

Submission for the Draft Climate Action Plan 2023

Tasmanian Climate Collective

The Tasmanian Climate Collective connects groups and individuals to encourage, promote and initiate climate action across lutruwita/Tasmania through cooperation, influence and knowledge sharing.

The Tasmanian Climate Collective (TCC) is pleased to be able to make this submission to help shape the Climate Action Plan into a well developed and effective policy. We would like to thank Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania for the opportunity to provide feedback.

While the Action Plan is a step in the right direction, we feel that it lacks measurable targets. The targets that do exist, seem to be rather weak. We feel that the plan lacks teeth, and we believe that Tasmania has the capacity to aim much higher in our plans for emissions reduction and climate mitigation.

Without ambitious, measurable targets, the Action Plan fails to follow the important principle of a “Science-based Approach”. Further, Tasmania risks the loss of our natural leading position with historically low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Businesses across the state benefit from our “Clean Green” brand. As other states move quickly to reduce emissions, we risk being left behind. Weak climate legislation and Action Plan could squander our head start.

Below, we have addressed the six questions as requested by ReCFIT.

1. Do you agree with the proposed vision and goals for the action plan? Which goals are you most supportive of? Are there any other goals that should be considered?

TTC supports all the goals that are listed in the Action Plan. However, we feel that there is capacity for these goals to be a lot stronger. There also should be more support for low income people to transition to make climate positive adaptations such as electrifying homes and transport.

Many of the goals mentioned in the Action Plan lack details and specific measurable targets or plans. This lack of measurable targets fails the plan’s own principle of “transparency and reporting”. Without set goals, it is hard to assess the effectiveness of the Action Plan. Specifically for each goal:

- **Electrifying Government fleets:** This is a step in the right direction, however TCC feels that this could be brought forward a lot sooner than 2030. There also needs to be incentives for businesses to electrify their car fleets and subsidies (beyond just a reduction in stamp duty) for individuals for electric cars. We note that there has been

some investment in the past in charging points across the state, but this needs to be expanded much further to ensure rapid uptake. There is also scope for the majority of hire cars to go electric, which would dramatically reduce tourism related emissions.

- **Increasing public and active transport:** Need to have specific and measurable targets for public and active transport. We need 100% electric public transport by 2030, if not sooner. We also need to make services more efficient. This really needs to be drawn into town planning objectives, since endless urban sprawl is incompatible with efficient public transport. Tasmania also desperately needs more active transport infrastructure, namely cycleways. Hobart, for instance, lags decades behind other cities in Australia when it comes to bike paths and dedicated bike lanes. Rider safety is a major deterrent for new cyclists, so improving facilities would dramatically improve uptake.
- **Reduce organic waste by 50%:** This is a step in the right direction, however TCC believes that the goal of 50% could be improved upon. For instance, Hobart City Council plans to be entirely waste free by 2030. All of Tasmania should aim for the same.
- **Plantations and Agroforestry:** TCC supports an increase in plantations and is very pleased to see that agroforestry is mentioned in the plan. We feel that agroforestry is the most ecologically friendly and safer (ie. bushfire mitigation) than previous models of plantation establishment. However, this must be met with an end to all native forest logging. Currently native forest logging is the highest emitting sector in the state. The industry is highly unprofitable, loses millions of dollars each year, and is propped up with tax payer funds. Ending native forest logging would not only prevent significant emissions, the money currently spent on the industry could go into climate solutions.
- **Reducing livestock emissions:** Reducing livestock emissions is a step in the right direction, as this is a major source of emissions. The Action Plan should set a target for emissions reduction that is ambitious and measurable. TCC would like to see incentives and programs be extended out to other sectors in agriculture. Incentives and education programs on how to improve and retain soil carbon would be one example.

Other goals which should be considered: TCC has a range of recommended goals which are listed in question 6.

2. Will the three priority areas (1) information and knowledge (2) transition and innovation and (3) adaptation and resilience, help Tasmania achieve its legislated 2030 emissions reduction target, and its vision for action on climate change? Are there other issues not covered by the three priority areas?

Since the legislated emission target is only net zero by 2030 and we have already achieved net zero, it is likely that doing nothing will achieve this target. Tasmania should aim to exceed the legislated 2030 net zero target with much more ambitious targets that are measurable and do not rely on carbon offsets.

TCC would also like to see strong sectoral targets, rather than a net overall target. LULUCF should be reported separately from overall emissions, as it is prone to its own natural fluctuations. Many academics suggest that 'bio' carbon (organic biomass ie. LULUCF) and 'geo' carbon (fossil fuel generated carbon) should be treated separately, as they represent two completely different stocks of carbon. Therefore, it is not appropriate to substitute geo carbon for bio carbon, which is what we see a lot of in carbon offsets and trading.

3. Will the key actions under Priority area 1 help support decision making for you and your community or organisation? What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

Further research and communication is welcomed by the TCC, but only if this information is taken on board by the Government. For instance, the current legislated target does not reflect a science based approach. Research needs to be taken into account and be the backbone of policy, not incorporated only when it's politically convenient.

Of the actions listed, 'Developing a whole of government framework to embed climate change into Tasmanian Government decision making' has the most potential to reduce GHG emissions. Strict regulation will be needed to ensure that this is enforced.

4. Will the key actions under Priority area 2 support Tasmania to achieve its 2030 emissions reduction target and continued emissions reduction across Tasmania? What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

In terms of meeting the emissions reduction target, the current target is already being met without any additional actions needed. TCC believes that Tasmania is quite able to achieve a stronger target and has a global responsibility to do so.

The key actions in Priority area 2 will support emissions reduction, but we feel that these actions could be strengthened and added to. We suggest that the best way to achieve emissions reduction in Tasmania is to implement the following:

- There should be detailed sector plans that follow the principle of a science based approach and include clear targets that are ambitious, measurable and do not rely on offsets.

- There needs to be incentives for our big polluting businesses to reduce their emissions, not just one specific business (ie. cement works).
- Assistance to support low income sectors of the community, ie. roof top solar and electrifying heating for social housing.
- Greater incentives for electric vehicle uptake.
- Need an end to native forest logging as it is the highest emitting sector in the state.
- No new coal and gas developments.
- Biofuels are not the answer, we need to switch to electric alternatives.

5. Will the key actions under Priority area 3 build resilience and support adaptation planning across Tasmania? What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

Resilience and adaptation is an important part of preparing our communities for the threat of climate change impacts. It is an important component to consider but this needs to be met with strong reductions in emissions.

We need to better equip our communities to deal with disasters before they happen. Emergency plans need to be well thought out and discussed with the community, so people know what to do in the event of a climate related emergency. For instance, towns at high risk of bushfires need to have detailed plans in place outlining muster points, evacuation plans, resources and post-fire services distribution. These plans need to be communicated well so the general public know what to do in an emergency.

We need to greatly expand our fire-fighting fleet and become up to date with the latest fire fighting technologies. We need targeted fire fighting helicopters and other services. We need more resources for managing the fire in our irreplaceable World Heritage areas, as these places are highly vulnerable to fire.

With climate change, many homes may become uninsurable. Tougher planning regulations are needed to prevent people from building in high risk areas such as dense bushland. Plans also need to be put in place to assist existing residents when their homes become uninsurable.

A major oversight in the Action Plan is the lack of consideration of the effects of climate change on the health of Tasmanians. Both mental and physical health will be seriously affected by climate change impacts and this must be planned for in consultation with medical experts.

6. Are there other ways the government could make its action on climate change, and progress towards meeting its targets, more transparent and accessible?

TCC strongly recommends that to achieve acceptable levels of climate action, much more needs to be done. The goals that we set need to follow a science based approach and should include:

- All major projects will be assessed for their scope 1, 2 and 3 climate change impacts and on their impact on environments threatened by climate change.
- No new coal or gas developments would be approved by a government that has embedded climate change in its decision making.
- Real GHG emissions reduction, rather than a reliance on carbon offsets.
- Replacement of native forest logging with agroforestry.
- Tasmania's highly polluting businesses will need to reduce their emissions, without the use of offsets.
- The introduction of an independent Climate Change Authority would ensure that government Climate Actions reflect a science based approach

TCC encourages RECIT to consider these actions to implement into the Action Plan:

- Need to end native forest logging
- No new coal or gas
- Electrify everything - subsidies and rebates to get households onto solar, heat pumps, more efficient water heating, induction stoves.
- Ensuring big polluting businesses make reductions to emissions. These have to be real reductions and not just offset by carbon credits.
- New public housing should include rooftop solar, community batteries, insulation and electric appliances. Existing public housing should be retrofitted with these.
- Biomass energy needs to be limited.
- Ensure that new renewable projects met stringent environmental and community standards and properly follow the principle of "community consultation"
- Reform political donation laws that publish all donations over \$1000 in real time. It is important for public transparency to see political donations from carbon intensive businesses.
- Fossil fuel advertisement bans including ban on sponsorships
- Public transport should be 100% renewable by 2030
- Better urban planning to ensure efficient public transport
- Consult with the Palawa community and implement sustainable "Caring for Country" practices