

Morrison must tear up Paris Agreement

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A FEW weeks ago, in Bangkok, there was a six-day meeting of the world's climate change bureaucrats to thrash out the details of a new rule book for the Paris Agreement.

In December, world leaders will all congregate in Poland for UN's Climate Change Conference, COP24 as it's known, and like Copenhagen and Paris that went before it, after their posturing speeches and group photograph, the politicians will 'agree' what's already been agreed by these bureaucrats in Bangkok.

Or that was the plan.

But Bangkok went off the rails. Officially it was reported as 'beset with tension', that key issues were 'stalemated' and that the future of the Paris deal was 'on the brink'. Central to this lack of consensus was a fight about the proposed rule book governing the implementation and monitoring of various Paris Agreement commitments. But really, the conflict was about the money.

Forget all the language about rising sea levels in the Pacific and saving polar bears, the real purpose of international climate change agreements is to move money from the developed world, rich countries like Australia and the US, to poor countries in the developing world. The Paris Agreement is not about the environment; it is about deindustrialising the West and imposing a 'moral tax' on nations that used fossil fuels to build wealth over the past two centuries and key in facilitating this is the new \$100 billion global climate change fund.

At Bangkok, Australia and the US were accused of stalling negotiations on the fund because they demanded greater transparency for how their billions would be spent. Quite rightly, the growing scepticism of taxpayers in both our countries is forcing a rethink on money being given away, hand over fist, to these global entities for little or no environmental gain.

Like foreign aid, which I grow ever more concerned fails to reach the people who desperately need it, I fear much of the climate change millions are merely being used to prop up the budgets of poorer countries, under the guise of green religion politicking, hiding more systemic financial problems in their countries such as lack of governance and corruption.

But it gets worse, because this week, the climate change shame police came knocking on Australia's door again. Despite our minuscule contribution of 1.3 per cent of global emissions, as a nation, we're now told we're expected to pony up some four billion dollars — that's more than four thousand million of your money — as part of our promises at the Paris Conference in December 2015. Or rather Malcolm Turnbull's commitments, remember him?

While it was the Abbott Government that first put Australia's 26 per cent emissions reduction target on the table, it did so on the advice that we could achieve these reductions, without any policy change, and without any significant economic damage. It was also on the written understanding that the emissions reduction agreement would include all countries.



The terms of the Paris Agreement changed considerably between Tony Abbott agreeing to it and Malcolm Turnbull ratifying it. Picture: Mick Tsikas/AAP

Three years on, we now know that even existing emissions reductions policy is putting power prices through the roof, sending jobs offshore, and risking blackouts when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine. We now know, that the emissions commissars will soon turn their attention to culling our animal herds and putting a carbon tax on cars. What's more — and this should be the clincher — we now know, that three of the four biggest emitters will make no commitments whatsoever, to reducing their emissions, leaving Australia in an even worse position than before.

Now, when circumstances change, smart people change their position. Tony Abbott has said that if we'd known then, what we know now, he'd never have agreed to a 26 per cent emissions reduction. Let's never forget that it was Turnbull government who signed the Paris Agreement and then raced out and ratified it the day after Trump was elected knowing the US were out. So far, and without much conviction, Prime Minister Morrison has said we're staying in — but that shouldn't mean that we hand over even more money to global green bureaucrats.

To big note himself at the Paris conference, Mr Turnbull promised “up to a billion dollars” for this UN green climate fund that was supposed to total no less than one hundred billion dollars each and every year. Now, something called the World Resources Institute says this week that Australia should be the sixth biggest donor to this fund — behind just America, Britain, Japan, Germany and Canada — because of our wealth, and because of our historical contribution to carbon dioxide emissions — and what was initially supposed to be a one-off contribution, of billions, could even be converted to an annual tax at the December meeting in Poland.

I can appreciate that Prime Minister Morrison is reluctant to change an international commitment made by his predecessor. But that's a weak reason in my book. After all, just the other day Labor agreed to support the TPP trade deal as it stands now but have already said they'll change it if elected. So, if they can change international commitments made by another government, why can't Morrison move here and be his own man?

It's one thing to stick with Paris, and on that I disagree with the PM, but it's another thing altogether to keep shovelling out good money after bad to a fund that we don't control. Mr Morrison should send a clear signal that he's in charge here, not the faceless global bureaucrats, by walking away from Turnbull's promise to put a billion dollars in the fund and declare from here on in, 'Australia comes first.'

And here's why getting out of the Paris Agreement matters.

On Monday, the North Rockhampton Bowls Club shut its doors, the latest victims of the great climate change con. As reported in their local paper, the club couldn't afford AGL's power costs to stay open. Since 2012, when the club's annual bill was \$67,793, electricity costs have almost doubled. Last year,

they paid a whopping \$100,267 and this year it's estimated to be about \$130,000.

Last year, the club was forced to lay off two permanent employees to try to cut costs and this week, another seven workers lost their jobs as it closed.

We say we care about older Australians, and we know that keeping active and socially connected is a key part of ageing well, so what do we expect the 600 or so members to do now? And this isn't just Queensland — it is happening right across the country as charities and not-for-profits, as well as small businesses, can no longer cope with the unaffordable cost of power.

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