

MEDIA RELEASE

Regional conservationists join national condemnation of Rudd's low greenhouse target

The South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA) is one of 60 environment groups across Australia that have condemned the Rudd Government's announcement of an ineffectual 5-15% greenhouse reduction target.

"The announcement of an interim emission reduction target of only 5-15% represents a total failure of climate policy and shows that the Rudd Government has caved in to pressure from the big polluters, including native forest woodchippers. This decision is simply unacceptable," according to SERCA spokesperson, Ms Prue Acton.

"If adopted globally, this target would guarantee the loss of the Great Barrier Reef and the Kakadu wetlands, and would steer the earth on a path towards catastrophic climate change. This decision represents a failure of the Federal Government to act on the climate science, a failure to act in the public interest, and a failure of international diplomacy."

"In our region it ensures that our native forests will continue to be ravaged for the cheapest woodchips in the Pacific region. Further, it opens the door to burning native forest wood for electricity as biofuels have been exempted from the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme," Ms Acton said.

The group of conservation groups believe this decision will send a signal to the world that Australia is reneging on the agreed Bali range of 25-40% for developed countries and will make a strong global agreement all the more difficult to achieve.

"We are urging the Australian Parliament, the media, and all sections of the community to ensure that this weak target is not allowed to stand, and to make sure that 2009 is the year that Australia begins to show real leadership on climate change in the lead up to the international negotiations in Copenhagen," she said.

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