

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

Media Release

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Garnaut plan disappointing for developing countries

If the Rudd Government accepts Professor Ross Garnaut's climate change advice Australia will fall behind much of the developed world in greenhouse gas reduction, the Make Poverty History coalition said today.

"Using Garnaut's 550 ppm pathway, by 2020 the average Australian would still emit nearly twice as much as the average Chinese person, and roughly eight times as much as the average Indian," Make Poverty History co-chair Andrew Hewett said.

Mr Hewett said 10 per cent cuts by 2020 (on 2000 levels) would further the devastating impact on our developing country neighbours, including nations such as Tuvalu and Kiribati that face the prospect of disappearing completely under rising sea levels.

"Professor Garnaut also talks about steeper targets for Australia by 2050. This kind of trajectory for Australia is dangerous – it delays action to reduce emissions until it may be too late, it will make further action more difficult, and it pushes the need for action on to our children," he said.

Mr Hewett said despite arguments to the contrary from Professor Garnaut, reduced emissions were not incompatible with population growth.

He said other countries had reduced emissions whilst increasing population. In the UK between 1990 and 2002, CO2 emissions dropped 6.2 per cent whilst population grew by 3 per cent; in Germany emissions dropped 13 per cent whilst population grew by 3.9 per cent.

"Australia, as one of the highest per capita polluters in the world, has a responsibility to take urgent action on climate change and make deep emissions cuts," Mr Hewett said.

"If we do not, as Garnaut said at the launch of his earlier report, Australia faces geo-political and economic risk, as our developing country neighbour problems will become our own."

Make Poverty History wants the Australian Government to:

- Cut Australia's greenhouse pollution by at least 40 per cent by 2020 and 95 per cent by 2050 (on 1990 levels)
- Contribute Australia's fair share of funds to provide adaptation programs in developing countries – from helping communities prepare for disasters to building more resilient, cyclone-resistant housing
- Help developing countries access renewable energy technologies
- Take a leading role in negotiations to find an equitable international agreement on climate change

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