

Submission on the draft Climate Change (State Action) Amendment Bill 2021

Tasmanian Climate Change Office
Department of Premier and Cabinet

Please accept and consider our submission on the Tasmanian draft Climate Change (State Action) Amendment Bill 2021

We are a group of elderly friends who want to see our governments taking action to reduce the severity of Climate Change and its effects. We have attended many seminars by researchers in the field and are aware that Climate Change will not only change weather patterns but also increase health problems, threaten our food and water supplies and create social instability. Some of these effects are already in evidence in other areas of the world.

Strengthening Tasmania's emissions reduction target by legislating a target of net zero emissions for Tasmania from 2030 is an important goal but there must be set targets for emission reductions by all sectors in the legislation. This has been the flaw in previous 'Action Plans'. It has been easy not to implement necessary changes.

All political groups and both Houses of the Parliament should be involved in formulation of the Act so that any change of government does not destroy the future operation of the Act. We have seen this approach be successful with Covid and it will be vital to dealing with future problems. The support of all political groups establishes a clear message to the community and business so that they can plan for a sustainable future. Parliament should establish a Standing Committee with representation of all political parties and independent members to monitor government activities in response to climate change.

Establishing a framework for sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plans to be prepared in partnership between the Tasmanian Government and representatives from industry and business is an essential component of achieving a sustainable society and economic base. However this needs to include more than just the Minister and Industry Representatives. It needs to be completed urgently. Like Covid it needs people with understanding of the science as well as sectorial interests and public participation to achieve the best implementation mechanisms.

Where trade-offs between low and high emitters are used in the early stage of reducing overall emissions, it is essential that these trade-offs take place within an overall target. It is not sufficient that easier to abate sectors meet a target and more challenging sectors don't. All sectors must have targets for reduction within their own sector and must publicly report on how they are meeting these targets.

Requiring the Tasmanian Government to have a **Climate Change Action Plan** in place is essential. But it must have clear targets for effective implementation and this should be in the legislation. Within the legislation the state government should commit to ensuring that no state government subsidies are paid for exploration or development of oil, gas or coal resources in Tasmania or its offshore waters. All government organisations and agencies should be required by legislation to report on usage of fossil fuels and develop plans showing how their use of fossil fuels will be phased out.

.As the Climate Council writes: Addressing climate change requires frameworks that involve the whole community and remain effective across decades and across changes of government. Public engagement needs to be informed by climate science, timely data on greenhouse gas

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emissions, and information on sectoral plans to reduce emissions.

A revised Act should provide for resourcing of public engagement, education and consultation activities across all aspects of climate adaptation and mitigation policies and plans. There should be an independent statutory authority to provide ongoing specialist advice for the Tasmanian government, the Parliament, and community on State emissions targets and carbon budgets, adaptation measures, sectoral policies, and health impacts. Its membership would need to include expertise in science, economics, business, government, public, environment, health and education.

The current draft does not provide legislative assurance or guidance for the community and its various sectors. We support the conclusions of The Tasmanian Independent Science Council and ask you to give this Act the legislative detail and targets that the State needs.

“A Tasmanian Climate Change Act that drives rapid action on emissions reduction and demonstrates leadership on climate action should include:

- A level of ambition in emissions reduction in all sectors that genuinely sets Tasmania on a path to being a global leader in climate action.*
- Sectoral (e.g. transport, agriculture) and fuel specific (e.g. oil products, gas, coal) interim targets with dates.*
- Explicit targets and mechanisms for phasing out use of fossil fuels.*
- Provision and funding for an independent body to provide ongoing specialist advice to the Tasmanian government, Parliament, and the community.*
- Establishment of a capability within Tasmania to collect, report and make public information on emissions sources by both fuel type and sector.*
- Explicit mechanisms to ensure public participation and parliamentary oversight in the development of climate actions.*
- A requirement to produce five-yearly state-wide climate risk assessments as recommended in the Jacobs Final Report.”*

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