THE CLIMATE GROUP

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GREENHOUSE EMISSION CUTS THIS SUMMER STYMIED BY CONTINUED GROWTH IN COAL EMISSIONS

- **EMISSIONS FROM COAL CONTINUE TO RISE, ESPECIALLY IN VICTORIA**
- **NSW AND QLD BOTH SEE TOTAL GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS DOWN SLIGHTLY**
- **PETROLEUM EMISSIONS FALL ACROSS VIC, NSW AND QLD**
- **VICTORIANS CUT ENERGY DEMAND MORE THAN OTHER STATES**

Greenhouse gas emissions from energy use across Australia's eastern states totalled 68.7 million tonnes this summer, a fall of just 60,000 tonnes or less than one per cent compared with emission last summer. 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 and Queensland on a weekly basis.

The reduction was due to a significant fall in emissions from petroleum of almost one million tonnes, or just under four per cent, across all three states. However, this good news was almost entirely wiped out by a continued rise in emissions from coal-fired electricity, which rose by 770,000 tonnes, or 1.9 per cent, compared with the previous summer.[1]

While Victoria produced more coal-fired electricity this summer, it was the only state to see its electricity use decline.

<u>The emissions picture was not uniform, and varied across the three states.</u>

New South Wales and Queensland's emissions from energy use this summer were 24.7 and 19.1 million tonnes respectively. Both states reduced their overall emissions, by 310,000 tonnes and 230,000 tonnes respectively, when compared with the previous summer. Both states also saw big reductions in petroleum product emissions (3.6 and 3.7 per cent) with New South Wales also reducing its emissions from coal-fired power by 0.7 per cent or 107,000 tonnes compared with the previous summer. Queensland saw a slight rise in coal-fired emissions of 0.3 per cent. [2]

In stark contrast, Victoria saw a rise in overall emissions by some 483,000 tonnes when compared with the previous summer, in spite of a 4.6 per cent decrease in petroleum product emissions. The culprit was a 5.6 per cent increase in emissions from Victoria's coal-fired power stations, the equivalent of 851,000 tonnes.

Rupert Posner, Australia Director of The Climate Group said:

"This report shows that the good news of decreasing emissions from petroleum products has been entirely undone by another big increase in emissions from coal-fired power stations, particularly those burning the most greenhouse-intensive brown coal.

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[1] The rise in emission from coal-fired power stations continues the trend seen in 2008, when emissions from coal rose by 3.6 per cent in Queensland, 2.4 per cent in Victoria and 0.7 per cent in New South Wales.

[2] The summer also saw an increase in the amount of diesel being used across New South Wales and Queensland in place of petrol, continuing the trend seen in 2008.

"These increases in coal emissions come at a time when we need the exact opposite to be happening.

"2009 is an incredibly important year for action on climate change. We have an ever-decreasing window of opportunity to act if we are to avoid dangerous climate change, with potentially catastrophic results in Australia, and around the world.

"We need to quickly find out if we can turn our greenhouse intensive coal-fired power stations into ones that produce electricity with no greenhouse emissions. In other words we need to know pretty soon whether carbon capture and storage is a viable solution for Australia."

The total amount of electricity generated across the East coast states continued its upward trend with 47 million megawatt hours produced in total, 1.7 per cent more than the previous summer. However, emissions from electricity grew more strongly, by 2.1 per cent, reflecting the increased burning of the most greenhouse polluting brown coal in Victoria.

Demand for electricity varied across the states. Despite being the only state to see a rise in its overall emissions compared with last summer, Victoria was the only state to see demand for electricity fall, down one per cent. As a result, Victoria exported significantly more of its electricity compared with the previous summer.

Demand for electricity rose in Queensland, by 3.9 per cent, as well as in New South Wales by 1.2 per cent. However, cleaner sources of generation such as gas and hydro electricity took a larger share of this output. This was especially true in New South Wales which commissioned two new gas generators over the summer period.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

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

Time Scale

The summer report looks at emissions across a 13 week period from 28 November – 26 February 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 and Queensland 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. We get business and government leaders talking – CEOs talking to heads of state, senior VPs to policymakers. And we concentrate on building the economic case for taking action against climate change. Because we believe that's the best way to make change happen. We broker partnerships and harness investment in low-carbon technologies. Because we can only tackle the climate issue if business, government and civil society work together.

We share practical ideas so others can be inspired and learn from them. We run leadership groups and webinars on issues like carbon management and energy efficiency. We focus on 'game changing' initiatives, because they're the ones that will make the biggest difference in the least amount of time. We act independently with no political agenda or any vested interest. And our plans are flexible, because the climate change challenge is evolving every day.

Appendix 1

Greenhouse Indicator - 2009 Summary

Greenhouse Emissions From Energy Use (mil tonnes CO2 equiv)

	VIC		NSW		QLD		Combined	
Summer 2007/08								
Coal	15.214		15.065		10.783		41.063	
Gas	2.444		0.112		0.533		3.089	
Petroleum	7.238		9.514		7.793		24.545	
TOTAL	**24.897**		**24.691**		**19.109**		**68.697**	
Summer 2008/09		% Change		% Change		% Change		% Change
Coal	16.066	5.60%	14.958	-0.71%	10.813	0.27%	41.837	1.89%
Gas	2.406	-1.57%	0.253	126.43%	0.559	4.91%	3.219	4.19%
Petroleum	6.908	-4.57%	9.170	-3.61%	7.503	-3.71%	23.582	-3.92%
TOTAL	**25.379**	**1.94%**	**24.382**	**-1.25%**	**18.876**	**-1.22%**	**68.638**	**-0.09%**
Est emissions not included by Indicator	**4.6**		**25**		**20.8**			
Change from 2007/08	0.483		-0.309		-0.233		-0.060	

Market share					
Coal	63.3%		61.3%		57.3%
Gas	9.5%		1.0%		3.0%
Petroleum	27.2%		37.6%		39.8%
TOTAL	**100%**		**100%**		**100%**