



MEDIA RELEASE:

July 24, 2007

Labor climate funding drop in the ocean of probable sea level rise

Australian aid watchdog AID/WATCH has welcomed today's policy announcement by the ALP to increase funding for climate change adaptation in the Pacific, however it has cautioned that the \$150m committed will not go far enough and must be provided in addition to existing aid commitments.

AID/WATCH Co-director Flint Duxfield commented "This is a welcome improvement on the Liberal government's woeful efforts to date, however if Australia is to meet its commitment to halve poverty by 2015, climate adaptation funding must be provided in addition to current aid pledges.

"Funding for climate adaptation should not be considered aid, but compensation by high emitting countries such as Australia to poorer countries who played no part in causing the climate shifts which are now having catastrophic impacts on their lives."

"Wealthy industrialized countries such as Australia have a responsibility to repay the ecological debt they have foisted on the majority world through their carbon-intensive development" he said.

Mr. Duxfield cautioned that while the \$150 million pledge is a significant improvement on the Liberal government's current \$32m commitment to climate adaptation, it is still far below what Australia needs to provide if it is to genuinely commit its fair share of climate change adaptation funding.

"Current estimates suggest between \$60-120bn in funding is required each year to assist poor countries to adapt to climate change. Australia's contribution to this needs to be between \$1.8-3bn which is more than ten times today's ALP announcement.

"The impact of Australia's emissions goes far beyond the Pacific and similarly, Australian climate compensation funding must also be provided to other vulnerable communities in Bangladesh, Vietnam and Southern Africa through global climate change funds.

"Unless Climate Change adaptation funding was accompanied with a genuine commitment to reduce Australia's domestic emissions, the benefits of this funding would be completely undermined in the long term by runaway climate change.

"If the ALP is serious about addressing the impacts of Climate Change in the Pacific then it must also commit to a policy which will keep global warming to below two degrees. Otherwise, regardless of adaptation funding, they are condemning millions of people to the severe flooding, droughts and epidemics which catastrophic climate change will induce" he said.

AID/WATCH urges the Government to demonstrate a genuine commitment to assisting climate affected communities in the Pacific by providing Australia's fair share of global funds for adaptation additional to aid commitments.

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