Dear Prime Minister

At the secondary school our children attend, just as at all high schools in Australia, 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. 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 countless examples of your callous indifference to the urgent need for action on climate change. I cite but a few recent examples: you had to be shamed into attending COP26 in Glasgow and when you got there, you did nothing to further the cause of fighting climate change. You failed to join the many countries which set a date from which there would be no further new fossil fuel projects approved. Your Minister for Energy & Emissions Reduction, Angus Taylor, even advertised Australia as a place, other countries could invest in gas.

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 financial support of coal and gas aiming to keep Australia as a major producer and exporter of these fossil fuels; 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 go on and on and on – there are so many examples of your active refusal to lead on this vital issue.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s sixth assessment report released in August 2021, clearly shows that Australia is lagging woefully 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. You are misleading the people of Australia for your own political goals. Why would you do this with such a vitally important issue? The truth matters.

You state publicly that the IPCC report shows China’s emissions accounted for more than the entire OECD combined but this is a deliberate distortion 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. Are you aware of these facts?

What exactly is our plan? Our main plan 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. Further, if we included in Australia’s carbon footprint the emissions from all the coal & gas we sell to the world, that would triple our carbon footprint.

Your latest plan, if it can be called that, made no change to this target in spite of the clear need to increase our commitment. Your current plan relies to a very large extent on guess work and hope – you are hoping that future technologies will magically “fix” the problem.

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 exists here in Australia today. It could have been achieved by 2020. Researchers at several universities already have well-developed plans for this based on scientific data. You must know this. Yet you ignore it, probably because you are worried that the pain the Australian people will feel when you take serious action, will result in you losing government. **What is more important, your re-election or doing something that will make a difference to countless numbers of people?** The leaders we remember beyond their brief term in office are those who leave behind them a legacy of good decisions. **A bi-partisan agreement on serious climate change action would be a great start – and a re-setting of our zero-emissions target date to 2030-2035.**

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 would like to believe that our children and grandchildren will have a beautiful, healthy world in which to live and grow and thrive.

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

But, again with respect, if all you are going to send back is some pre-prepared, trite Party-Political statement, please don’t waste my time, because clearly I have already wasted it in writing to you.

Regards