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c/- Moreland Energy Foundation Limited
Level One 233 Sydney Road Brunswick
Postal Address PO Box 276 Brunswick 3056
Telephone 03 9381 1722
Facsimile 03 9381 1733
judy@mefl.com.au

Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Submission to the Garnaut Review

The **Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA)**, which began operating in 2002, is a network of 9 Councils spanning the northern region of Melbourne from the CBD to the rural/urban fringe (see footnote) and Moreland Energy Foundation. The Alliance shares information, coordinates and implements community based emission reduction activities, undertakes research into reducing carbon emissions across the NAGA region, and cooperates on the research and development of innovative corporate emissions projects. NAGA also establishes partnerships and linkages with state and federal government agencies and departments, local government and industry associations, community groups and consultants to facilitate climate change action in the Northern Metro region. Over the last 2 years, NAGA has attracted more than \$1,000,000 in cash and in-kind contributions to implement climate action projects in the NAGA region, demonstrating significant emission reduction innovation at the local government and regional level.

NAGA applauds the establishment of the Garnaut Climate Change Review, and the serious consideration being applied to the effects of climate change on the Australian economy, society and environment.

NAGA notes that the interim report released in February 08 covers many issues of grave importance to climate change action, and flags appropriate coverage of these issues, including Australia's role in the international context, the need for establishment of firm commitments to 2020 as well as 2050, and rejection of short term solutions to address immediate issues in favour of the importance of soundly based policies that will need to be sustained over the long term.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Review. NAGA's key concerns related to the Review, and the development of Australia's program of Climate Change action are listed below.

- Scientific evidence is supporting the need to **keep warming below 2°C** to avoid dangerous climate change.
- Greater emphasis needs to be placed on how Australia can and should take a **leadership role** in international action.
- The urgency of the action required means that **short term targets** are of increased importance, to achieve deep cuts relatively quickly.
- An **Emissions Trading Scheme** is important to place a cost on emissions and assist the economy to make the transition to a low carbon future; to ensure a robust, efficient and effective scheme, NAGA strongly opposes giving away free permits. Whilst an Emissions Trading Scheme is a key element in our climate change response, there is concern that an ETS is a medium-long term measure and will not, of itself, achieve rapid deep cuts.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

BANYULE CITY COUNCIL, DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL, HUME CITY COUNCIL, MANNINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF MELBOURNE, MORELAND CITY COUNCIL, MORELAND ENERGY FOUNDATION LIMITED, NILLUMBICK SHIRE COUNCIL, CITY OF WHITTLESEA, CITY OF YARRA

- There is a need for a comprehensive raft of **complementary measures** to partner the ETS. These measures should include:
 - **Renewable Energy** supported by financing measures that include:
 - an effective national feed-in tariff for photo-voltaic grid connected panels, other renewable energy generation and low-carbon co-generation. Key features of an effective feed-in tariff include mandating the tariff at 60c/kW, and gross production metering;
 - rebates;
 - low interest loans and other innovative measures such as a the recently proposed National Climate Change Savings Scheme;
 - increase of the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target.

In addition, renewable energy should be supported by planning instruments that allow local renewable energy generation to proceed without excessive heritage controls hampering installations.
 - **Energy Conservation, Energy Efficiency and Behaviour Change** programs supported by measures including:
 - Strengthening and expanding the Minimum Energy Performance Standards program;
 - Improving regulation and statutory planning requirements for building standards and sustainable infrastructure;
 - Planning considerations that take into account access to local economic development and local food production to ensure development of more sustainable local communities, including access to local employment opportunities, access to efficient sustainable transport options, access to fresh food outlets.
 - Support for, and national expansion of energy efficiency programs such as the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target. Such programs have value in increasing energy efficiency installations, as well as stimulating the energy services sector; there are massive efficiency opportunities in non-residential sectors, including businesses, agriculture, streetlighting, etc.
 - funding community capacity building programs; working directly with existing networks and intermediaries including Regional Alliances and Local Government to implement effectively targeted programs.
 - **Social impacts:**
 - Strong consideration given to the social impacts of climate change action (including increased power costs, food security and access) and provision of assistance to low income households.
- NAGA is one of 6 Regional Greenhouse Alliances in Victoria. The Greenhouse Alliances bring together local governments, state government departments and agencies and other key players to plan, design and implement regional programs for climate change mitigation and adaptation. They have shown to be effective and efficient vehicles for regional action, and the establishment of such alliances across Australia should be encouraged and supported to establish a nation-wide network.

As noted in the Interim Report of the Garnaut Climate Change Review, 'the development of, and the marshalling of community understanding and support for steady policies that can be sustained over long periods' (p 58) is of critical importance. Community-focussed organisations and alliances, such as NAGA, and including NAGA's members (local government sector, and the not-for profit sector) are well placed to significantly contribute to this process of community engagement and support. The role of these organisations, alliances and partnerships should be recognised and their ongoing existence advocated as part of the Garnaut Review process.

I look forward to the release of the Garnaut Review report.

Yours sincerely



Judy Bush
NAGA Coordinator