

Joint Australian Non-government Organisations Statement on the Nuclear Industry and Climate Change

December 2010

We the undersigned Australian non-government organisations are united in our opposition to the nuclear industry including uranium mining, uranium enrichment, nuclear power reactors and nuclear reprocessing.

We call on all political parties to:

1. Stop this dirty and dangerous industry

The nuclear industry is dirty, dangerous and costly – costly to workers and communities, to health, the environment and future generations, as well as financially. Nuclear 'safeguards' are manifestly inadequate to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation.

2. Address climate change

We reaffirm our considered conclusion that nuclear power reactors offer no solution to the unfolding global warming crisis (see for example the 2005 report, 'Nuclear Power: No Solution to Climate Change', produced by Australian NGOs, <www.foe.org.au/anti-nuclear/issues/nfc/nuclear-climate>.) Promoting the nuclear industry as an effective response to global warming, proponents distract attention and resources away from existing effective, safe and affordable solutions to climate change.

3. Boost renewables

We call on all political parties to seriously combat global warming by adopting policies in support of the rapid expansion of the renewable energy sector and a concerted Australia-wide program of energy efficiency and conservation. These programs and technologies should also be exported widely around the world to help other countries, especially developing nations. We call on the federal government and state/territory governments to take responsible and timely action to prevent both catastrophic climate change *and* contamination of the planet by radioactive waste and nuclear weapons.

4. Adopt responsible management of nuclear waste:

The ethical, democratic and effective way to manage radioactive waste involves application of the principles of waste minimisation; thorough assessment of all waste management options; and site selection processes based on voluntary consent, transparency and scientific criteria. None of these criteria are met with the federal government's current plan to impose a nuclear waste dump in the Northern Territory and we therefore reject that plan. The National Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2010 suspends the application of key Indigenous and environmental protections, overrides all state/territory laws, curtails procedural fairness and appeal rights, and upholds the strongly contested nomination of a dump site at Muckaty in the Northern Territory.

Signatories:

National NGOs:

Medical Association for Prevention of War
Public Health Association of Australia
Greenpeace Australia Pacific
Australian Conservation Foundation
Friends of the Earth, Australia
The Wilderness Society
WWF-Australia
Climate Action Network Australia
Australian Solar Energy Society
Mineral Policy Institute
Women's International League for Peace & Freedom
National Toxics Network

Conservation Councils:

Conservation Council of South Australia
Conservation Council of Western Australia

Queensland Conservation Council
Environment Victoria
Nature Conservation Council of NSW
Environment Tasmania
Environment Centre Northern Territory
Arid Lands Environment Centre (Alice Springs)
Environs Kimberley

Other NGOs:

Total Environment Centre
Climate Emergency Network
Rising Tide Newcastle
Beyond Nuclear Initiative
Japanese for Peace
Australian Peace Committee (SA)
Greenleap Strategic Institute
EnergyScience Coalition