

Point: Growing Solar Power Is Both Necessary and Beneficial

Thesis

Solar power provides a clean, virtually unlimited energy source that can save individuals money, help meet net-zero emissions goals, and reduce Australia's reliance on imported fossil fuels for energy production.

Talking Points

- Solar power provides a clean, virtually unlimited energy source that can help Australia meet its 'net-zero by 2050' emissions goals.
- Residential solar panel installation helps individuals save money on their electric bills and provides clean energy to others in their neighbourhood.
- Solar power is becoming more cost-effective as the price of its installation and operation continues to decline, while the price of coal and other fossil fuels continues to rise.
- Increasing the availability of solar power allows Australia to reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels for electricity generation.

Summary

In October 2021, Prime Minister Scott Morrison, in conjunction with Minister for Industry, Energy and Emissions Reduction Angus Taylor, announced the Long Term Emissions Reduction Plan, which explained how Australia would continue endorsing renewable energies, specifically solar energy, in order to reach Australia's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. Supporters argue that solar energy benefits the environment because it does not generate greenhouse gas emissions. This makes it an environmentally friendly alternative to fossil fuels and a critical strategy for reaching the goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

Proponents of growing solar energy in Australia explain that solar power benefits both the individuals who install panels as well as the environment and society as a whole. Homes that install solar panels benefit from reduced energy costs since they use the power generated from their own panels before drawing electricity from the power grid. This reduces their dependence on the energy provider for electricity, which saves money. When excess capacity generated by the panels is transferred back into the main electricity grid, the homeowners receive a feed-in-tariff payment for generating that power for others to use. This scheme

helps homeowners recover the cost of the panels over a period of several years and contributes to the availability of clean energy for others in their neighbourhood.

Additionally, the continued investments in renewable energy have led to decreasing prices of solar and wind technology. On the other hand, burnable coal has been rising in cost. In 2020, the research firm BloombergNEF predicted that this fluctuation could lead to solar power costing less than energy generated by coal and other fossil fuels. Reducing reliance on coal and other fossil fuels helps Australia achieve greater independence in its energy sources. Australia has one of the largest supplies of black and brown coal in the world, but the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA) reported that Australia's dependence on imported liquid fuel and oil increased significantly in the early 2000s, from around 60 per cent in 2000 to around 90 per cent by 2014. To meet its emissions goals, as well as to outlast the non-renewable source that coal is, Australia must greatly reduce its reliance on coal for energy production; solar power offers a cost-effective and environmentally friendly domestic alternative that can help Australia avoid further reliance on imported liquid fuels.

Solar power provides a number of financial and environmental benefits, for individuals and society as a whole. It is a key strategy for reducing greenhouse emissions and reliance on imported fossil fuels and can lead to significant savings in energy costs for individuals and communities.

Ponder This

- The author has presented the fundamental positions for this perspective in the debate. Outline the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective.
- If asked to begin forming an argument for this position, what sources would you need to build your case? What fundamental information do you need? What opinion leaders in this debate would you look to in solidifying your argument?
- What are the weakest aspects of the position outlined by the author? How might those weaker arguments help you prepare a counter argument?
- What additional Talking Points could you add to support this position?

Bibliography

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