



Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25 Draft, CCAP, (Renewables, Climate and Future Industries, Department of State Growth, March 2023)

Submission by Landcare Tasmania

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To the Tasmanian Government,

Landcare Tasmania is the peak conservation volunteer body representing over 320 groups and 6000 individuals who are actively engaged with protecting and restoring Tasmania's land and waterways.

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and it is essential that we can all participate in immediate action to address it. Landcare Tasmania would like to continue to support ambitious climate action that focuses on community and industry participation in climate change mitigation and resilience.

Landcare Tasmania acknowledges the current productive relationship with the Tasmanian Government in the delivery of the Landcare Action Grants Program and is looking forward to expanding this program in the future. Landcare Tasmania supports the Government's view that climate action has the potential to create employment, training and community wellbeing by involving the Tasmanian community in the protection, enhancement and restoration of our unique ecosystems.

Landcare Tasmania's groups and individuals are actively organising projects that directly increase the resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change. These people are seeking support for training and materials to continue to deliver and monitor projects in their local area. The level of support available to Landcare Tasmania for the next few years is highly valued, however it does not currently match the demand from the community. Therefore, Landcare Tasmania would like to work with the government in developing novel ways in which the community can reach its unmet potential in managing risk, collecting information and improving resilience in the face of climate change.

Landcare Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the following consultation questions:

1. Vision and Goals

Q - 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?

Landcare Tasmania is broadly supportive of the goals of the CCAP especially those that address:

- (a) Improvements in the management of landscapes to support emissions reduction and resilience (CCAP p10).
- (b) The delivery projects that support business, industry and the community to be more resilient and adapt to a changing climate (CCAP p11).
- (c) Proposed climate change action considers the views of interested and relevant members of the community, through appropriate engagement (CCAP p12).
- (d) A CCAP that results in a carbon negative scenario rather than just net zero considering that Tasmania is uniquely placed to become a carbon sink and that climate change is a global problem.

Landcare Tasmania would also like to make the following suggestions:

- (e) Increased support for communities, groups and individuals who currently have latent capacity to deliver projects. This support needs to be long term in nature to ensure expertise is retained and that long term projects can be sustained.
- (f) Allow the broader Tasmanian community, business and industry to directly contribute to the protection and restoration of terrestrial (and marine) ecosystems through novel mechanisms.
- (g) A climate trigger should be included in the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* that requires a project to become a Level 2 activity and subject to offset conditions set by the EPA.
- (h) Broaden the concept, expansion and adoption of current and future agroforestry in Tasmanian farming systems to include restoration plantings and natural native regeneration that are both carbon sinks and biodiversity assets.
- (i) A greater emphasis is needed on the value of ecosystem function including threat reduction and connectivity.
- (j) Priority needs to be given to threatened communities and species.

2. Priority Area 1 - Information and Knowledge

Q - Will the key actions under Priority area 1 help support decision making for you and your community or organisation?

Landcare Tasmania supports the following initiatives in the CCAP:

- (a) the Tasmanian Government's 'delivery of the \$250,000 Carbon Farming Advice Rebate Pilot Program to offset the costs to primary producers of obtaining expert advice on carbon farming projects.' (p21). This is in accordance with the CCAP initiative of 'supporting business, industry, the community and government to innovate and implement emissions reduction opportunities, now and into the future specifically developing information for businesses, industry and the community on relevant Tasmanian and Australian Government programs (p18)'.

Landcare Tasmania would also like to make the following suggestions:

- (b) A similar program to the Carbon Farming Advice Rebate Pilot Program to be initiated for the emerging *biodiversity markets* to advise landholders and the community about potential opportunities.
- (c) Improvements in transparency around land clearing under a Forest Practises Plan and more scrutiny in assessing clearing on land zoned Agriculture in the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. Landcare Tasmania would like to highlight the considerable expense involved in revegetation which can be up to \$30k/ha (excluding fencing) and the time it takes for this emerging ecosystem to mature.
- (d) Priority vegetation needs to be assessed on a bioregional basis rather than a state-wide basis.
- (e) Natural capital accounting should be used to provide a value for the services that ecosystems provide to ensure that they are included in the decisions about land use.
- (f) Data collection needs to involve the capacity of the community for example support for Citizen Science programs and Waterwatch projects.
- (g) Increase knowledge sharing on ecosystem restoration in the face of climate change, specifically the traditional knowledge of the palawa/pakana people and the possible use of plant genetics from Climate Analogue locations on the Australian Mainland.
- (h) Projects that are supported by the local community result in long term outcomes and these should be a priority.
- (i) Longer term modelling and projections that extend beyond 2100.

Q - What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

- (j) Suggested projects include riparian restoration at a catchment scale and wetland protection and restoration.
- (k) Projects that support the creation of longitudinal environmental gradients for species movement and more connected landscapes allowing species population security.

- (l) Review of existing data sets, strategies and plans that have been developed that include aspects of environmental and community resilience, mitigation and adaptation such as catchment plans, protected environmental values (PEV's), Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystem Values (CFEV).

3. Priority Area 2 - Transition and Innovation

Q - Will the key actions under Priority area 2 support Tasmania to achieve its 2030 emissions reduction target and continued emissions reduction across Tasmania?

Landcare Tasmania supports the following initiatives in the CCAP:

- (a) The initiative of building capability in the community. This will address climate equity issues and regional disadvantage by providing training and employment opportunities.

Landcare Tasmania would also like to make the following suggestions:

- (b) Allow for novel mechanisms for business and public to directly contribute to climate change mitigation and resilience through the development of Tasmanian based offset programs and carbon/biodiversity credit schemes. Policy development in this area would be supported by the *Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008* Section 8. - Emissions offset regulations - that may:
 - (i) provide for the recognition, facilitation or promotion of emissions offset programs; and
 - (ii) prescribe ways of identifying or determining the types, and extent, of offset activities that may form part of recognised emissions offset programs; and
 - (iii) prescribe criteria allowing for the recognition of emissions offset programs capable of delivering multiple benefits (such as the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, biodiversity enhancement and economic development).
- (c) Offset mechanisms could be included in the sector-based Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans (ERRPs) for transport.
- (d) Landcare Tasmania would like to be involved in the sector specific transport plan that is to be released in November 2023.
- (e) Promote the use of Part 5 Agreements under the *Land Use and Planning Approvals Act 1993* to secure the conservation of carbon and biodiversity values on private land while forming partnerships with local councils and landholders. Kingborough Council has a well-established land use offset policy and routinely uses Part 5 Agreements to secure long term conservation outcomes with private land holders. This council could set a precedent for the remainder of Tasmania's municipalities.

- (f) Highlight the value of transitioning from fossil fuel-based energy to electrification and the benefits of purchasing this electrical energy from the community owned (Government owned) Hydro Tasmania company. Communicate the fact that money previously leaving the state for purchase of imported liquid fuels can be replaced with cheaper, locally produced electricity.
- (g) Innovative sustainable agricultural practices need to be included in knowledge sharing forums.

Q - What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

- A. Cross tenure and cross business forums should be developed as part of catchment based projects that address locally relevant climate based issues with innovative and practical solutions.
- B. Identifying key catchments that can undertake innovative climate projects and make them case studies that can form templates for future adoption in other catchments with similar economic, social and environmental attributes.

4. Priority Area 3 - Adaptation and Resilience

Q - Will the key actions under Priority area 3 build resilience and support adaptation planning across Tasmania?

Landcare Tasmania would like to make the following suggestions:

- (a) In addition to risk assessment for communities, business and agriculture there needs to be a risk assessment for ecosystem function with priority given to threatened communities, threatened species, catchments, wateruse and water availability (including necessary environmental flows), as well as other threats to connectivity/viability in the landscape.
- (b) A greater emphasis needs to be placed on improving the resilience of the ecosystems that provide ecosystem services to the Tasmanian community and economy. This includes ensuring connectivity in the landscape, refuge areas, managing threats, riparian vegetation protection/restoration in catchments and priority actions for threatened species and communities.
- (c) The resilience of these ecosystems and the communities that care for them can be increased through greater engagement and support.
- (d) There are potential strategies available to increase/protect the resilience of the environment to impacts of climate change on private land which accounts for 38.2% of the area of Tasmania. There needs to be more engagement and support for landowners who want to protect and restore ecosystem function, threatened communities and threatened species.
- (e) Increasing community participation in current and future resilience and adaptation planning strategies.

Q - What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

- (f) Specific funding for fencing off important ecosystems such as wetlands and riparian areas for protection against stock grazing.
- (g) Community outreach activities at a local scale that involve the greater Landcare community and their respective partners.
- (h) Support, recognise and remunerate primary producers and other land managers who have undertaken onground activities that mitigate against climate change

5. Additional Priority Areas

Q - Are there other issues not covered by the three priority areas?

1. Continued support of land managers through the Landcare Action Grants (LAG) Program.
2. Ensure participant recommendations identified through the Carbon Farming Advice Pilot Program are encouraged to undertake onground activities through onground support programs such as the Landcare Action Grants and other funding programs.
3. Ensuring current land manager environmental programs are recognised and measured as a contribution to emission mitigation.

6. Implementation, Reporting, and Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Landcare Tasmania would like to make the following suggestions:

- (a) Incorporate the state of the environment report into the monitoring reporting and adaptive management principles of climate change reporting.
- (b) Increase the transparency around land clearing especially in the Agricultural Zone that is now not part of the Natural Assets Code in the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.
- (c) Provide more transparency on current emission audits on industries with significant immediate emission contributions, for example - high energy-use market industries (requiring additional fossil fuel supplies to operate), forestry operations in mature native forests (e.g. the practice of regeneration burns), and emerging industries with unknown/unproven emission impacts.
- (d) Delineate between industries with current high emissions undertaking long-term offsets as opposed to those with immediate reduction plans in undertaking mitigation activities.