

**Media Release
16 April 2008**

CAMPAIGNERS PLAY FIDDLE WHILE ROME BURNS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Greens Party and some activist groups have been accused of throwing a smokescreen over serious debate on greenhouse solutions following a landmark decision by mainstream environmental groups, the mining industry and the union movement to form a united front to fast track low emission coal technologies.

Traditional political differences were put aside today as the World Wildlife Fund, the Climate Institute, CFMEU and the Australian Coal Association announced their intention to pursue a joint national taskforce to fast track technologies such as carbon capture and storage (CCS).

NSW Minerals Council CEO, Dr Nikki Williams, said the Australian community should applaud the vision of these organisations for being willing to rise above petty politics to tackle one of the most serious problems facing the world.

Dr Williams, who has just returned from China as a delegate with the Global Foundation's *Dialogue on Clean Energy and the Environment* said Australians deserved to know the facts rather than be misled by simplistic slogans.

"There has been a great deal of misinformation about climate change and how best to respond as a nation," said Dr Williams.

"International scientific opinion is agreed that we need a whole suite of responses which includes developing clean energy technologies, including renewable such as solar and wind power, fuel efficient transport and buildings, improved agricultural and forestry and taking personal responsibility for reducing our individual carbon footprint.

"Much as it may irk some campaigning groups to admit, the International Energy Agency has predicted that coal will provide 82 per cent of the world's energy to 2030 at least.

"Therefore if we are to do anything about making deep cuts to carbon emissions we must reduce carbon emissions from coal fired power plants.

"The beauty of the plan announced today is that it contains realistic targets and timeframes to co-ordinate and fast track the real progress which has already been made over the past year by Federal and State Governments, research groups and the coal industry," said Dr Williams.

"Australia is in an excellent position to be a global leader in the development of these technologies.

"Nobody is pretending that commercialising these significant technologies in the timeframe needed to make a real difference is going to be a walk in the park as there are some significant regulatory and legal issues to be worked through.

"Today's historic announcements prove that some groups at least are prepared to put aside their differences to work towards real solutions and stop playing politics with climate change."

**To arrange interviews please contact Marion Downey, NSW Minerals Council
T: (02) 8202 7213 | M: 0438 280 073 | E: mdowney@nswmin.com.au**

