
An Assessment of Australia's Climate Change Policies

Abstract

In Australia, the climate change debate emerged in the late 1980's as a response to rising global awareness of the issue, and right from the start the disparity between what is right for the environment and what is right for the economy began to dictate government policy directions.

As early as 1990, the Federal government, when speaking about climate change, made it very clear that it would not proceed with measures which have net adverse economic impacts nationally or on Australia's trade competitiveness.

This paper examines Australia's recent climate change policies and some influences on the Federal government to develop effective policy frameworks and market conditions favourable to business interests, and poses the question "Are Australia's climate change policies really business development plans?"

Outline of Paper

This paper provides a brief background to climate change issues in Australia. It outlines more recent events including the formation of the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change and the influence that this group, and other business groups, have on Australian government climate change policies. The Australian government's response to climate change issues through the establishment of the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate is then discussed. And finally this paper pulls together these political, economic and technical responses to answer the question "Are Australia's climate change policies really business development plans?"

Brief background

While a variety of environmental issues have been at the forefront of Australian politics since the 1960s¹, climate change only emerged as an issue in 1988² in response to a number of scientific conferences and events³ that alerted the world to increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

In 1989 the Federal government established a National Climate Change Program which included the National Greenhouse Advisory Committee of scientific advisers and a Prime Ministerial Working Group to assess achievable targets. However, right from the start the greenhouse debate became polarised between the Environment Ministers and departments, and the Energy Ministers and departments.

The Environment Ministers felt that climate change is primarily an environmental issue and therefore, requires an appropriate environmental response. However, the Energy Ministers and departments believed that as their departments are held accountable for the bulk of greenhouse gas emissions, their departments' responses on ways of reducing those emissions should be given priority. They argued that as the Australian economy is based on major exports of coal, natural gas and uranium, any realistic strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must focus on the energy supply system.

As early as 1990, the Federal government made it very clear that "the Government will not proceed with measures which have net adverse economic impacts nationally or on Australia's trade competitiveness in the absence of similar action by major greenhouse gas producing countries".⁴

In 1992 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the National Greenhouse Response Strategy (NGRS) which incorporated a suite of measures

¹ Lake Pedder, Kakadu and Fraser Island campaigns, green bans in Sydney, and forest conservation and urban pollution issues detailed in Hutton, D and Connors, L., 1999, *A History of the Australian Environment Movement*, for example

² Hamilton, Clive, 2001, *Running from the Storm – The Development of Climate Change Policy in Australia*

³ In November 1988 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established with the purpose of reporting on the science and impacts of global warming and strategies to deal with the possibility of climate change.

⁴ Attributed to Labor Government proposing stabilisation of greenhouse gas emission targets to appease industry and to presage climate change policy to come, in Hamilton, Clive, p 33

designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These mainly focused on energy supply and energy efficiency measures and the greater use of renewable energy.

However, the energy supply sector (especially the electricity industry) strenuously resisted any attempt at greenhouse gas regulation. And this resistance, when coupled with the emerging competition policy and the privatisation of public assets favoured by the Federal government, has affected government climate change policy ever since.

Generally, the 1990's in Australia was a time in which Government policy was aimed at removing as many restrictions on business as possible. Almost all large companies and industry associations in Australia opposed any government proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that were likely to be effective and therefore likely to have a real impact on their business activities.⁵ Government policy was based on "no regrets" measures or measures that were in the commercial interests of polluters.

This political perspective also influenced the approach that the Australian Government took to international climate change negotiations. Of course, the best example of this is Australia's non-ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and Australia's case for special status consideration.

Influences on government policy

Australian environmental policy has evolved since the early 1800s from concerns about pollution of natural resources through exploitation of natural resources to conservation concerns and the need to value natural resources.⁶ At the same time these phases of environmental policy have been influenced by international activities and the growing interests of business in international trade.

In the 1970s⁷, the links between trade and environmental protection - both the impact of environmental policies on trade, and the impact of trade on the environment - were recognised. The foundations for the current international trade regime emerged out of the unratified agreement for the International Trade Organisation and the salvaged

⁵ Hamilton, Clive, p 38

⁶ Thomas, Ian, 2007, *Environmental Policy – Australian Practice in the Context of Theory*

⁷ http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/hist1_e/html – accessed 30/03/04

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that were concluded⁸ in 1947. These foundations were designed to promote and manage global economic development and were intended to set the rules for world trade.⁹

The 1972 *Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment* provided a focus for several global environmental initiatives including the establishment of the United Nations Environment Program, Environmental Action Plans, various declarations, treaties and agreements. These initiatives, and many others, focussed on human development issues and consequently brought economics formally into the discussion. The 1987 report *Our Common Future* introduced the concept of sustainable development and in 1992 the Rio summit (officially the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*) marked a change of focus to an environment and development perspective.

While the idea of business groups influencing government policy was not new,¹⁰ in the early 1970's in response to rising business activism in the United States, the concept of the business roundtable (BRT) was formed. The first BRT consisted of a select group of CEOs of major US companies who met informally to discuss public policy issues.¹¹ The BRT's stated agenda was to minimise government interference in economic matters and to play a larger role in formulating government policy.

In Australia, the Australian Business Roundtable was established in 1980 and comprised CEOs from 20 of Australia's largest companies. The aim of this group was "to influence decision makers and shape public policy to ensure the best possible environment for business to succeed".¹²

⁸ *Environment and Trade – A Handbook*, IISD and UNEP – accessed http://www.iisd.org/pdf/envirotrade_handbook.pdf - 30/03/04

⁹ From 1948 to 1994 eight rounds of negotiation took place under GATT and they were mainly concerned with tariffs, quotas and related matters. However, during the Uruguay Round (1986-1994) trade related environmental issues were specifically addressed. The Uruguay Round put into place comprehensive international rules that overrode state and local laws, emphasised trade related environmental issues, and outlined the role of the soon-to-be-created World Trade Organisation (WTO).

¹⁰ For example, the National Association of Manufacturers was formed in the US in 1895 to promote foreign trade; the US Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1916 to promote business interests and influence government policy – Beder, Sharon, 2006 *Suining Themselves – How Corporations Drive the Global Agenda*, p16

¹¹ *Ibid*, p12-13

¹² *Ibid*, p16

The Business Council of Australia took over this role when it was formed in 1983 and now represents big business in Australia.¹³

Influences on climate change policy

In November 2004, the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change group was formed and publicly acknowledged that climate change represented a significant core risk to businesses and corporations.

The Roundtable comprised representatives¹⁴ from six of Australia's largest businesses and from a cross section of Australian industries. The group includes BP Australia; Insurance Australia Group; Origin Energy; Swiss Re; Visy Industries; Westpac and the Australian Conservation Foundation.

The aim of the Business Roundtable on Climate Change is to increase the understanding of business risks and opportunities associated with climate change and to help develop effective policy frameworks and market conditions. The group has clearly recognised that climate change poses serious threats to Australia's economy and that uncertainty about future climate policy heightens the risks associated with investment.

¹³ *Ibid*, p17

¹⁴ *BP Australia is part of the worldwide energy company involved in the exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas; refining, marketing, supply and transportation of crude oil and petroleum products; and the manufacture and marketing of petrochemicals

*Insurance Australia Group is Australasia's leading general insurance group, employing around 12,000 people, insuring more than AUD\$850 billion worth of assets and writing annual gross premiums of more than AUD\$6.6 billion

*Origin Energy supplies natural gas, LPG and electricity to over 2 million customers throughout Australia, New Zealand and the near Pacific

*Swiss Re is one of the world's leading re-insurers and the world's largest life and health re-insurer. It has operated in Australia since 1956

*Visy Industries was established in Melbourne, Australia in 1948 and has grown to become one of the world's largest privately owned paper recycling and packaging companies

*Westpac was the first company and the first bank to be established in Australia in 1817. Westpac employs over 27,000 people, serves 8.3 million customers and has a market capitalisation of \$39 billion, as at 30 September 2005

*The Australian Conservation Foundation is Australia's leading national not-for-profit environment organisation and has over 40,000 members and supporters.

In April 2006, the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change released a report, *The Business Case for Early Action*¹⁵. The report was based on preliminary studies made by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)¹⁶ for the scientific aspects of climate change and the Allen Consulting Group¹⁷ for the economic aspects of climate change.

This report made the following key recommendations¹⁸ to the Australian government:

- ∞ Design a “long, loud and legal” framework to establish a carbon price signal. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of the G8 Summit¹⁹ and introduced the idea of a long-term aspirational goal for Australia to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions while setting a short-term binding target for Australia to 2020.

The report also recommended the introduction of a national market-based carbon pricing mechanism to deliver cost-effective emission reductions and suggested ways to accelerate efforts to manage energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through best practice performance standards for buildings, vehicles, fuels and appliances.
- ∞ Encourage innovation and investment in emerging and break-through technologies through expanded fiscal incentives to encourage deployment of new energy efficiency technologies for power generation and transport. For example tax credits, accelerated depreciation and programs such as the Low Emission Technology Demonstration Fund.
- ∞ Build national resilience to the impacts of climate change. This recommendation included the development, funding and implementation of a national strategy to build resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate impacts by fully integrating adaptation into development and planning processes to

¹⁵ <http://www.businessroundtable.com.au/html/documents.html> - accessed 24/10/06

¹⁶ The full title of the report is *Climate Change Impacts on Australia and the Benefits of Early Action to Reduce Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, Preston, B.L. and Jones, R.N., February 2006. See http://www.businessroundtable.com.au/pdf/BRT-on-CC_Climate_Impacts-CSIRO.pdf - accessed 24/10/06

¹⁷ The full title of the report is *Deep Cuts in Greenhouse Gas Emissions – Economic, Social and Environmental Impacts for Australia*, The Allen Consulting Group, March 2006. See http://www.businessroundtable.com.au/pdf/GHG2050_FINAL.pdf - accessed 24/10/06

¹⁸ Recommendations summarised from *The Business Case for Early Action*, p7

¹⁹ <http://www.g8.gov.uk> – Summary Energy and Environmental Ministerial Proceedings 16/03/05 – accessed 25/10/06

address building codes, water resources, health responses, biodiversity, heritage areas and climate-dependent industries.

The Australian Business Roundtable's report which included Australian government greenhouse gas emission projections, the impacts of climate change on industry such as tourism, water and primary industries, and infrastructure and insurance issues, recommended that business and government work together to frame policies to create necessary investment conditions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining economic growth.

"We support government calls for a collaborative approach to climate change as demonstrated by the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate and recent Council of Australian Governments initiatives (COAG).

We ask Australian governments to work together, for example, through COAG to develop nationally consistent climate change policies, supported by all jurisdictions.

*This approach will ensure that Australia has an economically and environmentally effective national response and provides the necessary certainty for investors.*²⁰

- Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change joint CEO statement – April 2006

Australian government climate change response

In July 2005, the Australian government joined with Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors from China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States to announce the formation of a new regional initiative to accelerate clean development – the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (or AP6 as it is known).

²⁰ <http://www.businessroundtable.com.au/html/jointceo.html> - accessed 24/10/06

This partnership claims to bring together, as equal partners, major developed and developing countries and claims to be best placed to respond in a practical way to climate change impacts.

Specifically, the AP6 partnership aims to focus on energy, climate change and air pollution issues from an economic development perspective and will include multi-trillion dollar public and private sector investment strategies in low-emission and zero-emission technologies.

The six partner countries represent about half of the world's economy, population and energy use, and they produce about 65 percent of the world's coal, 48 percent of the world's steel, 37 percent of world's aluminium, and 61 percent of the world's cement.²¹

The AP6 partnership held its inaugural meeting in Sydney, on 11-12 January 2006 when it delivered the partnership's Communique, Charter, Work Plans and Guidelines. This meeting established eight public-private sector taskforces to focus on the areas of cleaner fossil energy; renewable energy and distributed generation; power generation and transmission; steel; aluminum; cement; coal mining; and buildings and appliances.

The second AP6 meeting was held in Berkeley, on 18-21 April 2006 and approved the eight public-private sector task forces which will deal with implementing and monitoring agreed work plans. The joint Policy and Implementation Committee and Task Forces presented their initial Action Plans and proposals.

From 11 – 13 October 2006, the Policy and Implementation Committee of the AP6 held its third meeting in Jeju, Korea during which it reviewed the draft Action Plans developed by the Partnership's eight task forces.

Details of the Action Plans were released on 31/10/06, and these plans emphasised the involvement of business enterprises in the AP6 projects and focusing on cost competitive technologies.

²¹ <http://www.asiapacificpartnership.org/> - accessed 26/10/06

“Virtually all of the actions identified will involve business, and a number of the activities will be undertaken primarily or exclusively by companies and associations representing commercial enterprises”²²

- Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate Executive Summary of Task Force Action Plans, 31/10/06

The next Policy and Implementation Committee meeting is to be held on 19-20 July, 2007 in Tokyo, Japan.

Clearly, the AP6 group is developing a business response to climate change issues and in a recent press release the Prime Minister Mr. Howard announced that AUS\$60 million in government funding towards 42 collaborative projects under the banner of the Asia-Pacific Clean Development and Climate Partnership would be made.²³

At the domestic level, in February 2006, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) held its 17th meeting in Canberra²⁴. The Council, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association, had detailed discussions on a number of issues of national importance.

Of particular relevance, COAG agreed to adopt a new national Climate Change Plan of Action and to establish a high-level inter-jurisdictional Climate Change Group to oversee implementation of the Climate Change Plan's recommendations.

Key initiatives in the Climate Change Plan of Action include:

- ∞ a national framework for the take-up of renewable and low emission technologies
- ∞ a national climate change adaptation framework to assist effective risk management by business and community decision-makers

²² Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate - Executive Summary of Task Force Action Plans, 31/10/06, p 2.

²³ <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/pm-blows-his-climate-trumpet/2006/11/01/1162339901697.html> - accessed 01/11/06

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- ∞ a study to identify the gaps in technology development
 - ∞ a \$100,000 study to examine options, such as a new dedicated Centre for Climate Change Science and Knowledge, for ensuring that Australia's scientific research resources are organised to effectively support climate change decision-making at the national and regional levels
 - ∞ acceleration of work by Ministerial Councils, that are investigating options to strengthen emissions reporting approaches and
 - ∞ all relevant Ministerial Councils to consider any climate change implications of their decisions and activities.²⁵

“Governments agree on the need to accelerate significantly our conversion to low emissions practices and technologies to reduce the risk of dangerous climate change and provide greater investment certainty in the light of greenhouse risk”.

- COAG announcement 10/02/06

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From the above COAG announcement and the details released so far of the AP6 Action Plans and funding allocations, the Australian Government is proceeding with a climate change regime that is based on and responding to economic opportunities. Climate change is now acknowledged as a key issue for both businesses and governments and these institutions face exposure to both risks and opportunities.

Government climate change risk management plans

Over the same period as the establishment of the AP6 and the formation of the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change, the Australian government prepared the *Climate Change Impacts and Risk Management Guidelines for Businesses and Government*.²⁶

²⁴ <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/100206/index.htm#other> – accessed 26/10/06

²⁵ <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/100206/index.htm#other> – accessed 27/10/06

²⁶ *Climate Change Impacts and Risk Management – A Guide for Business and Government*, 2006, Australian Greenhouse Office

The publication was released in May 2006 and was accompanied by a series of workshops held around the country targeting both the public and private sector. The workshops were aimed at informing executives of climate change risks and suggested appropriate ways to deal with those risks. Presenters at the workshops included Australian Greenhouse Office representatives, leading Australian climate scientists and specialists in economics, risk management and public policy.

The climate change risk management guidelines are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard for Risk Management (AS/NZS 4360:2004) and the workshops demonstrated how this methodology could be extended to include climate change risks. The guidelines focus on the assessment and prioritisation of climate risks and establish a process for managing these identified risks. They provide a framework for managing the increased risks to organisations due to climate change impacts. And while they establish an initial strategic assessment and prioritisation process, the guidelines are primarily concerned with assessing the physical risks of climate change.

Business climate change risk management

From a business perspective, climate change risk has been increasingly identified as a legitimate corporate risk.²⁷ A clear understanding of not only physical climate change risks, but legal liabilities and opportunities that exist, or are likely to exist in the future, are also considered by businesses and included in corporate planning and investment decisions.

While business leaders routinely include risk management into strategic planning, climate change risk management is unusual because of the uncertainty of regulatory risk at all levels of government, domestic and international, and the unpredictability of climate change's impact on weather, markets and trade issues. Businesses need to understand the impacts of climate change on their own operations, and recognise

²⁷ "In Control of Carbon Climate Law and Policy; managing obligations, liabilities, commercial risks and opportunities" Baker and McKenzie; "A Guide for Company Analysts – Climate Change and Company Value", Baker and McKenzie; "Managing the Risks and Opportunities of Climate Change: A Practical Toolkit for Corporate Leaders" Ceres and the Investor Network on Climate Risk; "Climate Change: Risk and Opportunity – Key issues for businesses and risk managers" Marsh.

that managing climate change risk is also about identifying climate change opportunities.

Even though Australia has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, Australian businesses are preparing for a regulatory environment which could affect their output and profitability. While current climate change legislation is mostly voluntary in Australia,²⁸ businesses are anticipating and preparing for a more stringent regulatory environment. The ramifications for Australian businesses of possible restrictions to international trade opportunities²⁹ are also being considered by corporate strategic planners.

Recent government climate change responses

In a flurry of press releases and announcements in October and early November 2006³⁰ the Australian government advised that a multi-million dollar fund to invest in new technologies designed to use fossil fuels, such as coal, while producing lower emissions had been established. Of particular interest is the announcement from the Environment Minister that

“About AUD\$500 million is expected to be allocated from a low-emissions technology development fund, a AUD\$300 million coal industry fund, and funds from the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (AP6)”

- Environment Minister 25/10/06³¹

²⁸ Each State and Territory has Acts governing climate change. For example, Victoria's Renewable Energy Bill, South Australia's Climate Change Bill, New South Wales' Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme and Queensland's 13% Gas Scheme.

²⁹ Future trade opportunities with countries that have imposed climate change regulations as part of their Kyoto Protocol requirements. A newspaper article on the French proposal to tax the imports of countries that refuse to ratify the Kyoto Protocol is a recent example – see <http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/us-pours-scorn-on-international-greenhouse-tax-proposal> - accessed 20/11/06

³⁰ Several articles found at; <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/victorian-green-policy-crucial/2006/10/25/1161699385334.html>; <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,20640344-662,00.html> – accessed 07/11/06

³¹ <http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,20641727-5006009,00.html> – accessed 25/10/0

While more recently the Prime Minister³² restated that the government's climate change initiatives will be sensitive to the nature of Australia's industries, major power sources and Australia's natural abundance of fossil fuels. He also went on to endorse the joint business-government taskforce's work on the design and nature of a workable emissions trading scheme for Australia.

Recent business climate change responses

On 7th November 2006, Rupert Murdoch, described as "probably the world's most influential media businessman",³³ called for the Kyoto Protocol to be replaced by a new international agreement that included the United States, Australia and emerging industrial nations. Mr. Murdoch said that he "now believed that business must lead the search for [global warming] solutions".

The same news article³⁴ announced that a new coalition of Australian blue-chip companies was evolving a business policy response to climate change. The new group, which includes members of the Australian Business Roundtable on Climate Change, has held a number of preliminary discussions "to look at which policy tools might accelerate and deepen the commercialisation of low-emission technologies such as clean coal and energy efficiency in Australia".³⁵

While at the Annual Dinner of the Business Council of Australia in Sydney on 13th November 2006, the Prime Minister announced³⁶ that the Federal government would consider a new emissions trading scheme which would protect the natural advantages that Australia has as major coal, gas and uranium supplier. He also announced the idea of "a new Kyoto" that operates differently to the present model, to try and find a new global solution that must include all of the major emitters and operates on a basis that is appropriate to Australia's interests and needs. The Government revealed plans to use the AP6 group as "a bridge" to reduce global

³² <http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2007/Speech23887.cfm> - accessed 05/02/07

³³ <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20714144-30417,00.html> – accessed 07/11/06

³⁴ "Blue chips go Green" article - <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,20712644-664,00.html> – accessed 07/11/06

³⁵ *Ibid*

³⁶ Transcript of the Prime Minister's Address at the Business Council of Australia Annual Dinner - <http://www.pm.gov.au/News/speeches/speech2246.html> - accessed 15/11/06

greenhouse gas emissions³⁷ and that a new government-business taskforce would be set up to assess the best options for Australia.

At the same dinner, the President of the Business Council of Australia³⁸ supported and encouraged the Federal Government's decision on an emissions trading scheme and encouraged the government to pursue this through the AP6.

It is interesting to note that the Business Council of Australia had briefed the Government recently on the Council's new position³⁹ and that the Federal Government has seemingly responded with a new direction in climate change policy.

New climate change policy directions

In his Speech to The Future Summit 2007,⁴⁰ Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs announced Australia's strategy for a global agreement on climate change that is both "environmentally effective and economically fair".

This strategy calls for

- ∞ new negotiations for a truly global agreement to be launched at the meeting of parties to the UN Framework Convention in Bali in December 2007
- ∞ continued support for the AP6 projects – because it is crucial that the private sector has an equal stake in driving the success of the AP6
- ∞ all Leaders in the Asia-Pacific to set clean development and climate change as the focus for the APEC Leader's meeting in September 2007 in Sydney
- ∞ Global Initiative on Forests and Climate - Australia is working with Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Germany and the United States, among others to reduce deforestation and to promote reforestation and better forestry practices in developing countries
- ∞ the Australia-China Joint Coordination Group on Clean Coal Technology – because Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal and China is the world's largest consumer

³⁷ <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,20679728-2,00.html> – accessed 01/11/06

³⁸ The BCA President's Address to the BCA 2006 Dinner 2006 - <http://www.bca.com.au/> - accessed 15/11/06

³⁹ <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,20679728-2,00.html> – accessed 01/11/06

⁴⁰ http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2007/070515_cc.html - accessed 15/05/07

The Future Summit 2007: New World Order 2.0⁴¹ is a forum where Australia's "established and emerging leaders from business, government, academia and the community meet to develop actionable options for a sustainable, desirable and prosperous future".

The objectives of The Future Summit 2007⁴² are

- ∞ clarifying Australia's key challenges and identifying policy and practice options in response
- ∞ broadening participants' horizons and strategic thinking with respect to key developments in the economic, geopolitical, technological, environmental and social fields and their impacts on Australia's and our regional partners' current decision making and likely future
- ∞ generating a series of innovative, and realistic, outcome-orientated recommendations and strategic directions to influence key policy makers and corporate leaders

The key themes addressed at this Summit were economic power shifts, geopolitical power shifts and societal power shifts and reflected the concerns of government and business leaders to a changing global political scene.

Conclusion

This paper has looked at some of the influences on the Australian government's climate change policies. It has provided a brief background on environmental concerns and climate change policy. It has traced the rising influence of business involvement in shaping public policy and assisting government with creating the necessary conditions for addressing climate change while maintaining economic growth.

The Australian government has responded by establishing the AP6 and announcing a multi million dollar fund to invest in new low-emissions technologies. While the most recent official government strategy on climate change recommends an

⁴¹ <http://www.mbs.edu/go/events/future-summit-2007> - accessed 16/06/07

⁴² The Future Summit 2007: New World Order 2.0 Agenda – p 2

environmentally effective and economically fair response, through a regional partnership, with a strong emphasis on economic and business interests.

It seems very clear that given the focus of this new strategy – of continued political, technical and economic responses to climate change issues – along with the overt encouragement and support from business for this approach, that the Australian government's climate change policies really are business development plans.

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