in the past where both CO$_2$ and temperature were above current levels, but we did not go into irreversible warming. In fact, the past suggests that the reverse may be true – every now and then, and probably in response to cycles in the solar system, the earth tips quickly into severe and life destroying cold. But neither heat nor cold remain forever – there is a stabiliser in the universe that brings earth climate back from extreme positions. If there was a tendency for world climate to “Tip” because of rising temperature or rising CO$_2$ levels, we would have tipped long ago.
13. The Green Paper is seriously and incompetently unbalanced in its presentation. Everywhere we are presented with opinions (stated as facts) that global warming if it occurred would be a terrible thing for mankind. In every climate change, there will be winners and losers, especially in a large island like Australia, stretching from cold wet Tasmania to the hot tropics and the inland deserts. Plants flourish with more warmth and more moisture. Global warming is likely to produce more bountiful harvests and increase the growing season everywhere, especially if the CO$_2$ content of the atmosphere continues to rise as a result of warming seas. The warm eras of the past are called Golden Ages, whereas the cold periods are known as the Dark Ages or the Hungry Years.

14. We are left with the impression that increased CO$_2$ in the atmosphere would be an unmitigated disaster. And the nasty word “pollution” is deliberately and mischievously linked with “carbon dioxide”. There is no evidence to support this slander-by-association. In fact the evidence shows that doubling of CO$_2$ content in the atmosphere would cause substantial increase in plant growth, plants would be better able to cope with heat, cold or drought, and food production from land and oceans could be increased. There is no attempt by the Green Paper to balance these benefits against the huge cost of Emissions Taxes and controls.

15. We are told that the government will aim for “fiscal neutrality”. By some sort of loaves and fishes trick, governments will levy carbon taxes on everyone via emissions taxes on electricity, petroleum, cement etc; take a hefty administrative commission for collecting, auditing and controlling the new industry; subsidise a claque of alternative energy pseudo-industries; and still claim to be able to fully reimburse all groups affected by the taxes. Even if this were possible (which it is not) what is achieved? The whole idea of a carbon tax is to push up the costs of all carbon emitting industries so that users feel the pain and reduce their consumption of emission producers such as electricity, food, petroleum products, steel and cement. If everyone is exempted, compensated or subsidised, nothing is achieved except the growth of a huge unproductive overhead producing nothing of real value to anyone.

16. Finally, the figures do not compute. The Carbon Plan envisages aiming to achieve emissions which are significant cuts (anything from 10% to 80%) from the level of some past base year (usually 1990) by some future date, with no allowance for population growth, or for increases in the standard of living. A bit of simple maths will show that this must result in a dramatic fall in Emissions (and standard of living) per head of a growing population. Even the moderated Garnaut plan is a guaranteed plan for poverty. With governments promising a future like that, it is no wonder our kids are becoming depressed.

Conclusion: This analysis suggests strongly that Climate Change is inevitable, uncontrollable and largely unpredictable. It shows that the scare stories and “forecasts” have no credible basis. Therefore there is nothing the government can or should do to control future climate. It also suggests that the whole emissions trading scheme will not achieve the planned cuts in emissions, but will merely become an additional tax burden in the guise of an “Emissions Tax”. This would swiftly become more costly, more discriminatory and more pervasive than the GST.

Therefore this First Pillar of the Green Paper is rotten and should be destroyed. Australia should NOT introduce a carbon Emissions Trading Scheme, nor should the government encourage any other countries to commit economic suicide for no purpose.
**Pillar Number 2: Adapting to Climate Change.**

Question: Is “Adapting” a feasible strategy, and what can government do to assist us to adapt?

The past record shows that climate and temperature are always changing.

Every person alive today is the descendant of a long line of survivors who have adapted to climate shocks, droughts, bush fires, floods, storms, sea level changes and Ice Ages. And since the discovery of fire, every generation of humans has increased its chances of survival by using a greater range of carbon food and carbon energy. This generation is even more dependent on carbon, and any attempt to forcibly restrict our access to and use of carbon products reduces our chances of adapting to climate change.

A glance at the news reports of any natural disaster shows that rich people are best able to cope with climate change and only rich societies can help poorer ones in times of crisis.

No one (not even the IPCC or Professor Garnaut) is yet capable of forecasting what Climate Change we will be challenged with. So the government should not try to pick any winning strategies, or mandate or subsidise any favoured technologies. They should maximise the freedom for people to innovate, to save, to invest, and to build facilities and accumulate useful equipment. All of these assets will help us to cope with climate change no matter whether we are forced to cope with floods, droughts, fires, tsunamis, snowstorms, ice ages or heat waves.

This leg of the Three Pillars thus could be made sound, providing the government reduces all taxes and allows the magic discovery tool of the free market to find smart and low cost solutions to whatever problems the climate throws up.
**Pillar Number 3: Helping to Shape a Global Solution.**

Questions: Is there a Climate Problem which requires a global government solution? Is there any chance of achieving a global agreement that does not heavily discriminate against Australia?

It is arrogant and fatuous to believe that the human race, even acting in concert, can influence global temperatures.

It is also clear there is absolutely no chance that an even-handed global agreement on curbing CO₂ emissions can be reached.

Any fair system with a chance of success should penalise equally every tonne of GHG released by human activity to the atmosphere. There is zero chance of this occurring. India, China, Russia and most of Africa and South America will only agree to extract benefits from any global scheme – they have no intention of causing any harm to their own economies. Russia has already taken billions out of the gullible west in carbon offsets, and India, China and others hope to emulate them. The only global agreement they would accept is one that aims to equalise carbon emissions per capita. Australians and Americans are unlikely to agree to be forcibly reduced to the life style and emissions levels of the average resident of India or China.

Garnaut and the Green paper stress the need for Australia to provide international leadership in leading the lemmings to greenhouse suicide. However they warn about the problem of “free riders” – these are more sensible countries who refuse to saddle their industries and companies with carbon taxes and who will thus benefit when Australian companies relocate there. Such countries are already taking industry and businesses from Australian because of their lower labour, tax and regulatory costs. Why would giving them an additional carbon cost benefit induce them to change their very profitable ways? There are no benefits in being a leader in this race towards economic oblivion.

Therefore the Third Leg of the Green Paper policy on Climate Change is also rotten and should be removed.

This leaves the Green Paper with only one leg:

**“Adapt to Climate Change that we cannot avoid”**.

The Carbon Sense Coalition strongly supports this Pillar of the policy.

This also means we believe there should be:

- No Emissions Trading Scheme, no compulsory reporting of CO₂, no compliance industry.
- No subsidies or mandated shares for alternate energy systems.
- No special carbon taxes.
- No premature assumptions on what we need to prepare for. Let every person decide what risks he is prepared to take regarding future climate. At least some of them will prove to be right – if the government decides on everyone’s behalf, we may all end up fully prepared for heat waves as the snow begins to fall.
But What about Energy Conservation and Reduction of Pollution?

Nothing said above should be taken to mean that the Carbon Sense Coalition opposes conservation of energy resources. There is probably universal agreement with the idea that conservation of any natural resource is a worthwhile and laudable goal. The real question is how best to do it.

There are only two ways to ration or conserve resources:

- Using price signals (as in the world oil and coal markets)
- Using queues (as in the hospital system) or ration cards

The market for oil, gas, coal and iron ore has already signalled that supply was unable to meet demand at previous prices, so prices rose. This immediately encouraged new supply, encouraged substitutes, and discouraged consumption and waste of the resource. The quickest cure for shortages is high prices.

(Perversely, however, while governments make big noises about energy conservation, they are striving mightily to reduce petrol prices! Watch what they do, not what they say.)

Queues and ration cards have been an abject failure wherever they were tried. The problems are:

- There is no encouragement to develop new supply or alternative products because the price is usually fixed.
- Both buyers are sellers are tempted to cheat. No one gets any product unless they pay more under the table.
- There is no reduction in demand; everyone focuses on getting extra ration cards or beating the system on the Black Market.

Some people advocate that we lock resources away in Government reserved areas. This creates big future problems. Which generation or nation will get to use the conserved resource? They become more valuable as the years go by - a magnet for the hungry and the avaricious, and a threat to future national security and sovereignty.

Carbon Sense supports the principle of allowing market prices to ration and conserve scarce natural resources.

Similarly, Carbon Sense supports measures to prevent or reduce harmful pollution of the atmosphere, the oceans and the soil. But trying to classify a harmless, non-polluting and beneficial gas like CO$_2$ as a pollutant just gives the whole EPA process a bad name. No one should be allowed to pollute without incurring penalties. But such control should focus on real, harmful or annoying pollutants, not a harmless atmospheric gas such as carbon dioxide which is present in every breath we take and which provides the bubbles in our beer, the holes in our bread, and which feeds every green plant in the world.
Our recommendations are clear and unambiguous:

1. **Abandon attempts to get global or national support for an Emissions Trading Scheme or any other carbon emissions reduction strategy.**

2. **Do not introduce ETS by stealth, by legislating for the whole reporting and compliance structure but with so many tax exemptions and compensations that most people do not notice the change. Once it is in place, and no matter what is promised, the Emissions Tax burden will rise, no matter what the Climate does.**

3. **Accept “adapting to climate change” as the sole leg of Australia’s Climate Policy.**

4. **Support policies that allow markets to ration scarce resources.**

5. **Apply policies that impose costs and deterrents on real polluters.**

The Carbon Sense Coalition is happy to appear before the Minister or the Department of Climate Change or to answer questions posed by this submission.

We do not seek confidentiality for this submission.

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This submission was prepared by individual members of the Carbon Sense Coalition on their own initiative with no inducements or policy directions from any other groups.

Disclosure of Vested Interests: The chief author of this paper, Viv Forbes, and the members of the Carbon Sense Coalition, have a big vested interest in this debate. Many of them (like most governments) earn income from the carbon fuels (coal, oil and gas), or rely on industries that will be greatly harmed by anti-carbon legislation such as cement, minerals processing, steel, transport, power generation, farming and tourism. They will also pay the increased costs caused by featherbedding of energy playthings like most of the renewables. They believe strongly that government is not competent to be trusted with total power to dictate the future of the electricity market. Some of them even invest or work in the uranium industry which will benefit greatly from all this demonization of carbon. Finally, they have kids and grandkids and have a vested interest in lifting the shadow of gloom and despair being spread over their lives by the Climate Scare Mongers.