

# Australia in the Global Response to Climate Change



## The Garnaut Review 2024: Australia in the Global Response to Climate Change by Ross Garnaut

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges facing the world today. Australia, as a developed nation with a significant carbon footprint, has a responsibility to play a leading role in the global response to this issue.

This article provides a comprehensive overview of Australia's involvement in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. We will examine Australia's climate policies, actions, and contributions to international agreements. We will also discuss the challenges and opportunities that Australia faces in its efforts to address climate change.

## Domestic Climate Policies

Australia has a long history of climate policy development. In 1992, Australia became a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In 1997, Australia adopted the Kyoto Protocol, which committed the country to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 8% below 1990 levels by 2012.

In 2007, Australia ratified the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period, which extended the country's emissions reduction target to 2020. However, Australia withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol in 2011, arguing that the agreement was not effective in reducing global emissions.

In 2015, Australia adopted the Paris Agreement, which commits the country to limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, and to pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Australia's current emissions reduction target is to reduce its emissions by 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2030.

Australia's domestic climate policies focus on reducing emissions from the energy, transport, and agriculture sectors. The government has introduced a number of policies to encourage the uptake of renewable energy, such as the Renewable Energy Target and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. The government has also introduced a number of policies to reduce emissions from the transport sector, such as the Fuel Efficiency Standard and the Green Vehicle Guide.

## **International Climate Action**

Australia is an active participant in international climate negotiations. Australia has been a member of the UNFCCC since 1992, and has played a leading role in developing the Paris Agreement.

Australia is also a member of the G20, a group of the world's leading economies. The G20 has committed to taking action on climate change, and Australia has played a leading role in developing the G20's climate action agenda.

In addition to its involvement in the UNFCCC and the G20, Australia is also a member of a number of other international organizations that are working to address climate change. These include the International Energy Agency, the International Renewable Energy Agency, and the World Bank.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Australia faces a number of challenges in its efforts to address climate change. These include:

- **High emissions intensity:** Australia has a high emissions intensity, meaning that it produces a large amount of greenhouse gases for each unit of economic output. This is due to a number of factors, including Australia's reliance on coal-fired power generation and its large transport sector.
- **Geographic isolation:** Australia is a geographically isolated country, which makes it difficult to access renewable energy sources such as hydropower and geothermal energy.
- **Political challenges:** Climate change is a politically contentious issue in Australia. There is a lack of consensus on the best way to address climate change, and this has made it difficult for the government to implement effective policies.

Despite these challenges, Australia also has a number of opportunities to address climate change. These include:

- **Abundant renewable energy resources:** Australia has abundant renewable energy resources, including solar, wind, and geothermal energy. This gives Australia the potential to become a major exporter of renewable energy.
- **Strong economy:** Australia has a strong economy, which gives it the financial resources to invest in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.
- **Public support:** There is strong public support for climate action in Australia. This gives the government the mandate to implement effective climate policies.

Australia has a responsibility to play a leading role in the global response to climate change. Australia has a high emissions intensity, but it also has abundant renewable energy resources and a strong economy. With strong public support for climate action, Australia has the potential to become a global leader in the transition to a low-carbon economy.



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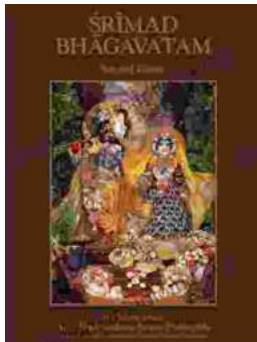
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