



THE POST-COVID-19 WORLD: EMBRACING A TRANSITORY MOMENT TO SECURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Australia, like the rest of the world, is in a unique moment; a moment that presents itself perhaps once in a century. It is crucial that Australia leverages this fleeting opportunity to transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy alternatives. Investment into renewable energy, such as wind and solar, and transforming structural and ideological frameworks to focus on energy decentralisation and Doughnut Economics, will enable Australia to rebuild a more resilient and progressive economy.

Through the lens of economic sustainability and energy security, divesting from fossil fuels is both beneficial and inevitable. The extraction and burning of coal is the single biggest contributor to anthropogenic climate change. Fossil fuels are becoming non-viable, less desirable, and ineffective. As renewable energy becomes more affordable with technology development and interest rates at an historical low, Australia is presented with a unique opportunity.

Using a top down approach to stimulate action across government, community and private enterprise, the Federal Government should legislate a carbon neutral tax reform with a commitment to redistribute the forecasted revenue to renewable energy initiatives. This will require three layers to be rolled out simultaneously:

- Legislating a carbon neutral taxation reform to incrementally tax companies who extract, burn or export raw materials until they become carbon neutral.
- Providing these companies with various measurement, analysis, and reporting tools to encourage a centralised self-reporting system.
- Contracting an external body to provide quarterly audits and educational workshops.

The intention is to move towards a more circular and regenerative economy through a single piece of legislation. This policy recommendation will encourage private divestment from fossil fuels and investment into clean energy alternatives, balance the impact to employment, and promote fossil fuel companies to adapt their business model by developing more sustainable practices or transforming to renewable energy alternatives themselves.

Transitioning to clean energy will allow Australia to align its political priorities and economic investments, mitigate its 2030 Paris Agreement commitments, and emerge as a regional leader in climate action.

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