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Clean exports could deliver 395,000 new jobs

Together, ACF, WWF-Australia, ACTU and BCA are today releasing *Sunshot: Australia's opportunity to create 395,000 clean export jobs*, charting a path for the country through the global transition to net-zero that delivers new jobs.

The new analysis from *Accenture* shows that Australia could create 395,000 new jobs and generate \$89 billion in new trade by 2040 through investment in clean energy exports.

A global shift towards renewable power and clean energy goods and services is already well underway, and early action can make Australia a leader and position workers and businesses for the future.

The report finds that Australia's largest clean export opportunities are in renewable hydrogen and ammonia, green metals, critical minerals, battery manufacturing, education and training and engineering, ICT and consulting services.

These industries offer the opportunity to create tens of thousands of well-paid jobs, mostly in regional areas and accessible by workers across all levels of skill and education.

Reaping the benefits of this change will require bold, co-ordinated action and investment and the development of a national clean exports strategy.

Together, the coalition of unions, business and conservation groups identifies 5 specific actions for government to put Australia at the front of the pack:

- **Coordinated investment in 7 clean export precincts** – to link Australia's low-cost renewable energy resources and regional workforces to clean exports at precincts around the country
- **\$10 billion co-investment in new industries** – to directly support flagship projects and accelerate the scale-up of Australia's clean export industries
- **\$5 billion fund for workers and regions** delivered by a new energy transition authority with representatives from government, industry and unions to manage the disruption to regional economies and workers dependent on carbon-intensive industries

- **Support for low-carbon materials in major infrastructure projects** – to boost domestic demand, support new manufacturing capacity and lay foundations for exports
- **An interim target of 6 GW of hydrogen and 3 green metals plants by 2027** – an ambitious target to galvanise collaboration between governments, industry, unions and the research and education sector to grow Australia’s clean export industry.

Quotes attributable to Australian Conservation Foundation chief executive Kelly O’Shanassy:

“Real action to tackle climate change requires a rapid shift away from fossil fuel exports. The good news is Australia can replace and grow the revenue and jobs from coal and gas exports with clean exports.

“As the world moves away from coal and gas, Australia can retain our mantle as an energy export superpower with critical minerals, renewable energy and green steel, hydrogen and aluminium.

“We need to act decisively. Climate damage is harming Australians and we’re not the only nation in the world with the natural advantages and know-how to become a clean energy superpower. We need genuine national leadership to secure our future.”

Quotes attributable to WWF-Australia President, Martijn Wilder:

“This report shows that few countries have the opportunities Australia does, to prosper, as the world transitions to renewables.

“With smart investments, it is regional communities, particularly those that currently depend on carbon-intensive industries, that stand to benefit the most from Australia becoming a renewable export superpower.

“As our international trading partners work to meet their climate targets, there will be voracious demand for renewables and zero-carbon commodities. Our federal and state governments need to work together with the private sector to take advantage of this growing demand, creating new jobs and investment opportunities.

“We can’t afford to squander this once in a century opportunity. However, the window is closing because Australia is being outspent by other nations.”

Quotes attributable to the Australian Council of Trade Unions President Michele O’Neil:

“The global shift towards net zero emissions presents huge opportunities to create new, secure jobs for workers across Australia, but we need to act decisively to secure these industries.

“We need leadership from the federal Government to develop a national clean exports strategy with clear targets and credible policies.

“Australian workers know that our future lies in producing the clean products and services needed in a net-zero emissions world but the nations that benefit most from this transition will be those on the front foot.

“It’s not a choice between jobs and the environment, it’s a responsibility to act on both.”

Quotes attributable to Business Council of Australia chief executive Jennifer Westacott:

“Our biggest trading partners are already making this transition and Australian businesses are already acting to respond to global capital.

“Acting now puts us in the box seat to take advantage of our world class skills, abundant resources and proximity to markets to secure existing jobs and create new ones.

“Reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 must be done in a way that harnesses Australia’s abundant natural resources to boost exports, drives investment in new technologies and delivers a stronger economy with more jobs.”

Quotes attributable to Accenture MD Andrew Charlton:

“The barrier to investment in the clean energy space has been the lack of a clear policy framework. The longer we go without one, the slower the uptake. Our research clearly outlines the potential of acting now.

“The potential for Australia to be a leading clean energy exporter is there if we move decisively and swiftly.

“We’ve identified five significant policies and actions to support Australia capture the clean exports opportunity. It’s a complex transition and requires coordination, co-investment, targets, procurement policies, and importantly support for people and regions in carbon-intensive industries to make the switch into new jobs and opportunities. You can’t just do one – you have to pull all the levers.”

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Contacts:

Josh Meadows, ACF, 0439 342 992

Scott Thomson, for WWF-Australia, 0432 218 681

Rheuben Freeland, BCA, 0422 044 390

Peter Green, ACTU, 0400 764 200