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Press Release: Attention Political, Resource & Environment Reporters

More Action Needed on Government Carbon Neutral Standards

Today, Minister Wong announced arrangements for the Government's Carbon Neutral accreditation program to be delivered by the Australian Carbon Trust, which implements part of the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS). The Voluntary Carbon Markets Association believes there are many gaps in the NCOS, which if not addressed will undermine consumer and business confidence in taking voluntary action to reduce greenhouse emissions.

Ric Brazzale, President of the Voluntary Carbon Markets Association said:

"We welcome Minister Wong's commitment to ensure consumers have confidence in whether a product is truly carbon neutral. The key issue we have is that NCOS does not enable domestic carbon abatement projects to qualify under the proposed standard due to lack of 'additionality'. Under the previous Greenhouse Friendly program 27 greenhouse abatement projects were accredited, these projects are stranded under the NCOS.

"This situation is driving purchasers of carbon offsets to invest in international abatement, and if allowed to continue, will undermine the growth of the voluntary carbon industry including the skills and jobs needed for domestic carbon abatement."

"Consumers and businesses that choose to go carbon neutral or purchase GreenPower, should be able to invest in Australian abatement projects and have their commitment count in addition to Australia's mandatory targets."

"The Federal Government can ensure consumer confidence by immediately retiring a Kyoto unit (AAU) for each tonne of voluntary carbon abatement from GreenPower, and other appropriate domestic abatement projects, including Greenhouse Friendly projects."

"Until these issues are addressed, the NCOS is unlikely to achieve its objectives and risks undermining consumer confidence in voluntary action needed to reduce greenhouse emissions."

The Voluntary Carbon Markets Association is an independent, non-profit organisation working to promote a vibrant and rigorous voluntary carbon market. We represent all aspects of the voluntary carbon market including businesses and local governments purchasing carbon abatement, carbon offset providers, carbon accountants and academic institutions.

For further comment, contact:

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