

Will Hodgman MP
Leader of the State Opposition
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Arrogance and laziness from Bartlett on climate change

It is the height of arrogance for Premier, David Bartlett, to imply that Tasmania does not need to be included in the round of consultations on the Garnaut Climate Change Review draft report because he has had a briefing on it.

It is also unacceptable for the Premier to take comfort in the fact that Tasmania would receive a visit from Professor Garnaut after his final report has been completed.

Leader of the State Opposition, Will Hodgman, said the Premier was continuing to take a back seat approach to the most important economic, social and environmental issue of our generation.

In contrast, the State Opposition believes that Tasmania can and must play a leading role in fighting climate change.

“And that means not being content for Tasmania to be left off the map when it comes to this landmark step towards an emissions trading scheme,” Mr Hodgman said.

“If Tasmania is to be a world leader in the fight against climate change, then we have to start behaving like one.”

A major investment in climate science and low-emissions innovation will be required as Australia heads towards an emissions trading regime, and Mr Hodgman believes Tasmania should be at the front and centre of this push.

With our proximity to the Antarctic, a wealth of knowledge in areas such as marine-based climate science, and in forestry, and our strength as a producer of clean

renewable energy, Tasmania has an opportunity to be a world-leader, as the global community moves inevitably towards taking decisive action to combat climate change.

Professor Garnaut has highlighted the need for increased investment in applied climate science in his draft report, and has also recommended a new research council be charged with elevating, coordinating and targeting Australia's effort in low-emissions research.

The State Government must argue Tasmania's case to be a hub for this sort of research and development.

"The State Labor Government has been asleep at the wheel on climate change for far too long.

"Tasmania remains the only state not to offer incentives to households to take practical action to reduce their greenhouse emissions – that this was not rectified in David Bartlett's first Budget as Premier was a massive oversight.

"And years after starting work on it, and releasing a draft strategy, the government still hasn't got its house in order in terms of releasing a final document.

"It was only last year that Mr Bartlett and members of the Labor Party voted in Parliament against the principle of legislated emission reduction targets to fight climate change.

"It is time for the Labor Government to wake up to climate change, and the opportunities, as well as the threats, that it presents Tasmania.

"That includes making Tasmania a key player in the debate surrounding a new emissions trading scheme, and the Premier must show leadership on this issue."

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