

Garnaut Climate Change Review
Level 2, I Treasury Place,
Melbourne
Victoria 3002

Bondi Junction
NSW 2022

RE: Submission to the Garnaut Climate Change Review

To Whom It May Concern,

I want to address the significance of Australia's native forests in the Climate Change debate. There is now unequivocal agreement that Climate Change is anthropogenically produced and the rate of climate change and global warming is accelerating, beyond original scientific forecasts. It is essential in our goal to move to a carbon constrained world that all forms of carbon emissions and carbon banks are considered as part of the suite of solutions that will be required to make the deep and necessary emission reduction targets, to try and avert serious climate change (i.e. the atmosphere's temperature rising more than 2 degrees Celsius).

It is also globally recognized that deforestation contributes around 20% to total world emissions, with the bulk of emissions generated from Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Brazil. Sir Nicholas Stern highlighted in his significant work on the economics of Climate Change, that the cessation of native forestry logging and burning would be one of the quickest way to reduce global emissions. Like many industries, the practicalities of achieving this are challenging, but not insurmountable.

Now that it is acknowledged that deforestation, and for that matter land clearing contribute substantially to global emissions, it follows logically that a cessation of these activities in Australia would assist in the reduction of our emissions. As we know the latter was negotiated for the 2008 Kyoto Targets for Australia. The exclusion of the Forestry industry in our total emissions calculations is erroneous and I believe under the proposed Emissions Trading Scheme, should be included.

Although I personally believe that all old growth native logging should cease in this country, there are strong vested interests in Tasmania and the Tiwi Islands, by way of example that have kept the practices going. However it is no longer acceptable to exempt the logging and forestry industries from an Emission Trading Scheme. At it's most basic level Australia's forests need to be preserved and valued as significant carbon sinks (which they are!). If this can not be achieved then a cost of carbon needs to be applied to deforestation. Like other major industries in this country, an Emissions Trading Scheme can only be effective and efficient if all industries are included and have to bid and pay for the initial permits.

I would like to strongly implore the Garnaut Report to consider the significance and importance of Australia's remaining native forests in the positive role they can have in the Climate Change debate and a carbon constrained economy. The world's carbon banks, our oceans and forests are already failing to cope with the level of global emissions, due to the effects of global warming. The failure of the sinks to absorb the emissions is quickening the pace of global warming, under the albedo effect, or positive feedback, where the sinks fail and in doing so ever larger emissions remain in the atmosphere.

Surely if we are to have any chance of succeeding in reducing emissions, and averting dangerous Climate Change, Australia's forests need to be protected from logging for low value added industries such as woodchips and pulp. The conversion from old growth, native forests to plantations at this stage is not a satisfactory solution either. Many southern states in Australia will increasingly face water shortages, as predicted by the Climate Change scientists, which will directly impact on the ability of plantations to grow and survive.

The significance of forestry and land usage in the Climate Change debate can not be understated. The sequestration of CO₂ from the atmosphere with forest preservation and better land usage, is essential in reducing global emissions and slowing the rate of climate change. I remember as a child how we learnt that trees take in CO₂ and give off oxygen. Now it is time that we respect the valuable role that forests have in the Climate Change debate.

Kind Regards

Danielle Ecuyer