

CSD15 Australian Statement on Climate Change

1 May 2007

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates

Australia is firmly committed to the fight against global climate change. We are committed to finding a common path towards international cooperation which is inclusive and environmentally effective, and which addresses energy issues and development opportunities for all countries.

Australia demonstrated this commitment through its announcement of a Global Initiative on Forests and Climate in March. As you know, deforestation and degradation of forests is a major contributor to global warming - almost 20 per cent of global emissions currently come from clearing the world's forests - second only to the emissions produced from burning fossil fuels to produce electricity, and more than all of the world's emissions from transport. Through the Initiative, Australia will work with like-minded countries and international organisations to reduce deforestation, support reforestation and to implement sustainable forest management. This is a practical approach which targets a widespread problem from the national, regulatory level, right down to the local and community level.

The Forests Initiative is an example of practical action which complements the work being undertaken by our colleagues in the UNFCCC. Similarly, the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (AP6) is a practical approach which is complementary in nature to UNFCCC efforts.

Australia's strong view is that any climate related matters decided here at CSD 15 should be practically focused and reflect this complementarity. They should not duplicate or stray into areas already being addressed by the UN Climate Convention or the IPCC. The CSD, in its consideration of climate change, should keep a focus on practical, inclusive and sustainable actions which support the UNFCCC's work towards a longterm global framework to address climate change.

Our colleagues in the UNFCCC will, next week in Bonn, continue their discussions on the way forward - beyond 2012 - the big picture of combating climate change. In CSD, our job is to consider how practical climate solutions can work closer to home, reflecting different national circumstances, involving business, utilising technology and addressing the link between energy, sustainable development and climate. Bearing this in mind it is hard to see how a lengthy negotiated decision from CSD15 would assist our colleagues in Bonn. We need a concise decision that focuses us on practical efforts that will complement the activities of the UNFCCC.