

UK Committed To Target, Says British High Commission

A letter from the British High Commission to Prime Minister John Howard and Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd stresses that Britain is not backing away from its earlier position on renewable energy and remains committed to the European goal. "Britain is playing its full part toward delivering the Europe-wide binding target of a 20 per cent share of renewable energies in overall EU energy consumption by 2020 which European leaders agreed in March this year," the letter states. Howard says that he will maintain his target of 15 per cent renewable energy by 2020 because Rudd's target of 20 per cent would impose too many costs on industry, according to *The Australian Financial Review*. The British government is yet to set a national target for 2020 and is discussing such a goal as part of a new energy bill. British Energy Minister Malcolm Wicks has suggested that the national target might be 10 to 15 per cent by 2020. Labor's Shadow Minister for Environment Peter Garrett says different approaches are appropriate for different jurisdictions and Australia has the capacity to meet a 20 per cent target. "Some developed economies think they have the capacity to get to 33 per cent by 2020," Garrett says. The British Government is the first to publicly signal it may break with European Union solidarity on the issue, with British Secretary of State John Hutton saying the EU formula may not "automatically apply to Britain", the *AFR* reports.

[Source esaa news]