

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Amendment to Motion

Resumed from 20 June on the following motion moved by Hon J.A. Scott -

That the House notes the implications of the rapid rise of greenhouse gas emissions on the Western Australian ecosystems, human population and economy and supports any measures intended to reduce these emissions and their impacts.

to which the following amendment was moved by Hon Christine Sharp -

and calls on the Government to formulate and begin implementation of a state greenhouse strategy within six months from the date on which this motion is passed

HON PETER FOSS (East Metropolitan) [11.05 am]: Last week I concluded my preliminary remarks.

Hon N.D. Griffiths: Are these now the introductory remarks?

Hon PETER FOSS: Quite seriously. I pointed out to the House a significant cause, as distinct from a significant source, of greenhouse gas. Sometimes we become obsessed with the source rather than the cause of greenhouse gas.

I am very pleased to see that Hon Paddy Embry is with us today; I was afraid we would not see him again!

The significant cause of greenhouse gas emissions is the heat sink effect of cities. Anyone who has been in a large city must be conscious that such cities generate their own heat, due largely to the effect of large congregations of airconditioners busily cooling internal air and dehumidifying it. That causes a considerable amount of humidity and heat outside. That in turn changes the climate of cities adversely, so that more airconditioning is required. Strangely enough, the buildings we erect in Perth are made to be airconditioned all year, yet we must have one of the most benevolent climates in the world. It is now the middle of winter and we are experiencing weather that people would pay thousands of dollars to holiday in to get away from the dreadful climates in which they live. Some of the huge airconditioners in buildings in Australia are programmed to operate for 24 hours a day. Those buildings not only consume energy but also create the need for even greater energy consumption. The situation is ludicrous. It is time we examined not only how much energy we consume but also why we consume it.

Hon Robin Chapple: You need only go to the cappuccino strip in Fremantle to see that the cafes are pumping airconditioning into the street. It is nonsense.

Hon PETER FOSS: Patrons of those cafes are able to sit in the street; therefore, they do not need airconditioning. People look for cafes that provide open-air seating. The gases they emit are nothing compared to the gas that comes from huge buildings.

Hon Barry House: We could do with a little bit of that in this place.

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes, we could do with some airconditioning in here, albeit only occasionally. I would hate to see this place airconditioned all year round.

Hon B.M. Scott: We don't need it in winter; there is enough hot air as it is!

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes. I made the point previously that a survey was undertaken some years ago on the heat sink effect in Chicago of not just bitumen but also concrete, which has been substituted for trees, grass, bushes and general vegetation, which would have eliminated the heat sink effect. The survey found that 400 000 cubic metres of greenhouse gas an hour was emitted in summer. Although Perth is not as big as Chicago, it has a warmer climate and more expensive power.

Hon J.A. Scott: We have more road space per capita.

Hon PETER FOSS: Hon Jim Scott has quite rightly pointed out that we have more road space per capita. A program which was not sold properly as an environmental program and which has the potential to be a major benefit to the environment is the program to put the power underground. As soon as power is put underground, street trees can be grown that will cover the bitumen. Trees have a beneficial effect on the microclimate of a city, particularly if deciduous trees are planted - although they are not native. The trees provide a benefit in the summer and the winter. During summer, they reduce the heat effect of the sun, and in the winter they accumulate the heat together with the heat sink of the bitumen road. A real opportunity is provided to reduce the amount of energy consumed and, therefore, the amount of greenhouse gas that is emitted by considering the causes of the consumption of energy rather than its source.

Australia as a whole has been slow to adopt efficient electric motors. It is extraordinary how slow Australia has been because it is such a simple measure; however, it certainly is happening. Electric motors have improved

enormously. The energy consumption of a new refrigerator these days by comparison with the energy consumption of refrigerators some 20 years ago is considerably less. A good electric motor these days has the capacity to consume about 50 per cent of the energy that an electric motor would have previously consumed. Which country has been one of the slowest in the world to adopt energy-efficient electric motors? Australia. Again, the payback time on the change - in other words, the amount of energy that is saved by changing to electric motors - is extremely small. It takes about four years in America and, with our more expensive power, it would probably be considerably less time. It is paid for by substituting a more efficient form of electric motor in the huge quantity of electric motors; they are everywhere, there is an enormous number of electric motors. What are we doing to promote the adoption of energy-efficient electric motors?

Both of these measures are based on sound economic sense. They do not have to be promoted on their greenhouse gas emission benefits; we have only to inform consumers that it makes economic sense; that is all that needs to be said. Both measures make economic sense and have great benefits. Consumers can upgrade to a new machine and street trees can improve the aesthetics of a neighbourhood. People's self-interest should tell them that they should do it. It does not have to be a self-denying ordinance to try to prevent the consumption of greenhouse gas. Plain commonsense says it should be done.

Another classic example about which very little has been done in this country is electric lighting. The old-style offices in town - they are still being built in this way - have the old-style fluorescent lights; that is, a little box in which the fluorescent tube is put. Half of the light energy goes straight into the top of the box. It does not take too much calculation to work out that 50 per cent of the energy is lost. A simple energy-efficient design uses a mirrored surface above the fluorescent tube rather than a plain box. What is the result? The energy that was otherwise sent up to the ceiling in the form of heat, which in the summer uses more energy to cool down, is reflected down to where it will be useful. Again, a saving of perhaps 30 to 40 per cent of the energy that is consumed in lighting could be achieved. One need only drive down Riverside Drive at night to get an idea of the sort of figures we are talking about. The city buildings are significant consumers of electricity. Retro-fitting makes economic sense, as does putting it into all new buildings. Making it a building design requirement also makes an awful lot of sense. All those things are simple; they do not have to cost people money or cause people to deny themselves. They are a good combination of what can be done to save money, to improve the value one gets from the money spent and to reduce the consumption of energy, which in turn reduces the emission of greenhouse gases. Nine times out of 10, sound environmental measures - sound greenhouse reduction measures - make sound economic sense. There is no reason for a contradiction between the two. That does not mean that a person cannot still come up with an absolutely screwy idea. It is possible for a person to come up with an idea that does not make sound economic sense, which will then probably not make sound environmental sense. Generally speaking, it is not a bad test to check the economic effect of a proposed environmental measure, because unless there is a sound economic result at the end of it, there might be something wrong with the proposal; it may not be the best way to do it. It is not just a matter of balancing two considerations; it is a check-up on the logic of the proposal. Is the proposal environmentally sensible? That must obviously be checked. Is the proposal economically sensible? If the answer is no to either of those questions, the suggestion must be examined again. The answer may be no to both questions. I can always ask for an amendment to Hon Jim Scott's motion if he does not agree to the change I will propose, but I suggest that he consider it himself. He may have intended it and it may have been omitted. I would like the word "reasonable" inserted between the words "any measures" in Hon Jim Scott's motion. There are a number of good reasons that "reasonable" should be inserted in the motion. The first is the test that I suggested; that unless it is reasonable, it should go back to -

Hon Dee Margetts: Would you support it if those words were there?

Hon PETER FOSS: I would support the original motion. I would like to hear a bit more on the amendment to the motion by Hon Christine Sharp because there is a bit of a misunderstanding over that. Hon Derrick Tomlinson will deal with that. I have a problem with the original motion. I am not supporting it because of the rapid rise of greenhouse gas emissions. I would have preferred a motion directed at the use of energy. I support all the measures that Hon Jim Scott has suggested. I do not necessarily support all the science involved in greenhouse gas emissions. Irrespective of that, I support the measures to remedy it because I think they are sensible. I do not wholeheartedly support the scientific conclusions, but I certainly support the suggestion that greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced because, by reducing them, the consumption of energy and fossil fuels will be reduced, and that is eminently sensible. It does not need any scientific consequences; it is justifiable in its own right, without any doomsday-type predictions. I believe that the suggestion by Hon Jim Scott is not only sensible, but it also fits in with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which requires balance in any measures that are taken. I suggest that Hon Jim Scott make that amendment. That would then make his motion far more acceptable, because it would put a touch of reason into the whole thing.

I would like to hear more about Hon Christine Sharp's amendment, because more debate is likely on that one. I do not find it offensive, except in the assumptions made. I am allowed to draw my own conclusions, which are

that a huge amount of fossil fuel is being wasted as a result of the rapid rise in greenhouse gas emissions. I would prefer not to have seen some of the emotional words in the amendment, but I am happy to support reasonable measures intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their impacts. That is unarguable, as far as I am concerned, but the emotionalism at the beginning of the motion is more questionable. I would support a motion that said that the House supports any reasonable measures intended to reduce the rapid rise of greenhouse gas emissions and their impacts. My whole speech has been along those lines. With those few words I indicate an unqualified support for the result of a motion amended as I would suggest, some qualified support for the words that have been used, and unqualified support for the sentiments underlying the intent to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and the waste of energy that involves. I support the principle, though I may quarrel a little with the actual wording of the motion.

HON LOUISE PRATT (East Metropolitan) [11.22 am]: I have a few words to say on this topic but, being one inexperienced in speaking in this place, I do not know if I will be able to pontificate as fluently as Hon Peter Foss.

The greenhouse effect is something we should all be concerned about. It is seen by the public as a fairly remote issue, not affecting our hip pocket or lifestyle. As scientists are now telling us, however, that feeling of remoteness will eventually be eroded. The possible impacts of global warming include an increase in the number of summer days with temperatures over 40 degrees, which would have big consequences for all of us; a reduction in spring rainfall, which would impact greatly on our agricultural sector; an increase in the danger of bushfires; more cattle suffering heat stress; rising amoebic activity in water pipes, which is not good for public health; increasing prevalence of the Ross River virus; a greater number of cyclones; rising sea levels; and an increase in surface temperatures of between two and five degrees in the south west.

The greenhouse effect also has a great potential impact on biodiversity in Western Australia. One government report showed that at least 18 species of fauna and 119 species of flora are expected to die out. With the predicted rate of global warming, there will be little time for these species to evolve and adapt. The challenges will be made greater by the fact that so much of the south west of Western Australia is surrounded by farmland, making it difficult for species to migrate. The decline in biodiversity will have an economic as well as an environmental effect, as more is learned about the economic importance of the pharmacological properties of various organisms. Western Australia has much to lose, and needs strong policies and programs to cut greenhouse pollution.

I learnt about the greenhouse effect, and the importance of renewable energy, at school. We were told that Australia would be a leader in renewable energy. Unfortunately, we failed drastically to capitalise on this. I was told by Hon Robin Chapple that we even import wind turbines from overseas. Children today are still being taught about the greenhouse effect. The other day I had the pleasure of visiting the Noranda Primary School. That school won a 2001 energy efficiency award. It has a great program in which it generates 10 per cent of its energy requirements from solar panels. The school is very proud of its achievement, and so it should be. However, that is a drop in the ocean when one looks at the communities that are having a positive impact on reducing greenhouse emissions through the kind of cultural change that we should all be engaged in. It is the kind of philosophy that should underpin all Western Australian schools, households, communities and companies, if we are to make any headway towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I would like to look at practices in Parliament, such as members turning off their lights as they leave their offices. In addition to generating energy, the Noranda Primary School holds competitions each week in which the energy monitors in each classroom monitor that lights have been turned off at recess. I was taught these things as a child, and children are still being taught these things. When young people are brought up to have decent environmental values, I question why at a government and policy level we do not seem to be making much headway on this issue.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has reported that Australia is among the highest per capita greenhouse emitters in the world. That should be common knowledge by now. In 1998 emissions, excluding land clearing, increased to 116 per cent of 1990 levels, which is already eight per cent higher than our Kyoto target. Meanwhile, in the past couple of years, countries like the United Kingdom, Denmark, India and China - interestingly we have had some talk about China - have reduced their emissions. Denmark and the United Kingdom have already achieved their Kyoto targets. The federal Government has trumpeted that it has done quite a bit about greenhouse emissions. I am afraid that is not so. Supposedly it has spent \$1 billion; however, I do not feel this has been much more than an elaborate smoke-and-mirrors exercise. The federal Government has not confronted the issue head on. For example, it has relied on voluntary initiatives that have failed to move us beyond a business-as-usual approach to greenhouse emissions. Australia has not made any substantial transitions in its economy, industry or lifestyle to start eliminating emissions. In fact, this country has accelerated electricity consumption since the Kyoto Protocol. Unlike much of the developed world, as yet Australia has no mandatory performance standards for domestic or commercial buildings. Governments on a

state and national level definitely need to look at this. Part of what the federal Government has done to encourage business has resulted in only 209 of Australia's 890 000 businesses signing up voluntarily. Most of these companies have reported that the program has not played any role in reducing greenhouse emissions and even fewer are able to quantify any reductions. The majority of companies have said that the main reason they signed up with the scheme was for a positive corporate image.

Western Australia will have to make tough choices in its relationship with fossil fuels, which are a fundamental part of our economy. We have seen what has happened with the timber industry down south and people's future livelihoods. We must pay a lot of attention to how we can make the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy without threatening people's livelihoods and the incomes of families in this State. Australia has the fourth cheapest fuel of any Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development country. There has been a lot of discussion about petrol prices. I support the need to keep petrol prices down because of the impact they have on families and people's lifestyles. The State's development has been connected to the use of motor vehicles and it is something that we all take for granted. In the long term, this part of the Australian way of life will have to change.

In 1999 the federal Government introduced new environmental legislation that, for the first time, identified areas of national environmental significance. It left out climate change - which was a vast oversight - despite the fact that many groups and political parties lobbied to have it included. As a result, the Government does not have any mechanism for assessing greenhouse emissions from major projects and other activities such as land clearing. On a state level, the Australian Conservation Foundation describes the record of past Western Australian Governments on reducing greenhouse emissions as woeful. The Government's technical panels estimate that greenhouse emissions from industry and waste could triple by 2010 - that is untempered - and, with the simple business-as-usual scenario, it would double. We must realise that the dirty industries of the 20th century must give way to environmentally clean and more efficient ones in the 21st century. Renewable energy will be an employer and it is disappointing that we have failed to capitalise on our natural advantages. We have had the advantage in the past of having a lot of fossil fuels and we are now well placed to capitalise on renewable wind and solar energy. Unfortunately, we have not yet done so. In Germany, the wind power industry employs 25 000 people. Greenhouse emissions in Western Australia in 1990 were 42.5 million tonnes and in 1995 the figure grew to 49.3 million tonnes. The rate of increase in Western Australia is 2.7 times that of the rest of Australia.

Despite Western Australia's potential for solar, wind, hydro, tidal and wave power, only 0.3 per cent of Western Power's energy comes from renewable energy sources. This must be looked at.

There is a worldwide problem and people need to stop putting their heads in the sand. We must stop having a bob each way. I am watchful of companies that seek to challenge scientific principles because of economic self-interest. More companies, such as Shell Australia Ltd, are beginning to see that the greenhouse phenomenon is real. Western Mining Corporation sent me a brochure a few weeks ago that contained a large section on its environmental report. It discussed all the fantastic things that the company was doing. The report on greenhouse emissions was summarised with the following statement -

WMC supports the Lavoisier Society, a group which challenges the scientific basis behind climate change and seeks vigorous debate to ensure the Australian community fully understands the economic consequences of greenhouse policies.

I am a little disturbed by Hon Peter Foss's comments that a lot of economic support has been given to scientists to try to prove climate change, but that no support has gone the other way. Economic support has been given to scientists going the other way, generally from companies trying to disprove climate change. We all remember what happened with scientists and smoking and some of the false relationships that were established.

We can do much as a State. We have already started to look at carbon rights; however, that is not an excuse for failing to lower emissions. In that context, I indicate that the Government will support Hon Christine Sharp's amendment. As part of a six-month strategy, the State Government has established a task force to look at far-reaching carbon rights legislation to ensure significant reductions in greenhouse emissions. That task force is chaired by Fran Logan and has been established because it is important for the Government to provide clear, open and verifiable processes for establishing carbon rights, including the ownership and transfer of those rights. Carbon rights legislation and the processes associated with it might support revegetation or reforestation in Western Australia, which would also help alleviate our salinity problems and protect biodiversity.

The Government has indicated that it will deregulate the electricity market. I hope this will open up new opportunities for renewable energy, as 90 per cent of Australia's electricity is generated by burning coal. The deregulation of the electricity market in the eastern States has resulted in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions; however, we are watchful of this and have built a requirement for renewable energy into the deregulation process. Unfortunately, the national electricity market rules, which are supported by the federal

Government, make it illegal for State Governments to discriminate against power companies on the basis of poor environmental performance. That is something we must look into.

I compare Australia's renewable energy targets with those of other countries. Australia has a modest target of two per cent, on which we will have to improve, versus countries such as Italy, which has a target of nine per cent, and Denmark, which is doing well at 20.3 per cent - that is an additional target for 2010. I hope we can do better than that. Greenhouse emissions from the electricity sector have increased over the past several years, and by 2010 are projected to rise to about 60 per cent above 1990 levels.

We must move beyond the small prototypes and trials of renewable energy technologies about which we spoke in the 1980s. We must get down to business and look at favouring renewable energy technologies over polluting ones. We must weigh the economic costs of greenhouse gas-polluting energies against cleaner options. Coal power might seem cheaper; but that is not necessarily the case, particularly if we fail to include the environmental costs associated with our power sources. Australia must also accelerate its national appliance and equipment energy efficiency program. Hon Peter Foss spoke about appliance efficiency. However, Australia is not currently as efficient as it could be in this area. For example, the current minimum energy performance standard of refrigerators is significantly lower in Australia than it is in the United States. We must legislate to enhance the national appliance energy efficiency program and I hope we will examine that issue with the cooperation of state and federal Governments. We must accelerate the energy performance requirements for buildings, and I hope we can talk to local government about that.

We should also accelerate a review of the commonwealth's Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act, which set a two per cent target for energy efficiency. That Act has a range of functions that must be reviewed; for example, the extent to which the Act has both contributed to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and achieved its policy objectives. The Act provides penalties for pollution and other environmental impacts. However, we should consider accelerating the review of the Act, which is not due for some time.

The problem of greenhouse gas emissions must be tackled, not only by Governments but also socially with changes to our lifestyle, our relationship with our cars, the leaving on of lights in our homes and our liking for household appliances. Greenhouse gas emissions will have a big impact on the lifestyles of everybody in Australia and around the world and the sooner we get on with educating each other and getting a real strategy under way the better.

HON DERRICK TOMLINSON (East Metropolitan) [11.42 am]: I rise in response to the amendment moved by Hon Christine Sharp to insert the following amendment -

and calls on the Government to formulate and begin implementation of a state greenhouse strategy . . .

I received in my electorate office on 28 June 1991 a letter from the then Minister for the Environment, Hon Bob Pearce, MLA, which reads -

In May 1989 the Western Australian Government appointed an inaugural Greenhouse Co-ordination Council to report on how the state might best address climate change. The Council was broadly representative of all sectors of our society.

The Greenhouse Co-ordination Council has prepared the enclosed report "Greenhouse Strategy for Western Australia" after extensive consideration of the scientific basis of climate change, and its social, environmental and economic implications.

The recommendations in the report have been approved in principle by Cabinet. A new Greenhouse Co-ordination Council has been appointed to implement the recommendations and to continue Western Australia's response to climate change.

The letter then invited me to ring the Environmental Protection Authority if I had any further queries.

Accompanying that letter was a publication dated April 1991 of the Western Australian Greenhouse Coordination Council titled "Greenhouse Strategy for Western Australia". In light of Hon Christine Sharp's amendment, I was uncertain whether this Greenhouse Strategy for Western Australia was extant or had been replaced by something else. However, I found on my bookshelf alongside that publication a report published in March 1992 titled "The Greenhouse Effect: Regional Implications for Western Australia: Annual Report 1990-91". It contains a foreword by the then Minister for Environment, Hon Bob Pearce MLA, in which he states -

This approach is in keeping with the 'Greenhouse Strategy for Western Australia' which was approved in principle by Cabinet in April 1991. The Strategy emphasises the need to keep the community of Western Australia informed about the consequences of a changing global atmosphere and to promote the 'no regrets' options in responding to our current understanding.

Since then, we have had two changes of Government. I was not certain whether the WA Greenhouse Coordination Council still existed. I therefore took the advice of the then Minister for Environment, Hon Bob Pearce, and I rang the council care of the Environmental Protection Authority on 9222 7000. Regrettably, I did not get anything other than an electronic response because the officer was elsewhere conserving energy. I rang a second time and, again, got the electronic response indicating that the responsible officer was elsewhere conserving energy. However, two days after my second telephone call, I received a call from an officer in the minister's office, who suggested that, given my status as a member of the Opposition, I should not ring the EPA for information. Apparently, if I want information about the environment, I should ring the minister's office. I apologised for that breach of protocol and asked whether I could have some information about the council - whether it was still in operation and details of its most recent reports. He undertook to get back to me; of course, he did not do so.

Hon George Cash: The font of all knowledge dried up.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: The font of all knowledge conserved energy. However, my electorate officer persisted, only to be told that the responsible officers were too busy to respond. It was suggested that she look it up on the web. She did, and two days ago she downloaded the June 1999 report to the council submitted by the sustainable land management technical panel. I am persisting in pursuing the web for information about the council, but the strategy adopted in principle by Cabinet in 1991 is alive and well.

I seek leave to table the "Greenhouse Strategy for Western Australia", "The Greenhouse Effect: Regional implications for Western Australia" and the "Report to Council: Sustainable Land Management Technical Panel June 1999".

Leave granted. [See papers Nos 436 to 438.]

HON J.A. SCOTT (South Metropolitan) [11.49 am]: I met with my colleague Hon Christine Sharp before she moved the amendment, and I agree with it. I note what Hon Derrick Tomlinson has just made known to the House; that is, that in 1989 he discovered from a letter that there was a greenhouse strategy.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: 1991.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I am sorry, was it 1991? I thought the letter was written in 1989. I understand that research has been going on, but I have no inkling of any workable strategy.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Look it up on the web.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I would have thought that the so-called greenhouse strategy is exactly that, because that is what we are getting: greenhouse gases.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Read the report; I think you will be agreeably surprised.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The greenhouse strategy has so far seen Western Australia completely blow out the levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Have a look at the report and you will be agreeably surprised.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I will not be agreeably surprised, because the facts of the matter are that today the projected increase in emissions from Australia as a whole is 140 per cent. Fifty per cent of that has occurred, and will occur, in Western Australia.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: Again, read the report. You will be agreeably surprised.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I will take advantage of Hon Derrick Tomlinson's advice, and I will look at that as well. However, unfortunately, the reality is that in this State, whatever strategy was applied by Hon Bob Pearce during his period as minister was not a good one. I am glad that he even thought about it. However, I noted in Hon Derrick Tomlinson's remarks the words "the no regrets options". Those words mean no imposition on certain sectors of our industry that are producing large amounts of greenhouse gases. That is what those words actually mean, because there has been absolutely no decrease in, and no effect on reducing, greenhouse gas levels in this State. If it is a greenhouse strategy, it is clearly a greenhouse production strategy, because we are not achieving -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I suggest you read the report before you make that outlandish statement.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I have read reports that indicate what we are producing. What matters here is that strategies are implemented and adhered to. Either the strategies were no good or there has been no proper adherence to them. We need a genuine commitment in this area, because the time has come, as the walrus said, when we must deal with this problem. It is the most critical issue with which we must deal. The economy can be looked at in a number of ways. One can consider that the greenhouse amelioration program causes problems for the economy, or one can see it as an economic boost if it is dealt with properly. That is one area on which I agree with Hon Peter Foss; that is, if we deal properly with greenhouse gas emissions, it can be a very large economic plus, even

without considering the damaging effects of greenhouse gases on areas of industry, particularly agriculture, for which climate change could be very significant, especially in the south west regions of Western Australia.

A number of models have been put together by various people. Hon Peter Foss said in his speech that there was a lack of agreement among the scientists about what the results would be of the rising greenhouse gas levels. I think Hon Peter Foss has misunderstood that lack of agreement between scientists. Different climate change models have been put together for Australia by many eminent scientific bodies, but they all agree that the south west of Western Australia will be one of the areas that will be impacted upon the most by global warming and will suffer the greatest problems. Many people do not grasp that when scientists talk about variations in the temperature levels - namely, whether we will experience a two-degree or a six-degree rise, or whatever - the same scientists often give different variations. It is not a situation in which different scientists give different variations and disagree with each other. The issue is highly complex and has many variables. For example, one group of scientists has been working on a molecule called hydroxyl radical, which is a small molecule that cleans up the atmosphere by combining a raft of pollutants. It ameliorates the rise in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and it also cleans out many of the other chemical pollutants that are pumped into the atmosphere. Unfortunately, not many hydroxyl radicals exist in the atmosphere, and the levels of hydroxyl radicals have been decreasing at the same time that pollution levels have been increasing.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind the member that he should be speaking on the amendment and may be straying over to the substantive motion.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I agree, Mr President; I probably am doing that.

Although scientists disagree with each another, because scientists around the world will never unite in their opinions - they are rather like economists - the general consensus is that there will be a rise in temperature. In these situations, people usually meet somewhere in the middle, purely and simply because that is the easiest way to reach the most precise agreement. It is like politics - the middle ground is where most people meet at the end of the day.

With regard to the amendment moved by Hon Christine Sharp, the so-called strategy put forward by Hon Derrick Tomlinson is not appropriate for this day and age.

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: I suggest you read it before you make that judgment, my friend.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: A lot of good information has been put together, but Western Australia's strategies have resulted in a 70 per cent rise in greenhouse gas emissions in the time we have been working on this issue. We cannot afford a 70 per cent rise. If, in fact, despite the good information backing up the Pearce strategy -

Hon Derrick Tomlinson: You should have a look at the 1999 report. That was well and truly after Mr Pearce left office.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: We have seen quite a change in attitude in the 1999 report.

Hon Christine Sharp: It is not a strategy.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: As Christine Sharp has pointed out, it is not yet a strategy; in fact, it is a whole lot of information put together.

Hon B.M. Scott: Why do you not wish to call her honourable?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Because she does not want to be called honourable.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.