

# Malcolm, most Libs think you're wrong on climate



by [Wilson Tuckey](#)

[21 comments](#)

The Rudd Government, recognising that their Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is a lemon, has followed the same strategy as a car manufacturer and rebadged the product under the label of a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS).



Tuckey: Turnbull is missing a tactical opportunity to attack Rudd on the ETS

They have not, however, improved the product nor does their ETS comply with its new label. The ETS remains a process whereby the Government sells or gifts the right to continue polluting the atmosphere to those industries most notorious for so doing. Rudd further expects to gain \$11bn of Tax Revenue from the process.

He sells this proposal under the delusion that there will be a market based response from those so taxed, which will cause them to reduce their emissions.

How an industry, which receives the right to pollute free of charge, experiences any market pressure is not explained by Minister Penny Wong, whose answer to all intelligent queries is “The National Interest” or a political attack on the Opposition.

Just how the “National” climate change interest is served by giving people the right to pollute is also ignored.

The Leader of the Opposition, who quite correctly highlights the negative economic effect that this punitive tax regime will have on certain industries, particularly those who must compete on price at home and abroad, now suggests the process might receive Coalition support if more free certificates to pollute were provided. How this process can comply with the principles of so called Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme is also lost on me.

As the Greens now claim, for an ETS process to reach its intended target of significant carbon emission reduction, it must take no prisoners and price itself at say \$50 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>, to force the emitter to find emission investment alternatives that cost less.

Such a response is of course untenable, but if a lesser penalty is applied the cheapest option for those forced to buy certificates is to do just that and keep polluting, particularly if you service a captive market where you can simply pass on the cost.

Those who receive their certificates for free, have sufficient time to plan their business exit strategy before the threatened tax is applied. Massive job losses will follow.

The question then arises; why have an ETS as a response to carbon emissions if, in the format provided, no one need comply? I have long argued that the task of the Opposition is to differentiate an ETS within the climate change debate. The European system has had little or no success, other than as a non tariff barrier.

The US Congress has only agreed by the narrowest of margins (7 out of 431 votes cast) to approve a 'Claytons' ETS which apparently will have no material effect on US industry or emissions until 2025. This proposal has yet to pass the Senate and also has tariff implications.

Both China and India have now made it clear that an ETS is not on their agenda and just how one would be administered in China is difficult to imagine.

They are both investing heavily in nuclear energy and in the case of China, exploiting available technology such as a 2000km high voltage DC electrical transmission system to transmit their huge hydro resources to the east coast manufacturing area with little energy losses.

This opportunity exists for Australia and examples can be found on my website, [www.wilsonsuckey.com.au](http://www.wilsonsuckey.com.au). Had Rudd invested his \$24bn of \$900 cheques in electrical infrastructure reform he could have achieved a 20% emission reduction and lower rather than higher energy prices.

Both China and India will be ready to replace or accommodate those Australian companies who find it uneconomic to purchase the right to pollute in Australia and invest their own capital in such low emission technology as the Chinese Government will provide along with low energy costs.

Put simply, why would any leader genuinely committed to energy efficiency and reducing carbon pollution, back an ETS which will so obviously fail whilst guaranteeing the imposition of an impossible financial burden on Australia's energy intensive industries?

Worse, in the light of these facts, why would a leader of the Opposition not grasp the political opportunity to attack this scheme and its failings? Why not highlight the alternatives which a Coalition Government could implement to achieve genuine emission reduction without harming our economy?

Recent history demonstrates how many seats were won by Kim Beazley's ongoing and misguided opposition to the GST. From a political perspective, I consider the failings of an ETS on both sides of the ledger are genuine manna from heaven for an Opposition and I am sure such an opinion resides amongst the majority of our Party Room.

## 21 comments

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- **Paul says:**

I am not a fan of you Wilson Tuckey. But you are 100% right on this matter. Please Malcolm kill this horrible beast of legislation

July 23rd, 2009 at 07:05am

- **Tony Dancer says:**

Most scientists think you're wrong on climate, Wilson. Unfortunately Malcolm Turnbull is starting to find out how captive the Liberal Party is to the far-right. The vast majority of the public want something done on climate change and while Labor's ETS is undeniably pissweak in that it beats the big polluters with a feather it was created that way because the Government know how many anti-environment types reside in the Opposition (mainly the neanderthals in the National Party and a few in the Liberal Party) so knew something no matter how tiny would look better in the public's eye than the Opposition's "Big Business can do no wrong" stance. Of course we all remember how well their policy WorkChoices to placate those Big Business backers of their party went down at the last election. This isn't the first time Mr Tuckey has opened his mouth to change feet (much like the Nationals Barnaby Joyce) and it certainly won't be the last but I did have to laugh at the Liberal Party's own Joe Hockey trying his hardest not to criticise Mr Tuckey on last night's national news bulletins but failing with his "mad uncle" comment. Unelectable.

July 23rd, 2009 at 07:32am

- **coxie says:**

Let's call a spade a spade, the ETS, CPRS, or any other nefarious, and erroneous, name that the spin doctors may wish to call IT; IT is still a TAX, or a levy, duty, surcharge, etc, etc, on our collective, economic activity. All of us should just acknowledge this reality and that to emit pollutants of any description is in unacceptable human activity for which we (the people, ...) need to do something NOW to affect and effect a sustainable future for all.

July 23rd, 2009 at 07:58am

- **pete says:**

Well it is delightful to see our elected representatives actually discussing something in the national interest rather than their usual self interest. Although I do not like your party's views on climate change, I am glad that someone is actually discussing A POLICY rather than just opposing I agree with the previous comment in regard to the

number or neanderthals in opposition and the fact that they all seem to suffer from “Julius Marlow “syndrome, i.e. the only time they open their mouth is to change their feet. I also agree with the previous comment in regard to Joe Hockey and will go one further, if he is leader of the opposition at the time of the next election, you should all go on leave and don't even bother running a campaign

July 23rd, 2009 at 08:07am

- **Country Pete says:**

Ah, Tony - did you even bother to read Wilson's article before you jumped in with your hyperventilating contribution?

The issue is not whether man-made global warming exists, it is whether the Rudd Government's ETS is a good scheme or a crap one. And the answer? It is a crap one.

It is a poorly-directed tax with regressive implications for the poorest members of the community. It will cripple farmers, with one economic think-tank estimating that more than 50% of all cattle farmers will be forced out of business.

It does not replicate European and US schemes, which specifically exclude agriculture - yet at the same time it makes no recognition of those farmers who do the right thing by way of reforestation and biomass.

Basically, the ETS is a failure on every level. It will not reduce CO2 emissions, it rewards big emitters and it will slug the farming community, forcing us to rely on foreign food imports.

Wilson is correct - it should be rejected and replaced with something which will work.

July 23rd, 2009 at 08:17am

- **Duncs of Mendooran NSW says:**

I just love the idea of Wilson and Barnaby standing shoulder to shoulder... For the record, I think they are dead right.

This tax will simply turn into little more than a tax for living - and will make a lot of money for those who trade in this new 'commodity'.

In addition, simply moving the ownership of a commodity around, doesn't mean it ceases to exist - this scheme will do absolutely nothing to reduce carbon emissions.

July 23rd, 2009 at 08:31am

- **Rationalist says:**

Wilson Tuckey is a champ, always with the best points of order!

He is dead right with this article. If you want to reduce emissions you should only do it “constructively”. Rather than lobbing a tax over the people of Australia simply invest in infrastructure which will solve the problem. Nuclear power, basically.

Anyone who whines about nuclear will simply be told that the only other base load option is coal, by and large. So greenies! Pick one, coal or nuclear.

July 23rd, 2009 at 08:52am

- **formersnag says:**

Trading in carbon default swaps, derivative forestry futures, shares in timbercorp, great southern etc is exactly the kind of thing that caused the Global Financial Crisis and is guaranteed to trigger the next one. While doing nothing at all directly to reduce co2 emissions.

Why cant we have reduced corporate taxation for “Good Corporate Citizens” who satisfy a set industry standard for all that they do, as well as pollute. Then the standard rates of tax could be increased later for those recalcitrant types.

July 23rd, 2009 at 08:57am

- **iansand says:**

Any scheme that Australia produces will be useless in the grand scheme of things as a means of actually reducing emissions. Where it is useful is demonstrating a united first world front in pressuring China and India. It was much easier for the US to be intransigent on Kyoto when they could point to the support of lickspittle Australia. With the US doing nothing it was difficult to pressure China and India to commit to any targets - why should they, when the consumer of ~25% of the world’s energy was refusing to do anything?

That is the point of a carbon reduction scheme, not the actual reduction of emissions.

July 23rd, 2009 at 09:00am

- **Lenny says:**

Good to see the opposition have debate going on amongst themselves, unlike the the Rudd Government where they all play follow the leader and read from the same script.

July 23rd, 2009 at 09:05am

- **AllanL says:**

It is great that debate about the ETS is hotting up.

There are gaping holes in the response by global governments and there is a very real chance that the Copenhagen Talks will fail to produce anything of value binding on Governments.

Just think if half the cars in our cities are converted to electricity, our consumption of electricity will require us to increase the production of electricity hugely.

Renewables, except for geothermal, and efficiency improvements will not go anywhere near producing enough baseline power to meet that increased demand.

If you don't like coal powered power stations the only option will be Gen4 / Gen5 nuclear power stations.

But politically I believe the opposition should point to every weakness in the Governments ETS, propose amendments and then abstain if the amendments don't get up.

Let Rudd and those that support him wear the responsibility for bring to life a real Frankenstein of public policy that in all likely hood will emasculate the Australian economy.

July 23rd, 2009 at 09:26am

- **Alvin says:**

Interestingly a cap and trade scheme was used in the 80s to reduce pollution causing acid rain in the US - and my didn't big business fuss and say it would go broke then. It didn't and the cap and trade scheme worked fantastically well. This Australian CPRS is not perfect but at the very least it establishes a framework to build on as opposed to doing bugger all and trying to score cheap political points. The Coalition never came up with anything feasible.

July 23rd, 2009 at 09:37am

- **CS says:**

The carbon pollution reduction scheme will cut more than \$30 billion out of the Australian business sector over the next five years even with the so-called compensation.

That's more than double the total profits of the construction industry in Australia.

What do you think happens when businesses no longer become profitable???

July 23rd, 2009 at 09:57am

- **Joe says:**

I agree totally with you Wilson. Turnbull is mad not to stand up to this new tax for his constituents as it will cost jobs and put up expenses for families.

Turnbull may be looking for a few votes in his trendy electorate but the rest of Australia wants to see much more debate and opposition on this front. Tell Turnbull not to be scared of the media and Penny Wong's reaction. Remember the left-leaning media aren't the public.

If Turnbull is all the way with Rudd on ETS why would you vote for Turnbull as he would only be Rudd lite anyway...

Thank you for standing up and helping to start this debate.

July 23rd, 2009 at 10:05am

- **RT says:**

When Wilson says 'most Libs think (Turnbull) is wrong on climate' I presume he means 'most crusty old Liberal MPs who belong to the past and should have retired long ago' Last time I saw opinion polls it shows most Liberal voters agree with action on climate change.

July 23rd, 2009 at 10:05am

- **laurie says:**

Like previous comments I have not been able to understand the logic of the ETS as it didn't seem to make sense. Wilson Tuckey explains why. Thank you Wilson for explaining it as nobody has explained the contradictions in it. The ETS will mean higher energy costs and savings will be made by those not able to afford to buy energy using less or moving offshore. This includes pensioner households and poor Australians. It seems like a very un-Labor like policy and almost hysterical.

July 23rd, 2009 at 10:09am

- **Penny L says:**

I agree with you Lenny, Good to see democracy is alive and well in the opposition. Unlike the Rudd robots, who repeat each other like parrots.

July 23rd, 2009 at 11:00am

- **G says:**

I hope people can see past their loathing of Mr Tuckey to hear the soundness of the argument—some points that have been distressingly absent from the carbon credit (as opposed to climate change) debate so far.

July 23rd, 2009 at 11:13am

- **Meg says:**

For the record, the majority of voters do NOT want an ETS or CPRS unless it does not cost them anything - either directly or indirectly - or affect their quality of life.

In the last C'W election they did not vote for a CPRS but for a change of government. They wanted to feel good about 'climate change' but at no time was it even mentioned, much less spelt out, that doing anything would cost them money or affect their quality of life.

Wilson's Tuckey's comments are correct. What do we want - a warm fuzzy feeling about climate change or low interest rates due to our strong exports. Most people will go for the latter first.

July 23rd, 2009 at 11:58am

- **Ben Payne says:**

The cost of any carbon trading scheme will be paid by us, the people, in the way of increased prices for goods and services. To suggest that this will affect executive salaries or industry profit just shows a criminal level of ignorance.

If the government was serious about climate change and cutting carbon emissions, it would be building renewable energy power plants. The technology is available - geothermal, tidal, wave, wind and solar, any one of which could power our entire country, forever, for free.

July 23rd, 2009 at 12:01pm

- **Matt. Y says:**

Look everyone, we all know that Australia's cut in emissions ,whatever the number may be, will do jack for the planet. But, if we have a CPRS in place when we go to Copenhagen, we won't sound like hypocrites and we will genuinely be able to pressure the big emitters such as China and India to employ an ETS/CPRS or whatever you want to call it. Once China and India buckle to the pressure (if the majority of nations begin employing a CPRS) we will see the massive changes needed for our one and only home, plane earth.

For now, I'll stick to be vegetarian - the best way for someone to fight climate change themselves 😊

Anyway, although most of the time I despise you Wilson 🤨, thank you for starting this debate - the Australian public also values a man who can stick his head out for his beliefs, whatever they may be.

July 23rd, 2009 at 12:56pm