



A low carbon future - Low Carbon Australia chairman The Hon Mike Rann

Energy efficiency is a way forward for Australian businesses seeking to position themselves at the forefront of a shifting global economy while cutting operating costs.

At the Rio+20 Earth Summit I attended last month, The Climate Group launched The Clean Revolution – a campaign to promote the massive up-scaling of clean technologies to create a smarter, better, more prosperous future for the world economy.

But the revolution will require bold, transformational leadership from the world's business leaders, investors and politicians to embrace this change to accelerate uptake to improving efficiency and productivity for a sustainable clean future.

My message in both my position as the Chair of Low Carbon Australia and my role with the International Leadership Council of the Climate Group, to which I was appointed by former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is that The Clean Revolution is happening, around the world, right now and we need to seize the moment of these opportunities or risk being left behind.

During my time as Premier of South Australia I was a strong advocate for built environment sustainability, believing it was important to demonstrate that we were serious about getting things done so we were able to realize the benefits of getting runs on the board early. A first mover advantage.

My government demonstrated that it was possible to be committed to sustainability and the environment while encouraging growth, mining, jobs creation and business opportunities that stem from a robust economy.

In the midst of the GFC, SA enjoyed strong economic growth, its highest ever employment levels and even recorded Australia's lowest unemployment. We were aggressive in our approach to securing private sector investment in renewables, substantially assisted by making our regulatory environment for wind farm and 'hot rocks' geothermal developments friendlier and more streamlined for business.

In 2002 there were no operating wind turbines in South Australia, yet today the state has 54 per cent of the nation's installed wind power and 26 per cent of SA

electricity come from wind ahead of coal fired generation. SA also leads the way in domestic solar take up.

As the chairman of Low Carbon Australia I'm equally as serious about leading by example and demonstrating the sound business case for energy efficiency across business and industry.

By working with some of the nation's leading financial institutions, government and industry, Low Carbon Australia has created a new frontier in financing which allows all sectors of business to harness readily available energy efficient technologies. We are helping make buildings smarter and greener through the deployment of intelligent and energy efficient technologies that reduce energy consumption while making buildings easier to manage and operate.

Through innovative leasing arrangements, loans and technology packages which can be repaid as part of a utility bill, we've come up with low carbon financing which means that building owners and tenants can access the very latest low carbon technologies now, without upfront costs and pay for them out of the savings they realise from reduced energy use and operating costs.

Energy efficiency has been the "sleeping" issue in the climate change debate, but corporate leaders are moving to embrace its attraction of improving productivity, bottom lines and reduced operating costs.

Smarter lighting, building management systems, boilers, pumps, air conditioning, and refrigeration improve productivity by helping organisations operate more efficiently, reduce those increasing power bills and lower their carbon emissions.

Low Carbon Australia is looking to work with The Green Building Council and other organisations within the built environment sector to help bring about this change.

We've already developed partnerships with the City of Melbourne 1200 Buildings program, City of Sydney and other public sector bodies with the objective of providing targeted investment such as through Environmental Upgrade finance to help to accelerate building retrofits across our cities. While rising energy costs are a big factor for many organisations, others are making this change for sustainability and to be well positioned as market leaders in our clean energy future. Low Carbon Australia is helping such organisations act now.

The most competitive companies – the ones expanding their reach and creating employment – will be the truly sustainable ones.

To learn more about Low Carbon Australia, visit www.lowcarbonaustralia.com.au