

My name is Jimmy Walker and I am a 26 year old architect.

My environmental concerns are becoming increasingly accentuated by the lack of real leadership and setting of clear-cut targets.

I do not believe people are inherently bad or that they don't want to see a real solution to climate change, but in the absence of being told what to do and having targets forced upon us, we find it difficult to change our ways.

As an architect, I am very much aware of the environmental impacts of our buildings. Buildings consume 32% of the world's resources, including 40% of its energy and 12% of its water. However, without clear guidelines and targets there is little incentive or obligation for professionals in the property and construction industry to adapt their practices to account for climate change. Sadly the moral obligation and environmental incentive has for too long taken a back seat to financial concerns.

I cannot urge you strongly enough to set robust, science-based targets to reduce greenhouse pollution by at least 30 per cent by 2020. This will have an enormous positive effect on the building industry, with reductions in building operating costs and construction waste, not to mention the healthy environment it will create to foster innovation and new technologies. Without these targets, Australia will miss a magnificent opportunity to become world leaders in new and emerging building technologies.

This is an affordable and achievable target. I wholeheartedly believe Australians are resilient and flexible people and I have utmost faith that with strong targets, as a nation we can achieve a better, greener world and not just with regards to the building industry.

Unfortunately the situation is such that to wait any longer without strong leadership and action would be utterly incomprehensible and unforgivable. I am begging you to show courage and strength. Stand up and show the world that Australia is serious, and initiate something that as a nation we can look back on and be proud of the way we responded to climate change.

I don't want to have to explain to my future children that we let this happen because we simply didn't care.

Regards,

Jimmy Walker
Victorian Architecture Group