

Question on Notice
No. 850
Asked on 5 June 2007

MR LEE asked the Premier and Minister for Trade (MR BEATTIE) -

QUESTION:

Will he provide details about the State Government's strategy to tackle climate change?

ANSWER:

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing Queensland and the world. It affects individuals, communities, industries and countries and addressing climate change is a long-term investment.

In Queensland we're facing up to climate change and committing ourselves to making a real difference to future generations. We also understand that we need to balance reducing emissions with the security of low-cost energy, our robust economic growth and the coal and major industries which represent Queensland's major economic drivers.

Already we have banned broadscale tree clearing across the State. This has been the single biggest contributor to greenhouse gas reductions so far in Australia and is the only reason that the Commonwealth government can claim that the nation is on track to meeting its Kyoto Protocol reduction target.

The Queensland Government is committed to a 60% or 22 million tonne reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

As part of the Government's commitment to this serious issue, the Climate Change Centre for Excellence was opened early this year, the first of its type in Australia.

Also on 3 June 2007, I launched Queensland's climate change strategy *ClimateSmart 2050* as the Queensland Government's overarching response to climate change.

This strategy represents new investments across all sectors totalling \$414 million to deliver the next steps in Queensland's climate change response with Queensland investing more than any other State.

The strategy outlines a range of short to medium and long-term actions that the Government is committed to delivering now and builds on what we have already achieved, including:

- a \$300 million Queensland Climate Change Fund to develop new technologies like hydrogen fuel cells;
- a \$55 million Smart Energy Savings Program to help business get energy smart, saving an estimated 3,280 kilotonnes in greenhouse gas emissions and an estimated \$78 million in energy costs;
- providing \$50 million for a Renewable Energy Fund to promote research and development into renewable energy and a commitment to a renewable and low emissions energy target of 10% by 2020, with \$7.5 million of this fund going

towards a Solar Thermal Demonstration Plant which will be constructed by the Queensland Government, CSIRO and industry;

- \$7.25 million in Climate Smart Homes rebates to help people living in remote areas of the state to install greenhouse friendly hot water systems and more efficient refrigeration and insulation, which will help lower emissions and lower power bills;
- increase the percentage of Queensland's energy generation being produced by gas under the Gas Scheme from the current 13% to 18% by 2020;
- new planning standards for commercial buildings by 2010 and the phasing out of electric storage hot water systems;
- all Queensland Government office buildings to be carbon neutral by 2020;
- establish a Queensland feed-in tariff for solar power to pay people whose home solar systems put power into the system; and
- neutralising vehicle emissions by encouraging Queenslanders to offset emission from their vehicles through a voluntary contribution.

To assist in driving the development of clean coal technology the new *Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Act 2007* was passed by the Parliament. This legislation formalises the agreement between the coal industry and the Government and outlines how the coal industry funds will be prioritised and distributed. Getting in early on the development of clean coal technology can position Queensland as a future exporter of these technologies to large coal consuming countries like China and India.

With the launch of the *ClimateSmart 2050* strategy the Government realises that although we have achieved much, there remains plenty to do.

Current projections estimate emissions from power stations can be reduced by approximately 34% (138% on 2,000 levels) to 50.9 million tonnes by 2020. If we do nothing, Queensland power stations would be emitting 63.7 million tonnes of C02 (172% of 2,000 levels) into the atmosphere by 2020.

By 2020, the Government expects that clean coal technology and next generation renewables will be ready for commercial deployment and this is when we expect to start to see a real difference in greenhouse gas reductions.