



## **Companies told to declare emission targets**

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**Reporter: Alexandra Kirk**

TONY EASTLEY: Corporate Australia is being challenged to declare its hand on greenhouse reduction targets.

The think-tank, the Climate Institute, says business leaders should come clean on their position, accusing many of them of pressuring the Federal Government to delay action on cutting emissions.

The Institute has taken out newspaper advertisements and written to the nation's top chief executives asking for a balanced approach.

From Canberra, Alexandra Kirk reports.

ALEXANDRA KIRK: The Climate Institute's chief executive, John Connor has placed ads in major newspapers and written to the Business Council of Australia and all its members.

JOHN CONNOR: It's a tough political environment and I don't think it's fair that one of the major players is allowed to get off scot-free on one of the critical elements of this debate.

You would see Woodside and Xstrata and Exxon Mobil, all of those are putting a lot of pressure on the Government and saying we should delay, we should give special treatments. All we're asking for is a bit of balance here, lets here what their views are in terms of the long term objectives for the planet and for the kind of low carbon competitive economy we should actually be aiming towards.

ALEXANDRA KIRK: One insider has labelled the challenge to business as "not very helpful".

Woodside says it will comment when the Government unveils its emissions trading scheme proposal, or White Paper, next month.

The Business Council isn't commenting, neither is the Australian Industry Group, though it has stipulated its preferred 2020 target.

ExxonMobil's spokesman, Rob Young, doesn't think it's for business to set or seek to set carbon targets.

ROB YOUNG: It's up to governments to determine what targets are appropriate based on the science and so forth that they wish to set. From our point of view, we consider

that climate change is a risk and we're working constructively with governments to provide input into their deliberations and in fact, along with a range of other stakeholders industry, we've been invited to do so by the Australian Government and Professor Garnaut and we've done that in an open and transparent manner.

ALEXANDRA KIRK: The Government will announce its interim emissions reduction target just before the Climate Change Minister, Penny Wong, heads to Poland next week for global negotiations. The Climate Institute wants business to reveal its hand before that.

The Government and Opposition aren't saying anything. But National Party Senator Ron Boswell, who recently sought the views of business leaders himself, says the ad strategy goes too far.

RON BOSWELL: Well I would call on the Business community not to be intimidated by the climate institute. I think they've got a cheek to come out and tell business what they should do. There's no doubt about it, businesses are becoming very edgy and very nervy about it.

ALEXANDRA KIRK: But Don Henry from the Australian Conservation Foundation says it's a case of give and take.

DON HENRY: Well some of Australia's biggest polluting companies have got their hands out for over a billion dollars a year in tax payers funded assistance to make the transition to a lower carbon economy. And if they want to have their hands in the public till to that extent, they should be saying where they stand on targets to reduce emissions.

TONY EASTLEY: The Australian Conservation Foundation's Don Henry, the report by Alexandra Kirk.