

Ian Dunlop: Climate Change & Peak Oil

An integrated policy response Ian Dunlop has outlined the need for an integrated policy response for Australia to the twin challenges of Peak Oil and Climate Change. Full report as submitted to the Prime Ministerial Task Group on Emissions Trading.

Climate change and peak oil are inextricably linked. Each one is a major issue in its own right, but their convergence has received minimal attention, which is unfortunate as it is likely to have far greater impact than the sum of the individual parts. Policy must ensure that solutions to the one reinforce, and do not conflict with, solutions to the other.

Current piecemeal government policy is totally inadequate to meet the challenges of climate change. Emissions trading is now, reluctantly, under discussion but it is only one component of the comprehensive policy required. Peak oil is barely on the agenda, although it may be the issue which has the greatest impact in the short-term. This paper suggests a comprehensive, integrated policy, at both global and national levels, which will provide a coherent response to both issues.

Above all, visionary, principled, long-term leadership is need from government, the community and business. Short-term political or corporate expediency is no longer acceptable; bi-partisan cooperation is essential. Action is required in the next 6-12 months, not in the 3-5 years favoured in political debate.

Ian Dunlop is a senior member of ASPO-Sydney. He is an engineer and was formerly a senior international oil, gas and coal industry executive. He chaired the Australian Coal Association in 1987-88, chaired the Australian Greenhouse Office Experts Group on Emissions Trading from 1998-2000 and was CEO of the Australian Institute of Company Directors from 1997-2001. He has a particular interest in the interaction of corporate governance, corporate responsibility and sustainability.