

Wong Releases CPRS Draft Legislation

The Minister for Climate Change, Penny Wong, released exposure draft legislation for the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) at the beginning of March.

The legislation follows the release of the Green and White papers last year. It sets out what is required of participants in the CPRS and the mechanics of the CPRS. The government is seeking submissions from interested parties by 14 April 2009.

“Through an unprecedented investment in energy efficiency, a fourfold expansion in renewable energy, and the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, the Rudd Government is getting on with the job of tackling climate change”, Wong said.

“This is all about creating the jobs of the future. The CPRS is a whole-of-economy reform that will, for the first time, put a price on carbon and encourage investment in new, low-pollution technologies.”

The Greens, however, have criticised the Bill.



Climate Change Minister Penny Wong

“The emissions reduction targets that would be enshrined in the objects of this Bill are patently inadequate and would see Australia holding back the global effort to prevent climate catastrophe”, said Greens Deputy Leader Christine Milne.

“Five-15% reductions by 2020 are nowhere near the 40% reductions that are necessary from one of the world’s biggest polluters on any measure. The 60% 2050 target is many years out of date and has been long ago overtaken by the science, which now calls for net zero emissions by mid-century.”

Clean Energy Council CEO Matthew Warren said the release of the legislation highlights the importance of setting effective renewable energy targets.

“This is a marathon, not a sprint. Developing a national trading scheme ahead of a global framework is clearly challenging and may have significant consequences for emissions and the economy”, Warren said.

“We should be realistic about the scale and complexity of the challenge at hand and stop pretending that there is a simple and perfect scheme that is easily deployed and ready to go. We expect to be debating the details of domestic and global emissions trading scheme design for at least the next decade. But we can, and should, start saving energy and increase the take-up of clean technologies today.” ■