



Speech by

Hon. Kate Jones

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Thursday, 8 October 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Climate Change

Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (10.14 am): While the federal coalition implodes and the LNP continues to deny climate change, the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this December is shaping up to become one of the most important international treaty negotiations of our time. Fortunately, international talks are not dependent on the policy position of the conservative parties in Australia. A successful deal in Copenhagen will provide a clear path for how the world will reduce emissions, how countries will share this responsibility and how we will deal with climate change impacts. There has been a series of negotiation sessions leading up to Copenhagen, including one happening right now as I speak in Bangkok. Issues being discussed include emissions reduction targets, technology development and financing for mitigation and adaptation. Other forums are also contributing to an international deal. The G8 and the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, of which Australia is a member, agreed this year to key pillars of a Copenhagen deal, including a target to keep the rise in average global temperature within two degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Achieving an effective agreement in Copenhagen is critical to Queensland. Being an emissions intensive economy, we are the state that is most vulnerable to climate change impacts and with the most to gain from effective global action. Our government recognises the impacts that a price on carbon will have on our industries and regions and we have been very proactive on this issue. Throughout the design of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, we have continually raised important issues with the Commonwealth, including the need for adequate support for the coalmining sector. We also recognise that the nature of any international agreement will have significant implications for Queensland. That is why we are watching the negotiations and Australia's position closely.

Queensland has a keen interest, for example, in the development of a framework that would enable increased abatement through native regrowth and harvested wood. We are also interested in opportunities for low-cost abatement action in the agriculture and land use sector and ensuring that Queensland is well placed to take advantage of opportunities in the international carbon market. In addition, Queensland is contributing to the latest international climate change science right here in Brisbane.

Reaching agreement at Copenhagen will be difficult, but it is very necessary if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. That is why Queensland is committed to playing its part in an effective global response.