



CLIMATE
AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

Health groups sound the alarm on Direct Action Plan

MEDIA RELEASE

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Health groups that are part of the national alliance advocating for action on climate change to protect health have sounded the alarm on the Abbott government's Direct Action Plan, saying the proposals fail to respond to the clear evidence and advice from climate scientists and health and medical experts on risk.

"The Direct Action Plan (DAP) will not reduce emissions at anywhere near the level required to reduce increasingly dangerous levels of global warming," said CAHA Convenor, Fiona Armstrong.

At present, experts warn the DAP will not reduce emissions enough to meet the government's target of a 5% reduction on 2000 levels by 2020 – a goal that is universally considered inadequate and is counter to the advice of the Australian Climate Change Authority, which advises 15-25% cuts to avoid Australia being forced to make "implausibly rapid cuts after 2020".

"This policy does not represent a genuine effort to reduce emissions – it fails to address the risk posed by our carbon intensive energy supply system, mostly dependent on coal combustion for domestic and industrial use, nor does it offer a pathway to transform our energy sector to more secure and more sustainable energy options," Ms Armstrong said.

"In its current form, the Direct Action Plan looks to prop up polluting industries and create little or no penalty for the production of dangerous greenhouse gas emissions, while government subsidies continue to support the fossil fuel sector, at the expense of cleaner, safer, healthier, abundant renewable energy technologies, such as wind and solar," said Ms Armstrong.

"The recent round of extreme weather events, including Super Typhoon Haiyan in The Philippines, the polar freeze in the northern Hemisphere, and intense heatwaves in Australia, should provide a warning signal about constraining emissions that we ignore at our peril – all this with less than one degree of global warming so far. With much higher levels predicted for coming years and decades, we can anticipate increasing deaths and even greater threats to health and wellbeing as the planet continues to warm – unless we take immediate action to reduce and then eliminate our production of greenhouse gases."

The Climate and Health Alliance's submission in response to the Emissions Reduction Fund Green Paper will be available in February.

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