

To: <submissions@emissionstrading.net.au>
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Subject: Po

I firmly and strongly believe that something needs to be done to reduce our greenhouse-causing gas emissions as soon as possible. However, as a resident of Western Australia I am also very aware that my state's current prosperity is dependent on an industry that is very dependent on carbon based fuels, and that the refining of the minerals, oils and gases found requires a large amount of power.

I understand that the scheme as currently proposed will focus initially on the stationary energy sector, and that permit allocation is proposed as a transitional assistance mechanism for those industries likely to be greatly impacted by increases in electricity prices. It seems therefore if everyone acts in the spirit of the proposed scheme greenhouse gas causing emissions could be reduced without an undue impact on industry.

However, an article I recently read in Upstream, the International Oil and Gas Newspaper (Vol 11 Week 40 6 October 2006; PDF file attached with copy of the article) illustrates that where there is money to be made, people will try to find ways to make it whatever the environmental consequences may be. The article describes how the Canadian government decided to maximise its revenue from selling bitumen from its oil sands reserves to the US, even though as a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol it should have been expected not to promote this industry as, according to the article, it has lead to a 50% increase in green house gas emissions there since 1990.

As a result of this decision, Canada is not on track to meet its obligations under the Kyoto protocol and has made a lot of money selling a very dirty burning fuel to the world's largest greenhouse gas emittor.

I am acutely aware that Western Australia, too, has the opportunity to make a lot of money from exploiting its resources further. I am not against further development in the state, as we have a lot to gain, but I am concerned that short term economic gains may blind decision makers both inside and outside of government to the risk of catastrophic losses we stand to suffer if climate change is not addressed.

I would therefore urge any greenhouse gas reduction scheme, including the one proposed, to make very certain that it is not possible for Australia to repeat Canada's mistake, by having an ostensibly green policy that allows for a definitely not green outcome. Stakeholders cannot always be expected to act in good faith, and the policy should expect this and create very strong barriers to prevent exploitations of loopholes by those who wish to.

Yours sincerely

Sally Griffith