

**Opening Statement to the
6th Conference of the Parties (resumed)
to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
by the Australian Minister for Environment and Heritage
Senator the Hon Robert Hill
Bonn, 19 July 2001**

Australia believes that the overwhelming weight of scientific opinion indicates that human activity is having a discernible and negative influence on the earth's climate system.

As such, we accept that it is our responsibility, along with the other nations of the world, to take the precautionary actions required to minimise and reverse this influence.

Australia is not walking away from the Kyoto process and we are not walking away from the target we accepted as part of the Kyoto Protocol.

On the contrary, we have already made significant progress toward implementing the domestic policies and measures required to fulfil our Kyoto commitments.

We have established an ambitious suite of greenhouse gas reduction programs in which we will invest \$1 billion, including almost \$400 million to support the development and uptake of renewable energy technology.

Already the indications are that we are achieving some success in de-coupling our nation's economic growth from the growth in our carbon emissions.

So we come to this resumption of COP 6 in Bonn confident that our actions demonstrate both the urgency and the goodwill with which we approach these continuing negotiations.

A successful COP6 will be one that maintains the dialogue towards a global framework to reduce greenhouse emissions and avoids divisions which may isolate individual nations outside of that framework.

However, the uncertainty surrounding the future involvement of individual nations should not preclude us from attempting to move closer to each other on the key outstanding issues.

Key issues for Australia are;

- effective rules on mechanisms that do not limit access, and allow the markets to work efficiently;
- non-discriminatory rules on sinks that do not restrict cost-effective abatement;
- a compliance system focussed on assisting parties to meet their targets and on the restoration of excess emissions rather than punishing non-compliance; and
- the launch of a dialogue on action by developing countries.

Australia looks forward to engaging constructively with other parties on how we might address these issues in moving forward together in the effort to combat global warming.

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