

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS DOWN BY 1.6 PER CENT THIS SUMMER

- **ELECTRICITY DEMAND FALLS BY 0.8 PER CENT**
- **NSW SEES BIGGEST CUT IN EMISSIONS DOWN 5.7 PER CENT**
- **COAL USE CONTINUES TO RISE IN ALL STATES BESIDES NSW**

Greenhouse gas emissions from energy use across Australia's four eastern states fell by 1.6 per cent or just over 1.2 million tonnes compared with last summer. The fall came despite the summer being one of the hottest on record in Australia with average maximum temperatures 0.55 degrees above average and minimum temperatures of 0.76 degrees above average (high temperatures tend to have a strong correlation to high electricity use, due to the increased need for cooling, causing a spike in emissions).

The figures were released today as part of The Climate Group's Greenhouse Indicator Summer Report, which tracks the main sources of greenhouse emissions (those produced by coal, natural gas and petroleum) in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia and compares them with the previous year.

The fall in emissions to 74.8 million tonnes was driven by a 1.6 per cent reduction in emissions from coal-fired electricity generation (692,000 tonnes), and an 8.4 per cent fall in emissions from the use of natural gas (608,000 tonnes).

The overall fall in emissions from coal was entirely due to substantial fall in coal-use in New South Wales, where emissions from black coal generators were down by 8.24 per cent, or 1.35 million tonnes on last summer. In Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, emissions from coal rose compared with last summer, up by 1.89, 1.35 and 18.38 per cent (655,000 tonnes combined).

The overall fall in emissions from natural gas was due to a substantial decrease in gas used for domestic and industrial purposes across all four states. Emissions from this category of gas use fell by 21 per cent or more than a million tonnes compared with the previous summer. This fall was partially offset by a 13.5 per cent rise in electricity generation from natural gas which resulted in an extra 405,000 tonnes of emissions.

Electricity demand fell 0.8 per cent across the four states combined.

Emissions from petroleum products rose by 0.25 per cent on last summer or 62,000 tonnes.

The emissions picture was not uniform across the four states:

New South Wales saw the biggest change in emissions from energy with a fall by 5.7 per cent or 1.53 million tonnes compared with last summer. This was partly due to a reduction in emissions from electricity generation, with generation from black coal down by 9.4 per cent. Electricity generation from gas, a less carbon intensive fuel was up by 36.8 per cent with new power stations being commissioned at Uranquinty and Tallawarra. Electricity demand fell by 0.9 per cent compared to last summer. Emissions from petroleum products and other gas use (domestic and industrial also fell) by 1.5 per cent and 15.9 per cent respectively.

Both South Australia and Victoria also saw a reduction in emissions compared with last summer. They saw falls of 0.61 per cent (29,000 tonnes) and 0.05 per cent (12,000 tonnes) respectively. Both states saw an increase in emissions from coal - up 1.89 per cent and 18.38 per cent respectively - and falls in emissions from the use of natural gas – down 11 per cent and 18.86 per cent respectively.

Queensland was the only state in which emissions increased compared with last summer, rising by 1.64 per cent, or 332,000 tonnes. This was because of an increase in emissions from coal of 1.4 per cent, as well as a rise in emissions from petrol-use of almost 3 per cent.

Rupert Posner, Australia Director of The Climate Group said:

“It is good that emissions fell compared with last summer, especially considering that it was one of the hottest summers ever on record across Australia. It is also heartening that this was helped by a reduction in electricity demand. Hopefully, this is an indication that we are becoming more conscious of how much energy we are using and the benefits of saving energy.

“While the amount of electricity we generated from coal fell by 3.5 per cent, disappointingly, this resulted in a smaller reduction in emissions because proportionally more electricity was generated by the most carbon intensive stations. This provides a clear indication of the benefit of introducing a price on carbon.”

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

N.B For a summary table, please go to Appendix 1 at the end of this document

Time Scale: The report looks at emissions across a 13 week period from 4 December – 4 March and compares them with the same period in 2007/08.

About the Weekly Greenhouse Indicator

The Climate Group has tracked greenhouse emissions from energy use in Victoria, NSW, Queensland and South Australia on a weekly basis since the beginning of 2007.

The Greenhouse Indicator provides accurate and real time information on greenhouse gases produced each week from energy use. It includes the major sources of greenhouse emissions that can be tracked accurately each week and is a unique tool designed to bring greater understanding to the issue of climate change and to help track greenhouse gas emissions in selected Australian states. It was developed with advice from some of Australia's best experts in the field.

All countries, including Australia, provide a detailed annual report of their greenhouse gas emissions. But such reports are normally released long after the emissions have occurred. Thus this information, while comprehensive and critical for policy planning and scientific assessment, arrives too late for us to respond to it in the manner necessary to tackling this growing problem.

The Greenhouse Indicator puts a figure on what is happening now, and enables everyone to follow how much we are collectively emitting in our state each and every week.

For more details and an explanation of the Indicator's methodology visit

www.theclimategroup.org/indicator

About The Climate Group

The Climate Group (www.theclimategroup.org) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that works internationally with government and business leaders to advance climate change solutions and accelerate a low carbon economy. The Climate Group was founded in 2004 and has offices in the UK, USA, China, India and Australia.

For more information please visit www.theclimategroup.com

Appendix 1

Greenhouse Indicator

2009-2010 Summer Summary

Greenhouse Emissions (mil tonnes CO2 equiv)

	VIC	NSW	QLD	SA	Combined
2008/09					
Coal	15.852	16.348	11.187	1.115	44.502
Gas	2.100	1.720	1.725	1.695	7.240
Petroleum	6.249	8.795	7.343	1.937	24.323
TOTAL	24.200	26.863	20.255	4.746	76.065

2009/10	Change		Change		Change		Change		Change	
Coal	16.151	1.89%	15.001	-8.24%	11.339	1.35%	1.320	18.38%	43.810	-1.56%
Gas	1.869	-11.00%	1.666	-3.17%	1.688	-2.12%	1.409	-16.86%	6.632	-8.40%
Petroleum	6.169	-1.28%	8.667	-1.45%	7.560	2.95%	1.988	2.68%	24.385	0.25%
TOTAL	24.188	-0.05%	25.334	-5.69%	20.587	1.64%	4.717	-0.61%	74.827	-1.63%

Change from 2008-9	-0.012		-1.529		0.332		-0.029		-1.238
Change ('000s tonnes)	-11.99		-1529.24		331.77		-28.84		-1238.29

Market share										
Coal	66.8%		59.2%		55.1%		27.98%		58.5%	
Gas	7.7%		6.6%		8.2%		29.87%		8.9%	
Petroleum	25.5%		34.2%		36.7%		42.15%		32.6%	
TOTAL	100.0%		100.0%		100.0%		100.0%		100.0%	

