

PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
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INDUSTRY CALLS FOR STRONG CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGETS WELCOMED

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has welcomed calls from global business leaders for governments to bring in tougher carbon emissions reduction targets. The calls from big business coincide with international climate change talks and echo calls from key Australian health and medical organisations.

“One hundred and forty international business leaders have banded together to call for deep and rapid cuts in greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate severe climate change. Australian-based businesses including the National Australia Bank, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Lend Lease and Linfox are part of the call to action, which has been timed to coincide with international climate change talks currently being conducted in the Polish city of Poznan,” said Dr Peter Tait, Environmental Health spokesperson for the PHAA.

“The calls from big business follow on from calls by nine key Australian health and medical organisations for Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong to act on what climate scientists say we need: emission reduction targets of 20 to 25% of 1990 levels by 2020. As our leaders in this area the Prime Minister and Senator Wong are charged with a responsibility to protect the health of all Australians now and in the future.

“To do too little too late on global warming risks a series of devastating health impacts and puts in jeopardy our ability to sustain our current level of population. Australian industry leaders also recognize that decisive action is desperately needed to avoid global warming of more than two degrees in order to preserve human society, health, wellbeing, agricultural production and the economy. The scientific basis for the need to take strong urgent action around the world has been clearly spelt out. Further, Garnaut and Stern showed plainly that taking such action to protect our future will have a minute or very limited impact on our long term economic prosperity.

“We believe there is enough evidence to demonstrate the need for immediate and decisive action. We will be judged harshly if driven by selfish, short term greed, at the expense of survival of our children and all future generations. It is a matter of moral obligation.

“Increasingly a broad range of groups from different sectors within the Australian community are calling on our current political leaders, in and out of government, to protect the interests and future of all Australians and to take urgent action in adopting appropriate emission reduction targets. We welcome leaders of big business and industry joining the calls for strong leadership in establishing tougher emissions targets,” said Dr Tait.

The health and medical organisation statement on the need for strong emission reduction targets was supported by the following groups: PHAA, Doctors for the Environment Australia, Australian Nurses Federation, Health Care Consumers Association, Council of Remote Area Nurses, Australian Rural Health Education Network, Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, Australian Health Promotion Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

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