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Media release

For comment, please contact: Andrew Macintosh (02) 6162 4146 or 0403 804 540
Clive Hamilton (02) 6162 4140 or 0413 993 223

Australians reject Government's greenhouse strategy

A new survey released today by the Australia Institute shows that 74 per cent of Australians would prefer a greenhouse strategy based mainly on energy efficiency and renewable energy. Only 19 per cent of Australians prefer the Government's approach that focuses mainly on nuclear power and clean coal technologies.

The finding is made in *Greenhouse Strategies: What do Australians prefer?*, a paper analysing support for different greenhouse strategies and preferred sources of electricity in Australia by Institute Deputy Director Andrew Macintosh and Executive Director Dr Clive Hamilton.

"This survey proves there is overwhelming support for a greenhouse strategy that gives greater prominence to energy efficiency and renewable energy," Mr Macintosh said.

"To date, the Government's approach has been weighted heavily in favour of clean coal technology and nuclear power, but the Australian community wants a more balanced policy."

The survey also found that 77 per cent of Australians would prefer to get their electricity from a renewable power source. In comparison, only eight per cent of Australians would prefer to get their electricity from nuclear and one per cent would prefer to get it from coal.

"The survey results show the extent of the popular support for measures to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, but these issues are seen as a secondary in the existing greenhouse strategy," Mr Macintosh said.

"The Government has recently signalled its intention to introduce an emissions trading scheme in 2012, which could help promote energy efficiency and renewable energy. However, even if the scheme is introduced, it seems likely that the policy framework will still be weighted toward nuclear and clean coal technology.

"There is a good economic case for ensuring there is greater balance in the Government's greenhouse strategy, and the results of this survey suggest that such an approach is likely to attract widespread public support."

The report may be read on the Australia Institute website.