Dear Prime Minister

As most people know, global warming and climate change and their serious effects on the world’s biodiversity and environment are extremely serious issues, just as serious if not more so than the pandemic. Even young children know this. At every school around the country children learn the science behind climate change and the fact that it is both real and caused by human beings. These facts are indisputable from the weight of peer-reviewed scientific evidence. We know this. Our children know this. We are deeply disappointed and upset that your government continues to do very little to effectively fight global warming, climate change and the resulting devastation of our country’s and the world’s biodiversity and environment.

There are numerous examples of your seeming indifference to the urgent need for action on climate change. I cite but a few recent examples: you chose not to help the Pacific Islands win their struggle against the impending effects of climate change – you were more interested in protecting Australia’s economy; your government’s negligence in protecting our Great Barrier Reef - three devastating bleaching events in five years and yet you send government officials (Sussan Ley & team) to lobby the world not to place the reef on the “in danger” list, contrary to all the scientific evidence showing that it is indeed in serious danger; your government’s continued support of coal and gas, aiming to keep Australia as a major producer and exporter of these fossil fuels, even as other developed nations and large corporations make serious efforts to move to renewable energy sources; your government actively seeks at every turn, to avoid your leadership responsibilities to tackle climate change – in 2019 in Madrid your government opposed the creation of a minimum set of standards to develop global carbon markets; and I could cite many other examples of your active refusal to lead on this vital issue.

The sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, released in August 2021, clearly shows that Australia is lagging markedly behind most developed countries in its efforts to fight global warming and climate change. Yet you tell the Australian people that we are doing more to cut greenhouse gas emissions than other countries. This is demonstrably not true. We are not pulling our weight as a developed nation and you are knowingly misleading the people of Australia. Why would you do this with such a vitally important issue? For political reasons? To keep the powers that run your political party happy?

You state publicly that the IPCC report shows China’s emissions accounted for more than the entire OECD combined but this is a deliberate misrepresentation of the truth. The report clearly shows that on a per capita basis, emissions from China are 5.4 tonnes per person while Australia emits 17 tonnes per person. China is getting its emissions under control; we are not. China has a plan in place to lower carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP by over 65 percent from the 2005 level by 2030. You must be aware of these facts. You must be aware of the great job China is doing to counter climate change. That is a good news story, surely. So, why do you not want Australians to know this?

What exactly is our plan? Our main plan, as I understand it, is to lower emissions by 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2030. Energy analyst Dr Hugh Saddler of the ANU, has found that all of Australia’s emissions reductions since 2005 have been due to farming activities, mainly due to a large fall in the amount of “land-clearing”. He states that if this was excluded from national emissions accounts, Australia’s emissions have increased by 7% since 2005. This is shameful. How can you not own the fact that your efforts in reducing emissions have failed? How can you not realise that you must now do something different, something effective and do it urgently?

We must assume that you are aware that your leadership and your government is only paying lip service to the climate change issue. Nothing you are currently doing will make a major difference to solving the problems the world is now facing. Eventually, your inaction will cause devastation, hardship, pain and suffering to countless numbers of innocent people. Are you truly so unkind and uncaring as to not care what happens to the world in which your children, grand-children & great-grand-children will be forced to live? We cannot keep putting off doing something about climate change.

The knowledge, skill, technology and will to make Australia completely free from using fossil fuels within the next decade and significantly reduce our emissions in real terms, exists here in Australia today. Researchers at several universities already have well-developed plans for this based on scientific data. You must know this. Yet you ignore it. I can only assume you do so because you are worried that the pain the Australian people will feel when you take serious action, will result in you losing government. Are you a leader of the people or just a leader of a political party?

What is more important, your re-election or doing something that will make a positive difference to countless numbers of people? Your children, their children and generations of children to come will either blame you or thank you based on your actions here and now. A bi-partisan agreement on serious climate change action would be a great start.

We are going to have to accept a certain level of pain if we are to avoid the full effects of climate change. The longer we avoid action, the worse the pain. Climate change is not a political issue. It is a matter of life and death. Please, in the name of our children and future generations, take responsibility for the leadership of our country and make the changes to Australia’s policies and economy that will make a positive difference. We must combat climate change now in order to provide a beautiful, healthy world in which future generations can live, grow and thrive.

Thank you for your time in reading my letter. I write to you because I, like so many other citizens of Australia, demand urgent action on climate change. I am frustrated and angered by your government’s repeated failures on this issue and by your seeming indifference to the issue. I look forward to a change of heart and policy on this issue, on the part of your government, that will make Australians feel proud of what we are doing to support the world-wide fight for survival.

I request a well-considered answer to this letter, addressing the points I have made and answering the questions I have asked.

Yours sincerely

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