



## TREASURER

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19 JUN 2008

Professor David Shearman and Dr Bill Castleden  
Honorary Secretary and Chairman  
Doctors for the Environment Australia  
2 Reynolds Drive  
CRAFERS SA 5152

Dear Professor Shearman and Dr Castleden

Thank you for your letter of 29 March 2008 concerning the impact of climate change on human health. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

I share your concerns about climate change and welcome your commitment to addressing environment and health issues in Australia.

In your letter you request information about what I am doing personally to address climate change. The role I played in helping to preserve the RAMSAR protected Boondall wetlands, the lungs of Brisbane, is one of my proudest achievements as a local member. I have fought hard to protect my local community's other precious environmental treasures like Moreton Bay and numerous creeks and waterways.

I also have a strong relationship with a number of local environmental groups, including the Brisbane North Climate Change and Action Group whom I have met and spoken with on environmental issues many times. This group also met with the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP when he visited my electorate towards the end of last year.

My electorate office is in the process of an energy audit and currently follows the best and most appropriate actions to conserve energy. I support the Rudd Government's objective to power Parliament House and all MP electorate offices with renewable and clean energy.

My electorate office also displays and produces a large amount of information about different climate change initiatives in order to help educate local people about Government action on climate change and how they can do their part.

The hot water system and oven in my family home are powered by natural gas and I have also recently installed a 10,000 litre water tank in my home.

As I mentioned in my speech at the Finance Minister's meeting in Bali, climate change is more than an environmental challenge — it is an important and pressing economic challenge as well. Indeed, climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing Australia and the world. The science is compelling, and we need to address the impacts of climate change across the nation. The Government is committed to showing global leadership, which began by ratifying the Kyoto Protocol as the first official act of government.

The Government is addressing the impact of climate change on human health through the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework which was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2007. The Government's adaptation framework will be implemented through a new COAG working group on climate change and water, supported by a sub-group on adaptation.

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of heatwaves and the number of heat-related deaths in temperate Australian cities. The Bureau of Meteorology is currently investigating the establishment of a heatwave warning service for Australia, which would provide improved information about such events for the community and health services. In addition, the Adaptation Research Facility, hosted by Griffith University, has funding to plan and implement national adaptation research plans. The National Adaptation Research Plan on Human Health is the first of the initial eight key priority themes to be progressed through consultation with key stakeholders.

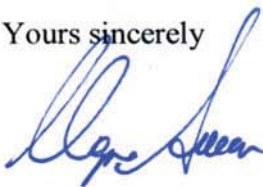
The Government is also moving quickly to implement its broader framework for tackling climate change. The central component of this framework is the introduction of a broad-based emissions trading system (ETS) by 2010. The ETS will be the primary mechanism for achieving the Government's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal – to reduce emissions by 60 per cent on 2000 levels by 2050 – at least cost.

While the operation of the ETS will help bring cleaner technologies into the market over time, the Government is also committed to introducing policies to accelerate the development and use of low emissions technologies in the shorter term. These measures include a new 20 per cent Renewable Energy Target by 2020, a \$500 million Renewable Energy Fund and a \$150 million Energy Innovation Fund.

As part of its commitment to improving the development of more fuel efficient vehicles the Government intends to introduce a \$500 million Green Car Innovation Fund over five years from 2011. The Green Car Innovation Fund will encourage the Australian automotive industry to develop and manufacture low-emission vehicles so that we can meet the challenge of climate change.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



WAYNE SWAN