



18 April 2008

These comments are on behalf of the *Pacific Calling Partnership*, a group of organisations and individuals who recognise Australia's ecological debt to our low-lying Pacific Island neighbours. The *Pacific Calling Partnership* was formed in May 2006 in response to requests from the people of Kiribati to advocate, educate and create networks of individuals and organisations committed to supporting the people of low-lying Pacific and Torres Strait Islands who are being affected by climate change. Four key members of the Partnership are the Edmund Rice Centre, the Wollongong Catholic Education Office, the Good Samaritan Sisters and the NSW Conference of Leaders of Religious Orders.

We ask that the Climate Change Review make **equity** a high priority in any recommendations about an emissions trading scheme. We are concerned that too much faith has been placed in the ability of an emissions trading scheme to cut back Australia's greenhouse gas emissions given the flow on effects on the poor. Thus we ask that the Review recognise that it is not enough to try to place an economic value on the environment. Many of its values are social, spiritual and most importantly are linked to human rights. We support the HREOC Background Paper '*Human Rights and Climate Change*' April 2008 which states –

'Whether particular climate change responses relate to local communities in Australia, to immigration policies for people seeking to come to Australia to escape environmental catastrophes, or to funding for adaptation measure overseas, a human rights-based approach to policy development could, and should, be adopted to provide a standard against which policy and resource allocation is evaluated.'

Kiribati is one of Australia's low-lying Pacific Island neighbours. The allocation of international mitigation tasks needs to take into account the fact that countries like Kiribati have only contributed to 0.06% of global emissions yet are facing extreme consequences from green house gases emitted by countries like Australia. (Australia is the highest greenhouse gas emitter per capita). Equity demands that adaptation strategies should be recognised as largely the responsibility of emitting countries. Related to this, we ask that you explore the risks that privatisation poses to attempts to reduce demand for greenhouse gas producing utilities such as electricity.

The sooner that robust arrangements are in place to encourage the reduction in Australia's emissions the longer time there will be for countries like Kiribati to adapt to climate change and to plan for resettlement of their displaced people. Australia is a wealthy country with a large range of resources besides coal. Australia is in a position to show real leadership by making profound and effective changes.

We believe that priority must be given to the fourth recommendation of the Department of Climate Change '**an effective emissions trading scheme must be fair**'.

c/- Edmund Rice Centre
for Justice & Community Education

First Floor, 9 Alexandra Ave (PO Box 170)

Phone: 61 2 9745 9700

Croydon NSW 2132

Fax: 61 2 9745 9770

Email: erc@erc.org.au

Website: www.erc.org.au

The concept of compensation should extend to developing countries like Kiribati that have not benefited from industrialisation. In October last year Sr Geraldine Kearney sgs led a delegation of young people to Kiribati to give young Australians an opportunity to dialogue with Kiribati youth about the issue of climate change and its present and future implications. Part of the dialogue included a skills exchange program aimed at preparing a delegation to attend the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change in Bali in December 2007. In a recent report released by the World Bank Institute, *'Development Outreach'*, Sr Kearney states -

'The impact of climate change on the most vulnerable victims is a global problem and demands a global response. We cannot continue to rationalize lifestyles that further greenhouse gas emissions and continue to capitalize on the lives and situations of the most vulnerable.'

c/- Edmund Rice Centre

for Justice & Community Education

First Floor, 9 Alexandra Ave (PO Box 170)

Phone: 61 2 9745 9700

Croydon NSW 2132

Fax: 61 2 9745 9770

Email: erc@erc.org.au

Website: www.erc.org.au