



Submission to Tasmanian Government Climate Change Office

Response to Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25

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Australian Parents for Climate Action represents over 17,000 parents, grandparents and carers from across Australia. We are Australia's leading organisation for parents advocating for a safe climate. Our supporters are from across the political spectrum, across all Australian electorates, and from varied socio-economic positions. We seek non-partisan responses to climate change and its impacts.

We advocate for Australian governments and businesses to take urgent action to cut Australia's carbon emissions to net zero as quickly as possible. We encourage Australia to take a leadership role on the world stage, leading by example and calling for other nations to take the necessary action to protect our children's futures.

For more information, visit www.ap4ca.org

This submission was prepared by Tasmanian volunteers Tanya Linden, Hannah Sadler and Karli Franks through input from members of the North Tasmanian group of Australian Parents for Climate Action and has been approved by Nic Seton, Chief Executive Officer for Australian Parents for Climate Action.

Submission:

Australian Parents for Climate Action (AP4CA) welcome the opportunity to comment on the Draft Tasmanian Climate Change Action Plan and appreciate the community feedback opportunities offered by Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania during this consultation period.

As the blueprint that sets the agenda for action on climate change for the next two years in Tasmania, we are deeply concerned that this Plan does not reflect the urgency of our current climate situation. The IPCC AR6 reports are very clear on the magnitude of the problem, the consequences of inaction, and the urgency with which actions need to be taken. As mothers, fathers, carers and grandparents deeply concerned about ensuring a safe climate future for our kids, this Plan does not adequately respond to the science and calm our fears.

Tasmania produces significant emissions across all sectors of our economy; burning fossil fuels for transport, heating, cooking and industry; significant livestock emissions and synthetic fertiliser use, ongoing land clearing and emissions across our waste sectors. Net-zero is not something we should be celebrating when Tasmania's emissions are rising, and our current emission profile is reliant on a non-permanent carbon sink - our forest estate. We likely have the most challenging economy to decarbonise out of any jurisdiction in Australia. If we do not have the Tasmanian Government's bold leadership in mobilizing community awareness and action for decarbonisation, then it will be an impossible task.

Whilst pockets of leadership, awareness and action exist, it is our experience that many Tasmanian community members, businesses and community leaders feel comfortable with what we are doing enough to tackle climate change and do not recognise the need for ambition to match the scale of the challenge. They are not aware of the need to transition to a clean economy to curb our emissions for a safe climate future or to meet the changing expectations of consumers and global markets.

The Draft Plan has sound reasoning for requiring more information to be gathered - risk assessments, sector-based Emission Reduction and Resilience Plans, etc. - all of which we welcome. But, this should not delay readily available climate actions and solutions that can be delivered right now to curb Tasmania's emissions and ready our community for a low carbon economy, perhaps even a fossil-fuel free future.

Consultation questions

AP4CA appreciates the consultation questions that have been provided to direct community responses. We have included responses to the first two consultation questions and feel that our responses here also address consultation questions 4 – 6.

Vision and goals

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?

Vision - By 2030 we will have reduced our emissions and built our resilience to the impacts of a changing climate

The proposed vision statement lacks the power needed to get our communities on board to decarbonise our economy.

In fact, we would argue that this is not a vision statement, but rather a statement that would allow Tasmania to remain operating at status quo. The proposed vision does not create the necessary focus needed for Tasmanians to develop the insight needed to champion our emission reduction efforts. The vision statement is too general which will cause efforts to be scattered.

Like shooting a basketball and aiming just above the ring, vision statements should be ambitious, setting the focus just beyond the target or goal.

We are inspired by Brand Tasmania's notebook and believe this vision needs to be Tasmanian, note Brand Tasmania's quote, *"It isn't easy here. It never has been. People said it was impossible, and for too long we believed it. This is why, for Tasmanians, good enough is never good enough. We work harder, we support one another, and we protect what makes this place different. Being Tasmanian is the quiet pursuit of the extraordinary. Help preserve what makes this place special. Find your extraordinary."*

In terms of meeting the emissions reduction target, the current target is already being met without any additional actions needed. The vision and goals should better reflect the urgency of the need for climate action. Tasmania is quite able to achieve a stronger target and has a global responsibility to do so.

To meet the urgency of the climate crisis and in line with the science, the Climate Council recommends that states and territories reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 75% below 2005 levels by 2030 and aim for net zero by 2035. Tasmania's emissions reduction target should be decoupled from a net-value. It is important that we can identify the level of reduction achieved across our key emission areas.

Goals

A number of the goals outlined in Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan for 2023-25 are not consistently specific or measurable. We understand that there is more to come with the development of Implementation Plans and sector-based Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans (ERRPs). However, to give Tasmanians a better understanding of how to address the urgent challenge of climate change, each of the proposed goals set out in this Action Plan must state a clear and specific objective and be measurable. Tasmanians need a clear pathway. There must be no confusion on the actions needed and whether key result were accomplished.

This needs to be a framework of specific, effective, and trackable targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions as well as mitigation and adaptation actions. In respect to this, adaptation being understood as the process of adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change and mitigations being actions that make the impacts of climate change less severe by preventing or reducing the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

The Goal of electrifying the Tasmanian Government transport fleet is an example of a measurable goal. We would like to see this opportunity expanded beyond Government fleet to other businesses, not-for-profits and individuals (beyond just a reduction in stamp duty). We believe there is also a need for education of State Government staff around electric vehicle (EV) uptake. We have heard an example of Government staff being offered an EV and opting to instead to purchase/lease a new internal combustion engine (ICE) or Hybrid car because of concern around charging and access to charging infrastructure. EV charging is managed very differently to service station refilling. There needs to be good systems in place to allow flexibility of charging for government fleet vehicles, including reimbursement for charging at home.

We would like clarification that the Electrification of the Government Fleet is aimed at full Electric Vehicles. Most Hybrid vehicles marketed and sold in Tasmania still use more petrol per kilometre than many small ICE cars. We need to ensure again that solutions marketed and adopted will truly drive down emissions, not prolong the transition to a clean economy.

It is AP4CA's opinion that the following key areas are missing from the Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25 goals and should be included:

- Reducing fossil fuel use

There is no mention of reducing fossil fuel use in Tasmania. The digging up and burning of fossil fuels is the major driver of global warming. We need to explicitly communicate to the Tasmanian community that this Plan aims to reduce Tasmania's consumption of fossil fuels. It is important that Tasmanians recognise their use of fossil fuels and acknowledge our journey to transition away from them.

The government must not rely on the promotion of the renewable energy industry to communicate this message. Many Tasmanians, especially on the north-west coast, are feeling powerless and concerned about renewable energy development. Concern is especially expressed around the development of infrastructure which is threatening valuable biodiverse areas such as Robbins Passage Boullanger Bay Key Biodiversity Area and intact native ecosystems in Loongana. This message must be decoupled from industry development and expansion.

With this in mind, we would like to see action towards a ban on fossil fuel advertising and sponsorship in Tasmania. Governments restrict advertising and sponsorships of tobacco, gambling and alcohol in recognition of their negative effects. But products such as fossil fuels are still advertised widely and freely, despite their disastrous impacts.

Coal, oil and gas are hazardous to human health. Gas appliances in homes are linked to increased Asthma [1] and other health issues and burning fossil fuels is the primary cause of global warming, which is driving worsening extreme weather. We must stop fossil fuel companies and high greenhouse gas polluters using marketing and sponsorships to delay the inevitable and urgently required social transition to clean energy. The ACT and more than ten Australian local Councils have already, or are moving to, ban fossil fuel advertising and/or sponsorships [2]. France is implementing national bans, as are jurisdictions in the Netherlands and UK.

We would also like to see a moratorium on gas connections in new homes and a plan for electrification including support for households to fully electrify.

- New fossil fuel development

We urge the Government to include actions to halt further fossil fuel development in Tasmania. We ask that the Plan explicitly communicates to the fossil fuel industry that fossil fuel expansion and development in Tasmania is not welcome. It is damaging to our Tasmanian Brand (as Powering Tasmania says, fossil fuels are "inefficient, expensive and the emissions are dirty and damaging to our health and to the planet").

The science is very clear on the requirement to stop all new fossil fuels development. Tasmania is in a unique position, due to its 100% renewable energy and its current low

level of fossil fuel extraction, to be able to take a leadership position and halt all new fossil fuel development on Tasmania and within Tasmanian managed waters.

- Native Forest Logging

Protecting native forests is a low-cost, effective and immediate way to take real action on climate change. The IPCC AR6 recommends mitigation actions around conservation, appropriate management of forests and maintaining the resilience and biodiversity of ecosystems. We request that the Plan incorporate ambitious goals that are in line with the IPCC AR6 mitigation actions to cease logging native forests in Tasmania.

Native forests in Tasmania provide a thriving biodiversity that can be part of the solution, providing resilience to some of the predicted impacts of climate change. The state's next Forest Management Plan must stop native forest clearing and end native forest logging. The importance of maintaining biodiversity and forest health and the need for carbon capture and storage needs to be explicitly valued by the Tasmanian government. Protecting native forests is a critical mitigation action.

- The Real Cost of Living

Cost of living is the issue which is at the front of mind for most Tasmanians. Outside of increasing public transport use, we believe the Tasmanian Government has an opportunity to lead several actions that can lower costs and ensure the resilience of our communities and individuals which are also climate positive. These include electrifying homes and community transport (not just Government fleets) and improving energy efficiency.

Our Australian Parents for Climate Action report *The Real Cost of Living*,^[3] reveals the sacrifices Australian families are making due to rising costs. Now is the time to accelerate the household clean energy solutions that reduce household bills.

Priority areas

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?

Mitigation describes human actions, technologies, processes, behaviours and decisions that intervene in the processes of climate change, for example, by reducing emissions or enhancing carbon storage. AP4CA requests that mitigation be named and embedded in the priority areas of this Draft Climate Change Action Plan.

Reading through the priority areas, we found ourselves feeling confused and unsure about the impact of specific actions on emissions reductions and resilience (key focuses of the overall Vision).

We implore that the Plan provides details of how to calculate priority area impacts on emissions, and an assessment of the priority area's ability to enable and accelerate shifts required.

Other comments on the identified priority areas and proposed actions are provided in the table on the following page.

Priority Area 1 – Information and Knowledge

As a whole, the actions within this Priority Area we agree are important and valid. A number of suggested improvements are provided below.

It is our experience that many of our current decision makers and community leaders (including State and Local Government elected members) don't understand climate change and are not adequately informed of the risks posed by climate change across all aspects of society and the economy. In our own interactions and within the media we have found that some even actively dissuade and hinder action on climate action.

We would like to see more focus on education of leaders (not just Ministers and staff directly involved in the climate portfolio) on the rigor of climate science, impacts beyond changes in weather and disasters and expert driven solutions.

Also, climate action is a non-partisan issue and it is still used as a political wedge in Tasmania. Australian Parents for Climate Action is a non-partisan organisation and we support climate action across the political spectrum. We are continuously frustrated that individuals and groups who speak up for climate action in Tasmania are criticised and siloed into political persuasions.

We agree that educating our younger generations about climate change is integral, but we do not want to leave this education for our future generations. The solution starts with us – adults within our community, now.

We also believe that celebration and education of achievements doesn't have to be achieved via awards or events. Low-cost media and social media sharing of information, regularly and featuring Government leadership in this space could be very effective in reach and awareness.

With regards to school climate change resources, we request that any actions develop genuine climate change education resources which are not limited to a renewable energy focus. The first focus on school resources should be on informed climate science and not choosing one specific mitigation method as a focus just because it is a focus on state economic development.

Climate change will and is impacting all areas of society – information and resources on climate change need not be limited to science curriculum.

<p>Priority Area 2 – Transition and Innovation</p>	<p>Transition and innovation is a vital priority area as are the action areas outlined within the Draft Plan.</p> <p>We have made specific recommendations with regards to the electrification of government vehicle fleets above. The information provided within the Tasmanian Emissions Pathway Review table of ‘best fit’ opportunities for Tasmania provides a clear and valuable explanation of what emissions reductions can be achieved by each of the sectors.</p> <p>The consultation question of whether these actions will support Tasmania to achieve the 2030 emissions reductions target feels void. If the Plan incorporated a strong measurable emissions reductions target (not maintaining net zero), then the answer to this question would be provided within the Plan. Calls then could be made for projects and focus areas that could contribute to further reductions.</p>
<p>Priority Area 3 – Adaptation and Resilience</p>	<p><u>Plan for sea level rise, coastal erosion and inundation</u></p> <p>From a town planning perspective there are vague mentions around ‘adaptation planning with local government’ and ‘guidance to manage coastal hazards’, and specific mention of a ‘statewide sea level rise planning allowances for municipalities’ (p 24). The vast majority of local councils are not resourced to undertake this work, regardless of the amount of funding provided. In the case of the few larger Councils that may be able to achieve this, there lies a barrier between information and adoption of this into Council planning policies and legislation. This issue was identified in the submission by the City of Hobart’s Senior Climate Change Officer to the Opportunities Paper. This work needs to be undertaken with a collaborative approach, led by State Government in order to achieve a cohesive and consistent plan for sea level rise, coastal erosion and inundation across the State, particularly in light of the implementation of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.</p>

As a group, we would like to reiterate our appreciation for the opportunity to respond to the Draft Climate Change Action Plan.

We understand that climate change is confronting but it is very real. As parents with so many conflicting responsibilities, our heads are hurting trying to figure out the best way forward amongst the influences and expectations of daily life in our consumerist culture. We understand that conflicting priorities would be similarly felt by those developing such plans within government.

However, we believe ambitious leadership can provide us with hope and motivation. Time and time again we feel disappointed when stronger action and advocacy is taken in other jurisdictions around Australia and by other countries.

Unfortunately, the Vision of this Draft Climate Action Plan left us feeling immediately disappointed and it may appear that this response is critical and at times negative.

But this is not our intention.

Our intention is to provide honest feedback and a genuine request for more ambitious, bold and courageous leadership. The authors of this submission and members of our group have taken hours to read through, digest and provide feedback. This opportunity is not taken lightly.

We want our children to be inspired by the action that we are taking in providing this response and, we want our children to be inspired by the ambition and clarity of a strengthened Action Plan and the leadership of the Tasmanian Government.

1. Health impacts of gas stoves, ABC:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-17/kitchen-pollutants-study-australia-looks-at-gas-stove-health/102109372>

2. Fossil Ad Ban News: <https://fossiladban.org/news/>

3. Australian Parents for Climate Action report *The Real Cost of Living*:
https://www.ap4ca.org/cost_of_living_report