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**AM PROGRAMME  
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**\*\*ETS**

Presenter: The main companies which distribute natural gas around the country are calling on the federal Government to set a target for natural gas use to help Australia burn less coal. Queensland already has such a target. Natural gas burns more cleanly than coal but the Greens say natural gas is no better in the long run. From Canberra Naomi Woodley reports.

Naomi Woodley: The federal Government is heading into the new parliamentary year having finalised two key climate change policies; its emissions trading or carbon pollution reduction scheme, and the 20 per cent target for renewable energy by 2020. But the Australian Pipeline Industry Association which represents the gas transmission industry says the combination of the ETS and the renewable energy target could be counterproductive, forcing businesses to use coal-fired energy for longer. The Association's chief executive is Cheryl Cartwright.

Cheryl Cartwright: It's quite possible that they might not actually reduce emissions much at all because the companies that currently use coal-fired power will be forced for the other 80 per cent that's not renewable energy to go for the least expensive possible power generation and that would be coal.

Naomi Woodley: The Association wants the Government to consider setting a gas target similar to a scheme already set up in Queensland where 13 per cent of energy used by electricity retailers must come from natural gas.

Cheryl Cartwright: If they want to go ahead with the renewable target and the CPRS then there should also be a target for natural gas because if we don't actually encourage the use of natural gas when companies decide they need it there won't have been the encouragement for the infrastructure to provide the gas as well.

Naomi Woodley: The Association says it recognises the need to shift to renewable energy but believes natural gas can fill a need for low emissions energy while renewable technology is being developed. But the Greens leader Bob Brown says the natural gas industry has left its run too late.

Bob Brown: To advocate now a halfway house in burning fossil fuels that is the gas industry to lessen the impact of gas is like saying that black coal is better than brown coal, gas is better than black coal. They are all fossil fuel burning industries which would inject massive amounts more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Naomi Woodley: He says the focus of Government initiatives must be on zero emissions technology.

Bob Brown: We now recognise where the climate change emergency means that we have to be moving straight through to renewable energy and energy efficiency. And gas can fight it out with the coal industry as to who is the less polluting. But we need zero pollution in our new energy production.

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Presenter: The Greens leader Bob Brown ending that report from Naomi Woodley in Canberra. And a spokeswoman for the Climate Change Minister Penny Wong says lower pollution fuels like gas will benefit from the emissions trading scheme. And she says the Government intends to phase out the renewable energy target between 2020 and 2030.