

Govt announces emissions trading timetable

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Tuesday, 18 March 2008

THE Australian Government has outlined its timetable for the introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) that will come into effect in 2010.

It includes four phases of consultation with industry and NGO groups and a Green Paper to be released in July that examines sectors included in the ETS and how emission caps will be set.

The timetable includes the following stages:

- March to June 2008: preliminary consultations on technical issues with industry and NGO groups.
- July 2008: public release of a Green Paper on emissions trading design, drawing on preliminary consultations.
- December 2008: public release of exposure draft legislation.
- March – mid 2009: Bill considered by Parliament.
- 2009: Consultation on emissions trading regulations.
- 3rd quarter 2009: Act enters into force, regulator established;
- 2010: Emissions trading scheme will commence.



Climate Change Minister
Penny Wong

Climate Change Minister Penny Wong reassured business and NGO groups that public consultation would continue as the Federal Government works to finalise the design of the ETS.

Public input would help inform the final design of the scheme “to ensure emissions trading gets the best results at the least cost”, Wong said.

“I want to assure industry that the views they have already expressed will be taken into account when formulating our policy positions,” Wong said.

Earlier this month, roundtable forums involving industry and other NGO groups were held. Wong and Agriculture Minister Tony Burke will begin discussions with agriculture sector leaders soon.

The second phase of public consultation will take place between July to early September and will focus on issues raised in the Green Paper.

Along with issues such as industry sectors covered and how emission caps will be set, the paper will also look at how to address the impact of emissions trading on carbon intensive, trade-exposed industries and households.

A further consultation phase will follow the release of the draft emission trading legislation in December.

As it arrives at its final decision on the design of the ETS, the government will also examine advice from the Federal Treasury as it undertakes economic modelling on the scheme, input from the Garnaut Climate Change Review including the final report due to be released in September and input from Council of Australian Government (COAG) meetings.

The Garnaut Climate Change Review will release an emissions trading discussion paper on March 20.