



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

PW 99/08

2 July 2008

FEEDBACK INVITED ON RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET DESIGN PAPER

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, today invited feedback from business and the community on issues relating to the design of an expanded national renewable energy target.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Working Group on Climate Change and Water, chaired by Senator Wong, released a design options paper today as part of the consultation process.

“The expanded renewable energy target will help deliver on the Government’s commitment to ensure at least 20 per cent of Australia’s electricity supply comes from renewable energy by 2020,” Senator Wong said.

“Renewable energy will have a key role to play in helping us move to the clean economy of the future, because it will reduce our electricity-related greenhouse pollution.

“We expect the 20 per cent renewable energy target to help drive strong investment and job creation in the renewable energy sector.

“It will support our emissions trading scheme, which will encourage industry and business to reduce their greenhouse pollution because there will be a cost to pollute.”

Senator Wong said the Government is working cooperatively with the states and territories to design an expanded renewable energy target that incorporates the existing and proposed state and territory targets.

“I encourage interested stakeholders to make submissions on the consultation paper being released today,” Senator Wong said.

The Rudd Government commitment will expand the previous government’s Mandatory Renewable Energy Target by more than four times to 45,000 gigawatt-hours by 2020. Combined with existing renewable energy sources, this will bring the proportion of Australia’s energy coming from renewable sources to 20 per cent (60,000 gigawatt-hours) by 2020.

60,000 gigawatt-hours is equivalent to almost the entire Australian annual residential electricity consumption, or approximately the amount of electricity currently generated in Victoria in a year.

The renewable energy target is a transitional measure that will help prepare the electricity sector for contributing to the significant emissions reductions needed to tackle climate change. The scheme will be phased out between 2020 and 2030, as the Rudd Government’s emissions trading scheme, due to start in 2010, matures.

A copy of the paper and information about making a submission are available on the Department of Climate Change website at www.climatechange.gov.au. The deadline for submissions is 30 July.