



H.E. Mr. Ralph Hillman
Ambassador for the Environment
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Commonwealth of Australia

Dear Ambassador Hillman

The Climate Action Network represented at COP7 hereby requests that Australia 'stand down' from the Kyoto Protocol negotiations here in Marrakech.

The Australian government's status as a 'caretaker' government until the elections next Saturday, November 10, bring its mandate into question in several important respects and as well gives rise to questions as to the responsibilities of public servants acting on its behalf. The main opposition party has stated that if elected, it would proceed with ratification of a legally binding Kyoto Protocol. This has become a public issue in the current election campaign, with your government taking a different view to the Opposition.

It is customary in Australia, and is mentioned in Prime Minister Howard's 'Ministerial Code of Conduct', that governments should not initiate any new policies or initiatives during the election campaign, and should advise the opposition when making policy changes. The Bonn Agreement clearly anticipates a legally binding compliance system for the Kyoto Protocol and says that the compliance system would be adopted at the first meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. Your delegation is opposing the adoption of any meaningful compliance agreement for the Kyoto Protocol, saying it wants to defer a decision on this to the first meeting of the Parties of the Kyoto Protocol. However, the main opposition Party, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) supports the ratification of a legally binding protocol.

We believe it is clear that the stance of the Australian delegation is biased and is not reflective of the spirit and intent of your role as a caretaker delegation.

Prime Minister John Howard's recent announcement that it would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol without the United States, and without commitments from developing countries, puts it in exactly the same position as the United States. We would also request that Australia follow U.S. President George Bush's lead in promising not to interfere with the rest of the world's desire to proceed with international climate protection via the Kyoto Protocol.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Sawyer
Greenpeace International

Jennifer Morgan
World Wide Fund for Nature

Karla Schoeters
Climate Network Europe

On behalf of:

Grace Akumu
Climate Network Africa

Nasimul Haque
CAN South Asia

Gurmit Singh
CAN Southeast Asia

Ana Rojas
CAN Latin America

Gary Cook
US CAN

Nicolette Boeie
CAN Australia