

Submission in response to the 2012 Renewable Energy Target review Issues Paper
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I very strongly support renewable energy, and believe the Government should continue, and preferably enhance, the RET scheme, for the following reasons.

There is very strong scientific evidence that climate change is happening and that the major influence is CO₂ produced by industry.

Fossil fuels are being exported and if we continue to rely so heavily on fossil fuels this will force up energy prices in Australia.

The longer we take to start major reductions in fossil fuel use, especially for coal burning power stations, the more expensive it will become to make the change.

South Australia has shown that it is possible to source a large proportion of Australia's electricity consumption economically from wind power.

Domestic solar roof top panels have helped to reduce the peak demand caused by air conditioners running in summer months and so help to hold down wholesale electricity prices. They also help people to become more familiar with their electricity consumption and ways of becoming less wasteful.

If not for the increase in installed renewable energy capacity, it is very likely that new coal fired power stations would need to be constructed to keep up with forecast electricity demand. Since the current level of the carbon price and buy-out incentives seem to be too low to encourage even heavily emitting brown coal stations to close down, a high RET is essential to at least ensure that no new coal power stations are constructed.

The rest of the world is moving into renewable energy and the early movers are the ones who gain the most in new employment, research and export opportunities. For example, Australia was a leading researcher in solar voltaics and if the government of the time had provided assistance, Australia could have had a thriving solar panel industry. Instead, China took up the technology and it has the thriving solar panel industry.