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We need national greenhouse policy

West Australian, Perth

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It was good to see almost 300 private citizens, organisations, companies, industry bodies, academic and community groups took the time to provide submissions to the Environmental Protection Authority about its greenhouse gas emissions assessment guidance. It shows they're passionate about a clean, green future and want to be heard.

The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of WA was one of those. Not just because we are the leading advocacy body for the resources sector and have some skin in the game, but because climate change is a unique global challenge that requires a globally coordinated response.

The chamber believes the most efficient and effective way to manage greenhouse gas emissions and the necessary transition to a lower carbon economy is to ensure that the Australian Government has primary responsibility in line with its commitments under the Paris Agreement. That's why we hope that when the EPA releases its greenhouse gas emission guidance, any recommendations take into account the Australian Government's evolving climate change framework.

It would be bad for industry, jobs and the economy if the WA resources sector was forced to operate under non-complementary regulatory frameworks and including one which

put WA out of step with the rest of Australia. As CME outlined in its

submission, a measured, coordinated approach through the Australian Government decreases the likelihood of policy shocks such as what was experienced when the EPA released its March guidance. Stable policy promotes the innovation, research, investment and certainty necessary to achieve a measured transition.

The State Government and the EPA's focus should be on supporting a national framework.

At all points of the upcoming policy and decision-making process, it needs to be considered whether a particular course of action best supports and strengthens Australia's framework and responses to climate change or, if it introduces policy that will ultimately harm WA, Australia or the global environment. Policies that restrict production in WA of minerals and materials may simply shift production to other countries that have lower environmental standards or more emissions-intensive production processes, a side effect of poor policy commonly referred to as "carbon leakage".

CME's policy principles are broadly consistent with other industry organisations including the Australian Industry Greenhouse Network, the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association, the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA and the Australian Aluminium Council. We all support a national framework that is transparent, stable and predictable,

that creates a price signal across the whole economy and considers import and export competing industries.



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CME's members are already doing a lot to help reduce their carbon emissions. Gold Fields' Agnew Gold Mine is installing a renewable microgrid which will consist of five wind turbines, a 10,000-panel solar farm and a battery energy storage system with the security and reliability of a microgrid underpinned with a gas engine power station.

In August, Chevron Australia confirmed safe start-up and commencement of operations for its Gorgon carbon dioxide reinjection system. Once fully operational, this system is designed to capture at least 80 per cent of Gorgon's reservoir carbon dioxide resulting in an overall 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for the project.

Alcoa and Rio Tinto, in partnership with Apple and the governments of Canada and Quebec, are investing in a revolutionary process to make aluminium that produces only oxygen. And between 2016 and 2018, Woodside improved its energy efficiency by 3.4 per cent against baseline performance and is on track to achieve a 5 per cent efficiency improvement by 2020.

The resources sector has always worked at the cutting-edge of innovation and will continue to. It's with that determination and innovation we can all work to reduce our carbon footprint, with the Federal Government leading the way.

**Paul Everingham is chief executive,
Chamber of Minerals and Energy of WA.**