



Fact Sheet: 200% renewable energy target – is it good for the climate?

In 2020 the Tasmanian Parliament legislated the Tasmanian Renewable Energy Target (TRET). The target is promoted by the state government mainly as a mechanism for encouraging jobs and investment. However the target is generally seen as being both driven by the need for action on climate change and as contributing to emissions reduction. What does the TRET legislation actually do and is it likely to make an effective contribution to a rapid reduction in Australia's greenhouse gas emissions?

What does the legislation do?

- Sets a 2040 target that renewable electricity generation will be 200% of the anticipated 2022 generation and an interim target of 150% by the end of 2030.
- Requires annual reporting on progress towards meeting the targets.
- Provides that electricity businesses (Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks and Aurora Energy) and prospective renewable electricity developers are able to share non-public information without the inference of anti-competitive behaviour under the Commonwealth Competition and Consumer Act.

The Act does not provide any mechanism (other than the sharing of information) by which the targets may be achieved.

Where will the electricity go?

As Tasmania is already close to 100% self-sufficient in renewable electricity generation, doubling production only makes sense if there is additional demand. The TRET is one part of a projected future in which Tasmania both produces hydrogen from renewable electricity and exports electricity to the mainland via Marinus Link, a new interconnector to Victoria.

Will it reduce emissions?

In the context of a climate emergency, will the proposed suite of Tasmanian projects (TRET, Marinus Link and further development of wind farms) contribute to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions? Since Tasmania's electricity is already close to 100% renewable, the main emissions reduction challenge in Tasmania is in other sectors (transport, industry, agriculture etc). Many coal fired power plants on the mainland will close over the next two decades. The question is, will Tasmania wind and pumped hydro transmitted via Marinus Link be an important contribution to the need for reliable renewable electricity to replace coal fired plants?

A range of alternative solutions may combine to be a faster and more cost-effective way of balancing future electricity supply and demand on the mainland. These include demand management, pumped hydro (both Snowy 2.0 and other schemes), and batteries in various configurations including grid scale, domestic and two-way electric vehicles to grid.

Large scale government and private investment in Marinus Link, pumped hydro and new wind farms, if made, **may** contribute to decarbonisation on the mainland. But this is by no means certain. Other technologies may be faster to implement, cheaper and have additional advantages.

More information

An earlier and more detailed version of this content is available at:

<https://www.climatetasmania.org/tasmanias-200-renewables-target/>

Climate Tasmania is a group of concerned professionals who have a diverse range of expertise, spanning scientific, legal, economic, health, energy, social and policy aspects of climate change. Our aim is "To provide timely, independent and authoritative advice to Tasmanian business, government and community leaders on climate change and appropriate policy responses."

Details of the members of the Climate Tasmania board and expert advisers are available at www.climatetasmania.org/members/

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