

AUSTRALIAN STATEMENT

Australia remains fully committed to the ~~Framework Convention on Climate Change~~ and to achieving its ultimate objective.

At this ten-year juncture, we see value in reflecting on the way forward in addressing this important global issue.

It is worth welcoming the real progress that has been made. Over the past decade, many Parties to the Convention have reduced emissions of greenhouse gases.

Australia's emissions as we deliver entirely on our Kyoto target, for example, will be 15% lower in 2010 than if we had not taken action.

Yet, if our collective target is to make a serious impact on greenhouse gas emissions, our collective response has clearly not been remotely adequate to date.

Global emissions will be some 30% higher in 2010 than in 1990. This increase has occurred at a time when the world has had more focus ~~and~~ more information on climate change than ever before. *+ More action*

The international community faces a considerable task in tackling this issue effectively. We consider that our future approach must be guided by three key criteria:

- it must be environmentally effective, and specifically provide for meaningful contributions from all major emitters and at least those accounting for 80 per cent of global emissions;
- it must be economically efficient, and deliver emission reductions that are affordable and which ensure that nations are able to continue to develop economically; and
- it must be socially responsible, and take account of the impact on communities – particularly in developing countries – and it must reinforce the

PANEL II

IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ADAPTATION MEASURES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Statement by the Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell

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I am pleased to be a panellist to discuss this important topic.

Given that this year represents the 10th Anniversary of the first Conference of the Parties, it is an appropriate time to reflect on where we have been and the best path forward. In addition to continuing global efforts to stabilise our climate, Australia recognises that we must also take action to respond to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

Australia and our immediate region in the Pacific are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and have a strong interest in adaptation. Given some degree of climate change is inevitable, any comprehensive climate change strategy must integrate both adaptation and mitigation.

Looking back on our efforts, it is clear that through the efforts of the Parties to this Convention, we have established a credible framework for adaptation.

- . We have moved forward in the science and modelling of impacts
- . We have integrated adaptation and vulnerability assessments into the capacity building framework and into national communications preparation
- . We have established National Adaptation Plans of Action for least developed countries.
- . We have held workshops sharing our collective adaptation experiences, and
- . We have earmarked funding for adaptation in the Global Environment Facility and in the three funds established at Marrakech.

This is a good start but only a beginning. Implementing practical and effective adaptation responses will require ongoing efforts and we see two key areas of work that must be taken forward through the Framework Convention as a matter of priority.

First, we all recognise that the scientific picture of climate change and its associated impacts at a regional and local level, is far from complete. We must as a matter of priority address these information gaps and uncertainties, to enable all Parties to plan and implement local, appropriately-targeted adaptation responses.

Australia is committed to working with other Parties to find ways to better share the knowledge and experiences of both developed and developing countries. This information-sharing will assist us all in finding cost-effective ways to adapt to the impact of climate change in our communities.

In Australia, the Government has recently announced a new national climate change adaptation programme that will start understanding, informing and preparing Australian governments and vulnerable industries and communities for the unavoidable impacts of climate change. We look forward to sharing our domestic experiences with the broader international community.

Australia recognises that effective responses to climate change, including both mitigation and adaptation, must be built on the foundation of sustainable development. Our second area of priority must therefore be to find ways to mainstream adaptation into broader sustainable development objectives. This integration is essential to ensure that projects focussed on the Millenium Development Goals, such as food and water security, are not undermined by the absence of consideration of climate change related impacts.

Australia therefore looks forward to working with other Parties to identify how donors, implementing agencies and host countries can ensure that potential climate change impacts are given greater consideration in the design and implementation of development projects.

While much has already been achieved and agreed within the Framework Convention, we must draw on our collective expertise to identify new opportunities and ways forward for the future.

The Convention provides a valuable forum for information sharing on methodologies and tools for adaptation. This information sharing can assist us all to find cost-effective ways to adapt. The in-session workshops on adaptation in the last two sessions of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice are excellent examples. The development by the Secretariat of the useful Compendium of Methods and Tools to Evaluate Impacts of, Vulnerability and Adaptation to climate change is another example of a practical product that all Parties can utilise to inform national adaptation efforts.

However, the Framework Convention should not and cannot solve the entire problem of adaptation alone. The inherent top-down approach of the Convention can only provide one part of the adaptation solution. The problem of climate change may be global but the impacts are likely to be local. Adaptation actions and strategies are typically country-specific and need to be tailored to local environmental and socio-economic conditions.

The Framework Convention is only one of a number of organisations progressing adaptation. To name a few examples:

- . Australia's development agency is working closely with our Pacific Island neighbours in piloting practical adaptation responses in the water sector.
- . The World Bank and IMF are assisting developing countries devise Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers to provide a comprehensive and integrated planning and financing blueprint for development.
- . And of course Working Group II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will focus exclusively on impacts, adaptation and vulnerabilities in regions around the world in its Fourth Assessment Report.

Australia came to Buenos Aires hopeful that we could make concrete and practical progress on adaptation. In considering the activities of this COP, I am pleased to see forward momentum. Australia will therefore be strongly encouraging and supporting the COP's agreement to the range of positive adaptation measures that has been developed by the Subsidiary Bodies. These useful measures include

- . Establishment of a multi-year work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change – with the specific elements to be further elaborated by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its next session
- . Three regional workshops, plus one expert meeting for Small Island Developing States, to enhance information exchange on issues of priority for each region and to assist in the identification of specific adaptation needs and concerns
- . Further reporting from the Global Environment Facility on progress on all aspects of adaptation funding, in addition to mainstreaming of adaptation into its other focal areas.

Australia has been pleased to be able to work with all Parties, particularly our Umbrella Group colleagues, to achieve these outcomes. Each of these initiatives represents a welcome step towards making real progress on adaptation.

In closing Mr Chairman, and although not solely related to adaptation, I would like to take this opportunity to respond very briefly to yesterday's Panel discussion by expressing Australia's hope that a further positive outcome from this COP will be agreement to an appropriately focussed seminar in 2005.

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