



5/04/2023

Our Ref: [Climate Change](#)

Your Ref:

Climate Change Office  
Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania  
Department of State Growth  
GPO Box 536  
HOBART TAS 7001

I am writing to provide a representation as one of the Local Government representative in the State regarding Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25. As a local government representative, I have a vested interest in ensuring that this plan is effective in mitigating the impact of climate change on our communities and our environment.

First and foremost, I would like to commend the State Government for taking a proactive approach to climate change and for developing this comprehensive plan. It is clear that the impacts of climate change are already being felt in Tasmania, and it is imperative that we take immediate action to address this issue.

From a local government perspective, there are several key aspects of the draft plan that we believe are particularly important. These include:

- Community engagement and participation: We believe that it is critical to engage with and involve local communities in the development and implementation of climate change policies and initiatives. This will ensure that the actions taken are relevant and appropriate for the specific needs of each community, and that they have ownership and support of the initiatives. I commend Department of State growth for taking initiatives via various forum to incorporate the community voice, however, key pieces such as taking action on the ground using local government and building confidence with local government to work together are missing. We would like to take part in

climate change voice and be the messenger of change. Further, we urge the State Government to consult with local government on the development of region-specific strategies and actions, as we have a deep understanding of local conditions and priorities.

- Investment in renewable energy: The draft plan rightly recognises the importance of transitioning to renewable energy sources, and we fully support this objective. We encourage the State Government to explore all available options for investment in renewable energy, including solar, wind, hydro, and battery storage. We believe that local government should play an active role in this transition, particularly in the development of small-scale renewable energy projects that benefit local communities. While the draft action plan mentions potential funding opportunities, we believe that the State Government should commit to providing ongoing, dedicated funding to local government for climate change initiatives.
- Leadership opportunities: Local government should be given opportunity to lead from the front, for example, by providing resources to go fully renewable/carbon neutral by investing in Solar panels in its corporate electricity use. Some councils may have resources to go carbon neutral but many councils do not have such financial capabilities, thus, zero interest loan, co-funding opportunities should be explored. Current action plan seeks to go 100% electric vehicle for state government fleet. Local government fleet has higher proportion of heavy vehicles that are still burning fossil fuels and without alternatives. In case of unprecedented shortage of fossil fuel and price hike, the local government would not be able to provide essential services that is critical for communities. Thus, significant investment should be directed to building resilient fleet system and service delivery facilities that is independent and climate resilient.
- Planning and development: Climate change will have significant impacts on the built environment, and it is crucial that we take a proactive approach to planning and development to ensure that our communities are resilient and adaptive to these impacts. This includes considering climate change in all planning decisions, including land use planning, building design, and infrastructure investment. Moreover, investment in assessment of impact of climate change to local government infrastructure should be provided. Further, transition to climate resilient buildings

within council's infrastructure should be prioritized and funding should be allocated to the local governments. Further, arrangements should be made so that every development has climate risk assessment within the local government.

- Waste management: The draft plan recognises the importance of reducing waste and increasing recycling, and we fully support this objective. Local governments have a critical role to play in waste management, and we encourage the State Government to provide support for local government-led waste management initiatives. Sorell Council has recently joined forces with other Southern Councils to form a Southern Regional Waste Management Authority to improve resource efficiency and improve waste management. This body will play an important role in regional waste management initiatives such as diversion of organics from landfill, waste minimization and community education. Thus, investment in such bodies would greatly support the strategy of this action plan. Sorell Council in particular have great interest in waste management. Recent study by STCA suggested more than 83% of the GHG emission is from landfilled waste in Sorell. Thus, there are opportunities of investments in infrastructure and technology to manage wastes at source and segregate the wastes that significantly reduces the landfilling.

In conclusion, we believe that Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25 is a comprehensive and well-considered document. However, we believe that there is scope for further engagement and collaboration between the State Government and local government to ensure that the plan is effective and appropriate for the needs of our communities. We appreciate the opportunity to provide this representation and look forward to continued engagement on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Higgins', written in a cursive style.

Robert Higgins  
**General Manager**  
**Sorell Council**