

Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) Submission to the Victorian Government's climate change summit paper "A Climate of Opportunity"

The AYCC is a coalition of over 20 youth-focused and youth-run organisations from across Australia - the membership of these organisations is well over 200,000. The AYCC is committed to uniting youth organizations across Australia, and around the world, to build a generation-wide movement to prevent climate disaster.

We inspire, educate, empower and mobilise young Australians to take action on climate change whether that be in their homes, schools, universities, work places or as advocates on the national and international stage.

This submission to the Victorian Government's summit paper "A Climate of Opportunity" outlines the AYCC's position on a number of the strategic directions outlined in the summit paper.

- **Positioning Victoria's economy**
 - The AYCC supports a far greater level of resources being directed to the generation of renewable energy such as solar PV, solar thermal, wind, biomass and geothermal.
 - The AYCC does not support additional coal fired power generation, and urges the Victorian Government to ensure all new energy is generated from renewable sources.
 - The AYCC urges the Victorian Government not to support compensation for electricity generators and to advocate this position at a Federal level.

- **Assisting Victorian communities**
 - Assistance for low-income households should be in the form of structural support, for example free energy audits, large rebates for insulation and other energy efficiency programs and appliances, and programs (as well as regulation) for both home owners and rental property landlords. This should commence before the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, and work as a complimentary policy during the scheme, to ensure maximum resilience of affected households.
 - The AYCC supports a just transition for workers and communities in affected areas, such as the Latrobe Valley, without compromising the objective of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Adaptation**
 - All future planning decisions should take into consideration the likely impacts of climate change, utilizing the latest scientific reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the CSIRO.
 - Increased water security measures should be undertaken through increased harnessing of storm water, increased rebates for rainwater tanks, and ceasing of logging in all water catchments. No support should be provided to desalination plants.

- **Biodiversity**
 - Much more resources should be allocated to protecting Victoria's biodiversity due to the likely impacts of climate change on biodiversity.
 - The Victorian Government should ensure the immediate cessation of logging in Victoria's native forests, specifically in East Gippsland and the Central Highlands areas. This is in light of new research from the Australian National University that Victoria's forests hold much more carbon than previously predicted, and in light of biodiversity concerns.

- **Mitigation**
 - For the purposes of mitigating climate change and taking the lead among the Australian States, the Victorian Government should:
 - refuse to provide compensation to coal fired energy generations and advocate at the Federal level for strong science-based caps for the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme; and
 - implement policies complementary to an emissions trading scheme in sectors that are either not covered or inelastic to price increases. Such policies can include greater rebates for household energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy generation, assistance to move farmers away from unsustainable agricultural practices, large-scale information and awareness campaigns, and greater support for community groups that are already undertaking these kinds of initiatives.
 - In reiteration, logging should immediately cease in Victoria's native forests in light of recent science that indicates their great value as carbon sinks.

Prepared by the Policy Working Group of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition.

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