

MEDIA RELEASE

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New environment legislation ignores climate change

Today, the Government tabled 409 pages of amendments to Australia's environment laws, but climate change is not mentioned once.

There's not one single measure in the Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill (No.1) 2006 to cut Australia's soaring greenhouse pollution or protect Australia from dangerous climate change.

Climate change is the elephant in the room being ignored by John Howard.

Climate change is a serious threat to Australia's economy and environment, and action is needed on the ground and in legislation to avoid dangerous climate change.

Climate change is making Australia's weather more extreme and cutting water supplies to cities and agriculture. Leading businesses say "climate change is a major business risk and we need to act now".

The Government has responded to other serious threats to Australia with legislative measures, so the absence of any climate change measures in this Bill suggest the Government doesn't think climate change is a threat.

The legislation should have included measures to cut greenhouse gases, encourage energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, and measures to ensure appropriate assessment of large scale greenhouse polluting projects.

It is clear that climate change sceptic and Industry Minister, Ian Macfarlane, is running climate policy in the Howard Government.

I am appalled the Government is trying to ram this legislation through Parliament.

With 409 pages of amendments, the Bill will change the way the environment is protected.

The Parliament and the community must have a decent opportunity to scrutinise and discuss the implications of this Bill, but the Government seems determined to have the debate done and dusted by the end of November.

Ramming through massive changes to Australia's environment laws is extremely arrogant.

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For further information/comment:

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