



Australia

Strengthening Australia's National Ambition for 2020

Submission to the AWG-LCA and AWG-KP

May 2009

This submission provides further information on Australia's ambition to reduce its emissions to 2020 additional to Australia's submission on national ambition in UNFCCC/AWGLCA/2009/MISC.1/Add.3.

Australia seeks a comprehensive global deal that stabilises greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at 450 parts per million CO₂-equivalent (ppm CO₂-e) or lower.

This stabilisation goal would reduce the risks associated with severe climate change. The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that this goal is consistent with seeking to restrict the rise in global temperature at long-term equilibrium to around 2 degrees. Recent scientific and IPCC advice is also that achieving this goal would require an early peak for global emissions, emission reductions by developed countries in aggregate of at least 25 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, and a slowing in the growth of emissions in major developing countries substantially below 'business as usual' (BAU).

Australia is prepared to play its full part in such an outcome. In addition to its earlier pledges, the Australian Government will reduce Australia's emissions to **25 per cent below 2000 levels by 2020** if there is an ambitious global agreement sufficient to deliver long-term stabilisation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at 450 parts per million CO₂-equivalent or lower. This equates to a 24 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2020.

We recognise that achieving such an outcome is a great challenge. A comprehensive and ambitious global outcome of this nature would realistically and necessarily involve:

1. comprehensive coverage of gases, sources and sectors, with inclusion of forests (e.g. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation - REDD) and the land sector (including soil carbon initiatives (e.g. biochar) if scientifically demonstrated) in the agreement;
2. a clear global trajectory, where the sum of all economies' commitments is consistent with 450 ppm CO₂-e or lower, and with a nominated early deadline year for peak global emissions no later than 2020;
3. advanced economy reductions, in aggregate, of at least 25 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020;

4. major developing economy commitments to slow growth and then reduce their absolute level of emissions over time, with a collective reduction of at least 20 per cent below business-as-usual by 2020 and a nomination of a peaking year for individual major developing economies;
5. global action which mobilises greater financial resources, including from major developing economies, and results in fully functional global carbon markets.

Australia has pledged to deeper national action based on our assessment that an ambitious outcome is closer now than ever. Australia has been encouraged by international developments, particularly encouraging signs from major emitters, both developed and developing.

Australian Treasury analysis shows that Australia faces high economic costs relative to most other developed countries, due to our large share of emission- and energy-intensive industries and a dominance of low-cost coal in electricity generation. A 25 per cent reduction would almost halve the carbon emissions of every Australian over the period 1990 to 2020. Up to 5 percentage points of this target could be met by the Australian Government purchasing international credits, such as avoided deforestation credits, using revenue from Australia's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme no earlier than 2015. This demonstrates Australia's continued commitment to building an effective international carbon market.

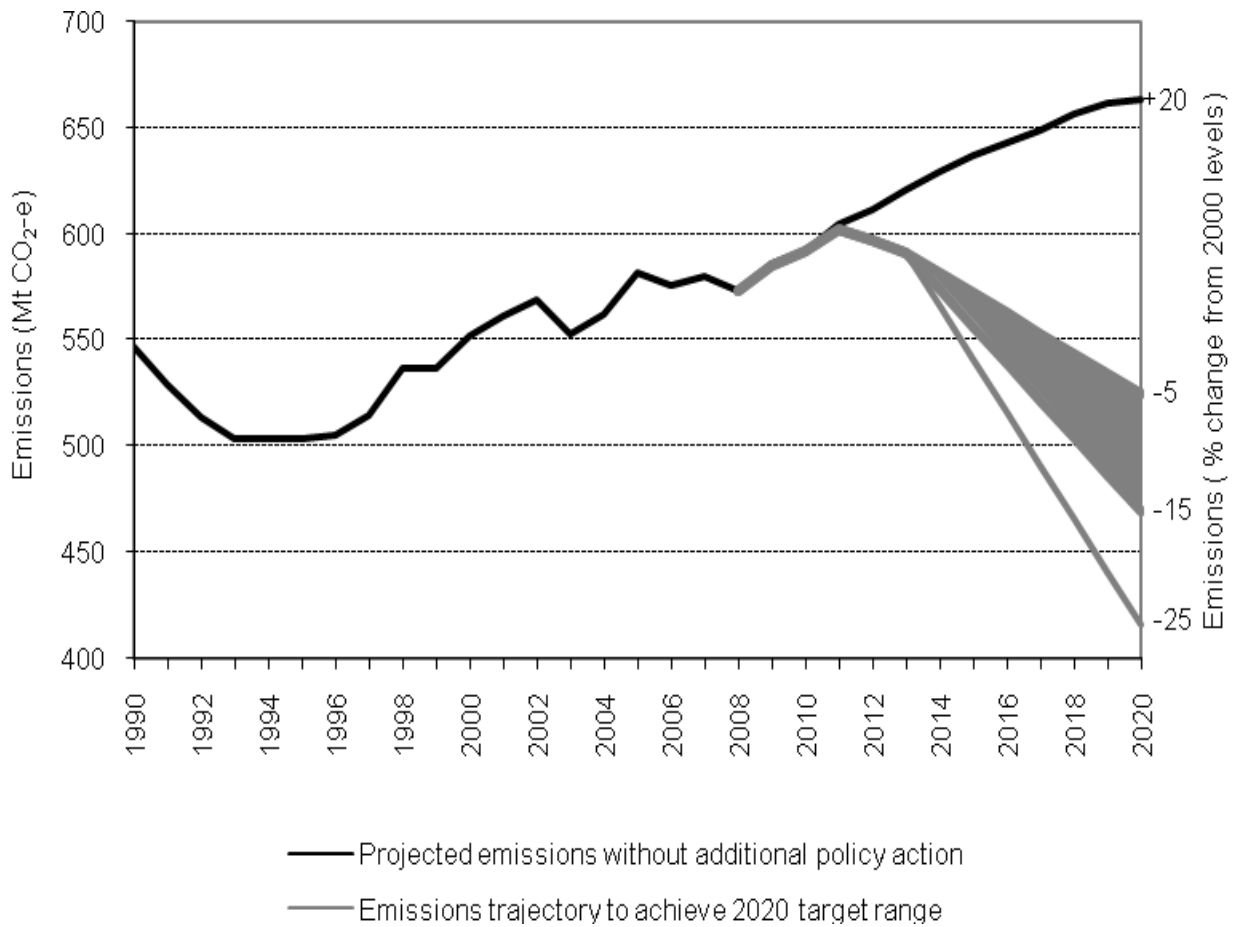
The conditional 25 per cent target builds on Australia's existing national emission reduction target range of 5–15 per cent reductions on 2000 levels, as announced in Australia's "Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme White Paper" in December 2008. The Government has committed to unconditionally reduce emissions by 5 per cent on 2000 levels by 2020, regardless of actions by other countries, and to reduce emissions by up to 15 per cent on 2000 levels by 2020 if there is an agreement where major developing economies commit to substantially restrain emissions and advanced economies take on commitments comparable to Australia's. This commitment represents a 12-22 percentage point reduction from Australia's target for the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

The Australian Government is committed to legislating its Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme in 2009, before Copenhagen. This will provide a responsible plan to deliver the target commitments and demonstrates Australia is serious about delivering these targets.

Climate change is a global problem and Australia will continue to advocate for an ambitious global response to it. Any ambitious global response will require strong action from all countries and Australia is committed to playing its fair part in this. The presentation of a more ambitious target from Australia, linked to broader global action, is put forward in the hope of encouraging more ambitious commitments from others.

Australia invites other countries, particularly all advanced and major economies, to add further momentum to the negotiations by nominating ambitious national restraints on emissions.

The following chart illustrates Australia's strengthened target range.
2020 target range: 5-15 and 25 per cent reductions on 2000 levels



When projected population growth is taken into account, a 25 per cent cut in Australia's emissions by 2020 will almost halve the carbon emissions of every Australian.

