



WHITSUNDAY
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

Caring for the future is in our nature

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22 March 2021

**SUBMISSION ON THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE INQUIRY INTO THE PRUDENTIAL
REGULATION OF INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA'S EXPORT INDUSTRIES.**

Attention: Committee Secretary
The Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth

**Dear Secretary and Members of The Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment
Growth,**

On behalf of the Whitsunday Conservation Council (WCC), please accept this submission regarding the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry into the prudential regulation of investment in Australia's export industries.

The WCC is a Whitsunday based umbrella organisation associated with and supporting a large number of Whitsunday based conservation groups

First off, WCC challenges the need for the inquiry into the prudential regulation of investment in Australia's export industries. This is clearly an attempt by the Federal Government to promote further investment in the coal and gas industries at a time when the smart money in our banking, insurance and superannuation institutions see increasing financial and health risks in these industries.

A further indication that our financial institutions see the coal and gas industries as risky business comes from the European Union which is already indicating it will place trade barriers and tariffs on countries like Australia if they continue to ignore international efforts to curb greenhouse emissions. This could see a collapse in prices for coal and gas and mining projects made unviable. Encouraging further investment in fossil fuel infrastructure and extraction could see Australia having increased exposure to the risk of stranded assets.

Even Wall Street is going green; a steadily growing trend in investment went fully mainstream in 2020 as a record number of corporations pledged to go "net zero" and move to cancel out the carbon emissions they produce to halt a catastrophic rise in global temperatures.

It is certainly not the government's place to attempt to influence, even regulate Australia's free market economy on behalf of the coal and gas industries.

Should this inquiry actually run, then, regarding the terms of reference, we would suggest the following information be collected:

- Why are our major financial institutions moving away from coal and gas and which energy industries do they recommend we invest in?
- Why are some Australian politicians encouraging Australian businesses to invest in coal and gas projects, and even investing taxpayer money in coal and gas projects, which carry unacceptable financial risk as the global market moves towards more efficient and environmentally sustainable technologies.
- How can the Government best support Australian communities and businesses to manage the inevitable world downturn of the coal industry?

It is of great national concern that members of our federal parliament are attempting to take action and potentially legislate to limit the free market upon which Australia's economy is based, and worse, actively encourage unviable, unethical and unsustainable investments.

Sincerely,



Faye Chapman
Secretary
Whitsunday Conservation Council



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