

Question on Notice
No. 105
Asked on Thursday, 14 February 2008

QUESTION:

MS JARRATT asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) — With reference to his participation in the official Australian delegation to the United Nations conference on climate change held in December in Bali—

Will he outline what benefits for Queensland were achieved from the conference and how the conference contributed to a better understanding of the potential impacts for Queensland from climate change?

ANSWER:

The United Nations Climate Change Convention Framework conference held in Bali in December 2007 was a historic milestone in the global effort to curb climate change. It has provided a roadmap for a post-Kyoto international agreement on climate change that includes the development of interim targets for developed countries.

Furthermore, Australia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol demonstrated a national commitment to international mechanisms for addressing climate change. This commitment includes establishing interim national emissions targets, which will strategically position Australia for future post-Kyoto climate change negotiations with key emitters such as India, China and the US.

As Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation, I had the honour of attending the conference as a member of the Australian delegation.

Queensland's representation at the Bali conference provided our Government the opportunity to network with international leaders on climate change policy. This resulted in a number of significant outcomes involving negotiations with key international bodies that will place this state at the leading edge of climate change policy action.

I secured the first Australian Clean Energy Conference to be held in Brisbane in November 2008, which is expected to attract up to 600 national and international experts and business leaders, with wide ranging interests across energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Hosting the conference is important for Queensland as it demonstrates our commitment to clean energy as a critical component in our climate change response and provides the opportunity to attract business interest and investment to Queensland – especially in the areas of geothermal and solar energy. By hosting this event, the Queensland Government will be sending a clear signal to the clean energy market that it is open for clean energy business – a \$700 billion international industry.

In Bali, I met with the President of the International Energy Agency, Mr Nobua Tanaka, who has shown keen interest in participating as a keynote speaker at the conference.

Discussions with other international leaders on climate change policy, including the German and Californian Governments led to a number of other significant outcomes for the Queensland Government.

Both the German Government and Californian Government are recognised worldwide leaders in the area of climate change response. Following dialogue in Bali with contacts from the German Government regarding energy efficiency and renewable energy policy, the German Department of Environment and Energy will be invited to present on leading reforms in renewable energy and clean technology development at the Australian Clean Energy Conference.

Over the course of conference negotiations, a Queensland Government staff exchange program with the Californian Air Resources Board was also developed. Staff exchanges spanning two-monthly periods will focus on sharing ideas, information and experience to develop practical approaches to greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Overall, my view is that the Bali Conference was a success in terms of international agreement, which now includes Australia, the US and China, on a process for developing emissions targets, and a success for Queensland in terms of active involvement in a key forum affecting our future and the opportunity to present Queensland's position and opportunities to the world.