



Environment and Resources Committee

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The Environment and Resources Committee is a select committee of the Queensland Parliament. It was established by resolution of the House on 23 April 2009 to monitor and report on: environmental protection; climate change; land management; water security; and energy.

Media Release

Parliamentary committee gives support for low carbon energy future for Queensland

A parliamentary committee has recommended that 40 per cent of Queensland's electricity should come from renewables and gas-fired generators within ten years.

The Environment and Resources Committee report, tabled today, makes 14 recommendations from an inquiry into expanding the state's renewable energy electricity sector.

The recommendations include setting a Queensland target of 20 per cent of electricity needs to be met from renewable energy sources by 2020. This is consistent with the national target set by the Federal Government.

The committee also recommended that the Queensland Gas Scheme be amended to require that electricity retailers must source 20 per cent of their power from clean burning gas-fired generators by 2020.

Committee chair, Carryn Sullivan MP, said the committee is keen to ensure that Queensland doesn't get left behind other states in the switch to low-carbon sources for future electricity needs, and in improving energy efficiency.

"Our report also stresses the importance of energy efficiency to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It remains the best first response to cutting our greenhouse emissions. The greenest watt of electricity will always be the watt you don't have to produce."

"Setting a Queensland renewable energy target will send a very clear message that Queensland is serious about growing a strong renewable energy industry. This will be good news for Queensland, particularly people in regional areas."

The committee also recommended that the government lobbies the Federal Government to resolve the details of the proposed carbon price mechanism as soon as possible to restore certainty to the energy industry.

Other recommendations include a review of the state's feed in tariff for small scale solar PV systems with the possibility of expanding it to other renewable energy generators.

(Report recommendations enclosed with this release)

For further information contact the committee's secretariat at Parliament House ph 3406 7908 or 1800 504 022.

RECOMMENDATIONS¹

1. That the Queensland Government should encourage the Federal Government, through the Ministerial Council on Energy, to finalise the form of its proposed carbon price mechanism as soon as possible.
2. That the government should continue to pursue energy efficiency improvements and efforts to minimise energy wastage as a priority to achieve greenhouse gas abatement targets.
3. That the government should increase the prescribed percentage for the proportion of electricity to be sourced from gas-fired generation under the Queensland Gas Scheme to 20 per cent by 2020.
4. That the government should set an aspirational target for Queensland of 20 per cent of the state's electricity needs to be generated from renewable energy sources by 2020, consistent with the Federal Government's national renewable energy target.
5. As a further Queensland target, the Queensland Government should aim to replace diesel generators with renewable energy systems as the primary source of electricity in all the state's remote Indigenous communities by 2020.
6. That the government should consider options to mandate that GreenPower be used for recharging electric vehicles used on Queensland roads.
7. That the government should review the existing net feed in tariff scheme for small scale solar photovoltaic installations to ensure the scheme provides appropriate outcomes for electricity consumers and promotes better, more efficient use of energy. This review should consider: the cost of the feed in tariff scheme to electricity consumers; whether the feed in tariff should be extended to other renewable energy technologies as well as solar photovoltaic systems larger than 10 KW; whether the tariffs should be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis; and the specific tariff rates that should apply.
8. That the government, through the Ministerial Council on Energy, should seek the establishment of a uniform, national feed in tariff regime for renewable energy generators.
9. That the government should legislate to provide certainty to current and future participants of feed in tariff schemes and confirm that arrangements for existing scheme participants are grandfathered in the event of alterations to the scheme.
10. That the government should consider whether upfront subsidies or interest free loans may provide electricity customers with greater incentives to participate in the renewable energy market than the current feed in tariff.
11. That the government should examine the benefits and feasibility of allowing open tendering by renewable energy generators for long-term electricity supply contracts for government departments, buildings and other infrastructure.
12. That the government should consider providing support for renters to purchase GreenPower by providing subsidies based on the Brisbane City Council EzyGreen scheme.
13. That the government should consider a scheme to mandate the purchase of GreenPower by households to offset the electricity consumed by pool pumps and air conditioners.
14. That the government provides the Parliament with a statement of the objectives, outcomes and value for money achieved from its renewable energy projects and initiatives.

The committee's report and other inquiry documents are available from <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/erc>

¹ The minister with portfolio responsibility for these recommendations is the Minister for Energy and Water utilities