### Germany talks Nov/Dec 2015

## "Australia's climate policy and energy transition: a rollercoaster ride"

Frank Jotzo, Australian National University

Abstract:

Australia’s climate change policy has been through radical changes, with governments strongly committed to climate action followed by another which abolished carbon pricing and dismantled other aspects of climate policy. Under the present government it is expected that Australia will display a forward looking stance on climate policy. Australia’s emissions target of a 26 to 28% reduction in emissions by 2030 on 2005 will require significant effort if it is to be achieved domestically, given the relatively fast growing economy and population.

The political ructions over climate policy reflect a deep conflict between Australia’s inherent interest in strong global climate change action and its large coal endowment. But Australia is also blessed with practically unlimited low-cost potential for renewable energy, and a close to 100% renewable power supply is a possibility by mid-century. The challenge is how to facilitate the transition from the energy and carbon intensive structures of the past. Transition from coal to renewables getting underway in power supply, and there is also great potential for improved energy efficiency throughout the economy. Questions of economic policy and regulatory reform loom large. Insights from Germany’s energy transition process are relevant, and aspects of Australia’s coming energy transition could be interesting to Germany.

Alternative short Abstract:

Australia’s climate change policy has been through radical changes, with governments strongly committed to climate action followed by another which abolished carbon pricing and dismantled other aspects of climate policy. Under the present government it is expected that Australia will display a forward looking stance on climate policy. Australia’s 2030 emissions target will require significant effort. Australia has an inherent interest in strong global climate change action but also a large coal endowment. It is also blessed with practically unlimited low-cost potential for renewable energy. The challenge is how to facilitate the transition from the energy and carbon intensive structures of the past. Transition from coal to renewables for power supply is getting underway, and there is also great potential for improved energy efficiency throughout the economy. Questions of economic policy and regulatory reform loom large. Insights from Germany’s energy transition are relevant, and aspects of Australia’s coming energy transition could be interesting to Germany.

Bio:

Frank Jotzo is Associate Professor and Director of the [Centre for Climate Economics and Policy](https://ccep.crawford.anu.edu.au) at the Australian National University's Crawford School of Public Policy. His focus is on policy relevant research on the economics and policy of climate change and energy, in particular mechanism choice and design. In addition to academic work, he has contributed to advisory and assessment processes, including Australia's Garnaut Climate Change Review, as adviser to Indonesia's Minister of Finance and to the World Bank’s Partnership for Market Readiness program, IPCC lead author AR5 WGIII, the UN SDSN Deep Decarbonisation Pathways Project, and as leader of a collaborative research program with Chinese researchers. He is a member of advisory bodies to the governments of South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, and Associate Editor the Climate Policy journal. Frank is in Germany as part of a collaboration with Prof Andreas Loeschel of Muenster University, supported by the German government (Auswaertiges Amt).

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Web links:

Centre: ccep.crawford.anu.edu.au

Personal page: https://crawford.anu.edu.au/people/academic/frank-jotzo

Photo:

