

Submissions for the *Australia 2020* Summit

The Rudd Government will convene an *Australia 2020* Summit at Parliament House on 19-20 April 2008 to help shape a long term strategy for the nation's future.

The Summit will bring together some of the best and brightest brains from across the country to tackle the long term challenges confronting Australia's future.

Every Australian has the opportunity to make a submission to the Summit in one of the ten critical areas of discussion:

1. The productivity agenda – education, skills, training, science and innovation
2. The future of the Australian economy
3. Population, sustainability, climate change and water
4. Future directions for rural industries and rural communities
5. A long-term national health strategy – including the challenges of preventative health, workforce planning and the ageing population
6. Strengthening communities, supporting families and social inclusion
7. Options for the future of Indigenous Australia
8. Towards a creative Australia: the future of the arts, film and design
9. The future of Australian governance: renewed democracy, a more open government (including the role of the media), the structure of the Federation and the rights and responsibilities of citizens
10. Australia's future security and prosperity in a rapidly changing region and world.

SUMMIT TOPICS FOR SUBMISSIONS #

(please limit comments to 500 words per topic)

Population, sustainability, climate change and water

The *Australia 2020* Summit will examine:

- a. How Australia develops a long term plan to adapt to the growing impacts of climate change on our environment
- b. How does Australia best plan for its long-term water and energy needs
- c. How we position Australia to become a global leader within the next decade in the new low carbon technologies and industries
- d. How do we plan future population growth at a national and regional level, given the constraints of water shortages and sustainability.

Key outcomes for consideration for inclusion in the 2020 Summit Proposals from the Switch to Green Conference

The challenge:

- Recent scientific evidence points to climate warming occurring at a faster rate than that predicted in the IPCC reports.
- In SE Australia it is predicted that rainfall will decrease in winter and spring, with serious implications for agricultural production. Wind speed is predicted to increase, humidity to decrease, solar radiation to increase, and also an increase in evaporation.
- Water security in SE Australia will decline and competition for water will consequently increase.
- The case for urgent action is very strong. Human activity is causing global warming and it will have huge impacts. People can change their lifestyles and reduce their energy footprint. Energy and Transport are societal issues and we need to debate them.
- Adaptation to climate change needs to become a mainstream issue in all plans, policies and strategies
- A zero emissions target is necessary to avoid dangerous climate change and is achievable.

Electricity generation

- Solar Thermal electricity generation combined with thermal storage could easily meet the energy needs of the ACT and Eastern Australia according to Dr David Mills, Chairman of Ausra Pty Ltd, one of the world's leading companies in the construction of solar thermal power station. Detail analysis of the NSW power market and the potential sites for solar thermal generation were presented.
- What is needed to establish BIG solar is stable Federal policy, loan guarantees, climate sensible government market targets, carbon trading, market entry subsidy, and an enlarged transcontinental grid.
- The decisions by the ACT Government to undertake a feasibility study for a Solar Thermal power station and to introduce a feed-in solar electricity scheme are both timely and welcome initiatives.

Ending dependence on cars for transport

- Transport accounts for almost half of our GHG emissions.
- Canberra needs to reduce car use by 50% by 2050.
- Experience around the world and in Australia shows that public transport works with a combination of electric rail between town centres and transport hubs and feeders bus services to local hubs. Canberra needs to begin planning for an electric light rail system
- Canberra is well placed to develop higher density urban hubs with pedestrian friendly green town centres and fast inter-urban electric rail connections
- Future planning needs to be directed to three objectives: TOD, POD, GOD: Transport Oriented Development, People/pedestrian Oriented Development and Green Oriented Development

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Greening homes

- Need to address the “hassle factor” in helping home owners to green their house
- A street by street approach with Teams trained to assist sustainability (so called ‘eco coaches): providing advice to householders on travel, energy, water and waste options to reduce emissions. What is needed is an individualised marketing approach to households. Groups like See Change are having an impact with this approach.
- Need to address the link between advice and how to implement the advice: compile a directory of suppliers outlining who does what in greening a house.
- Help return to child friendly city.

Greening property development

- Adjust building regulations to make Green Building more affordable.
- Need new financial models to assist innovation
- Greater emphasis is needed on solar passive design in urban planning
- Program to retrofit investment houses
- Energy efficiency remains the low hanging fruit in reducing emissions