



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
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The issue of weather and climate change has been around for quite some time.

Last century the editorial writer of an American newspaper commented that "everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it".

You can't say that anymore. The activities of humanity have started to exert a profound and an unhealthy influence on the earth and its atmosphere, resulting in the emergence of "The Greenhouse Effect" as a global environmental problem.

In the spirit of the newspaper editorialist, we must do something about this accelerated global warming and its potentially drastic effects, and we must do it now.

The need for energy conservation and efficiency is paramount.

Last year, my Government adopted an interim planning target of stabilising emissions of greenhouse gases by the year 2000, and reducing them by the year 2005 to 20% below their 1988 levels.

Of course, we had already adopted a policy of phasing out CFCs and halons (ozone depleting gases and also greenhouse gases) by 1997, three years ahead of the scheduled proposed by the Montreal Protocol.

These sorts of measures are a matter of great pride for me personally and for this Government.

Much of the focus about our environmental achievements over the years has been on domestic issues. But Australia has also been steadily building up a record of strength on international environmental issues which is second to none.

Truly global issues such as the Greenhouse Effect, depletion of the ozone layer and ecologically sustainable development are assuming increasing importance world-wide.