
THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2019

Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory – **pollution levels still on the rise under the Coalition**

The Federal Government has released its quarterly update of [the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the December 2018 quarter](#).

In the year to December 2018 Australia's emissions increased 0.7 per cent (including land use, land use change and forestry).

Fugitive emissions from the production, processing, transport, storage, transmission and distribution of fossil fuels such as coal, crude oil and natural gas increased by 4.9 per cent over the year to December 2018, driven by a 15.1 per cent increase in natural gas production and 0.5 per cent increase in coal production.

There was a 4.0 per cent decrease in emissions from the electricity sector over the year to December. According to the Environment and Energy Department reduced electricity emissions are a result of a strong increase in solar generation in the National Electricity Market and decreases in gas and brown coal generation.

Stationary energy use emissions which includes emissions from direct combustion of fuels, predominantly in manufacturing, mining, residential and commercial sectors increased by 6.0 per cent. This was largely caused by a 22.4 per cent increase in LNG exports in the year to December 2018.

Transport sector emissions increased 2.8 per cent over the year to December 2018. The growth in transport was reflected in a 10.9 per cent annual growth in diesel consumption for the year to December 2018. According to the Department the past year saw a 4.5 per cent decrease in the consumption of petrol (including ethanol-blended) and a strong increase in diesel consumption of 10.9 per cent.

Government's record

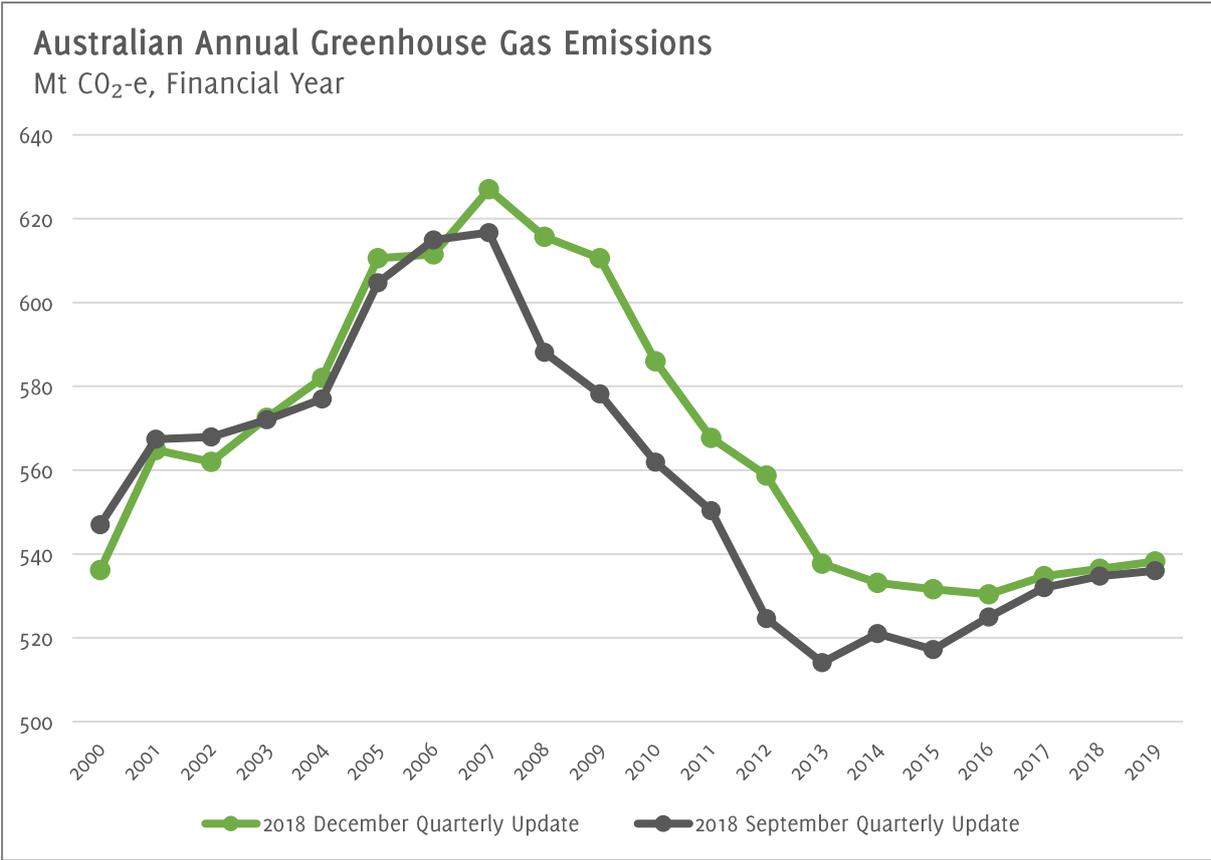
In this quarterly update the Government has made significant increases to the historical quarterly and annual emissions figures from many previous years. The government report does not provide a detailed explanation of why these amendments have been made. The effect of these changes to the historical data is to significantly reduce the apparent overall increase in emissions under the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison governments.

Since coming to office in September 2013 the Coalition has made no progress in reducing Australia's overall emissions. In fact, there is an upward trend. Under the Coalition's watch, Australia's annual greenhouse gas emissions have increased by 24.1 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂-e) – or 0.5 million metric tonnes using the newly

amended historical data. Australia’s annual greenhouse emissions are now 4.5 per cent (or 0.09 per cent using the newly amended historical data) higher than they were in 2013.

The Government’s decision to repeal the national carbon price in June 2014 exacerbated the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. Quarterly emissions have risen 4.9 per cent (or 1.73 per cent using the newly amended historical data) since the repeal, reversing emission reductions made while the law was active.

Figure 1 – Australian annual greenhouse gas emissions: September Quarterly Update vs December Quarterly Update



The current Government has set Australia’s 2030 annual emission target at 441–435 (Mt CO₂-e). Australia’s annual emissions for 2019 are 538.2 Mt CO₂-e.

In response to the release of the latest greenhouse gas emissions data, the Australian Conservation Foundation’s Economy & Democracy Program Manager, Matt Rose, said:

“This latest data, showing a rise in emissions for the fourth year in a row, coupled with the fact that the Government has no plan to reverse this trend, displays a very worrying lack of commitment to addressing this fundamental issue.

“Australia remains without an economy wide scheme to reduce climate pollution and as such we are foregoing the employment and economic opportunities that come with being part of the global transition in energy systems, vehicles and other technology.

“Australia can’t hide from the global shifts that are underway in climate policy.”

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