



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

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IT'S OFFICIAL - AUSTRALIA IS NOW A PART OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

Australia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol came into force today, officially making Australia a full party to the Kyoto Protocol.

"From today, Australia is officially part of the global solution on climate change," Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd signed Australia's instrument of ratification in December as the first act of the new Government. However, under Kyoto rules, it takes 90 days before the ratification 'comes into force'.

"After so many years of neglect under the previous Government, we are sending a clear signal to the world that Australia is taking responsibility on climate change," Senator Wong said.

Also today, the Government released *Australia's Initial Report under the Kyoto Protocol*, 365 days earlier than the United Nations' deadline requires. The report demonstrates how Australia is able to measure the reductions in emissions that are required under Kyoto.

"The Australian Government is moving quickly to meet its Kyoto Protocol obligations. Countries have 12 months to submit this report – we are releasing it on day one."

This new report follows the Rudd Government's first report card on climate change, *Tracking to the Kyoto Target*, showing that we are now on track to meet our Kyoto target. Under Kyoto, Australia is obliged to limit its greenhouse gas emissions in 2008-2012 to 108 percent of its emissions in 1990.

"The Rudd Government has put Australia on track to meet its Kyoto target. Under the previous Government's policies, Australia was going to miss the Kyoto target."

Senator Wong said the Kyoto Protocol was just the first step and that much more needed to be done.

"That's why we have a comprehensive plan for responding to climate change based on three pillars – helping to shape an international solution, reducing Australia's emissions, and adapting to the climate change we cannot avoid.

"To help Australia reduce its emissions and make the switch to a low-emissions future we have announced that 20 per cent of Australia's electricity will come from renewable sources by 2020.

"We will also implement emissions trading, which will place a limit – or a 'cap' – on the emissions we will allow to be produced. Emissions trading will make us responsible for the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere."

Senator Wong said climate change also presents many opportunities for business.

"The World Bank estimates that opportunities created through the Kyoto Protocol were already worth more than US\$5 billion in 2006. Australian businesses will have access to that market."

While Australia's ratification of Kyoto only comes into effect today, the Australian Government is already engaged in international negotiations for a post-2012 agreement.

"The Australian Government recognises that the Kyoto Protocol itself was a first step for the international community. We are continuing to engage in key international climate change forums and are working with other countries to build on our achievements in Bali.

"The Australian Government will seek to strengthen its cooperation with other countries on climate change as we continue to pursue a future international agreement that is both equitable and effective."

Australia's Initial Report under the Kyoto Protocol:

www.climatechange.gov.au/inventory/publications/unfccc-report.html

Tracking to the Kyoto Target

www.climatechange.gov.au/projections/index.html

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

www.unfccc.int