



## **Australia and New Zealand set to cooperate on climate change**

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Australia and New Zealand agreed Wednesday to work together to tackle climate change now that the new government in Canberra has signed up to the Kyoto Protocol on global warming.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who ratified the treaty as his first official act after the previous government had refused to do so, made the announcement at a joint news conference with his New Zealand counterpart Helen Clark.

"The fact that both Australia and New Zealand now are full ratification states in relation to the Kyoto Protocol means that we have an unprecedented opportunity to work seamlessly in the international negotiations," Rudd told reporters.

Rudd said the two countries' new partnership would be "reflected in the combined positions we take across the many meetings which will occur across (the) international community" following a conference in Indonesia in December.

The Bali conference yielded an action plan that set a late 2009 deadline for a landmark new treaty to cut global-warming greenhouse gases once the current Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

Clark said it made a huge difference to New Zealand that it could now combine with Australia in talks on climate change.

"We are absolutely delighted that Australia has ratified Kyoto," she said.

The leaders also discussed economic integration, ongoing problems in the South Pacific, East Timor and war-torn Afghanistan, where both nations have deployed troops.

Rudd said the two countries would also work together on the big challenges posed by the South Pacific, including universal education, health care and law and order.

Source: [www.chinapost.com.tw](http://www.chinapost.com.tw)