



Policy Paper: What Do We Need in a Tasmanian Climate Change Act?

The existing [Tasmanian Climate Change \(State Action\) Act 2008](#) is currently under review. A Final Report has been completed by Jacobs Consulting, the state government has responded to the report and has released [draft legislation for public consultation](#). Comments are due by 14 November. For more background on the process see our [briefing paper](#).

The need for stable, non-partisan policy framework

Successive state governments have produced Climate Change Action Plans (there have been six of these since 2007) but none of these have set firm targets for emissions reduction. Climate Tasmania believes that effective climate action requires a legislated framework for targets, independent advice, and implementation mechanisms that are supported by all political parties. Within such a tri-partisan framework, parties can then promote their own individual approaches.

A framework and targets supported by all political parties will send a clear message to the community and business on the type of sustainability goals that all Tasmanians can work towards.

An effective Climate Change Act for Tasmania needs:

- An emissions reduction target for 2030 that reflects the urgency of the need for action, Tasmania's unique advantages and our claim to global climate leadership.
- A mechanism for developing plans for individual sectors (eg transport, agriculture) and fuels (eg oil products, gas, coal) that are consistent with the 2030 target.
- Explicit targets and mechanisms for phasing out use of fossil fuels.
- Provision and funding for an independent Climate Change Commission to provide ongoing specialist advice to the Tasmanian government, Parliament, and the community.
- Establishment of an independent statutory authority to oversee and assist the transition.
- Explicit mechanisms to ensure public participation and parliamentary oversight in the development of climate actions.

A 2030 emissions reduction target

The Jacobs Final Report recommends that the state government legislate a target to remain below net zero emissions from 2030. The state government claims that Tasmania has already met a net zero target in six of the last seven years based on a large take-up of emissions in forestry and land use. Given the necessity to reduce emissions substantially over the next decade, there is no reason why a legislated net zero target should be deferred until 2030.

Tasmania's 2030 emissions reduction targets should represent real reductions in all sectors of the economy and not rely largely on land use. A 60% reduction in emissions by 2030 excluding land use figures would be ambitious but achievable and would demonstrate real leadership.

Mechanism for developing sectoral targets

The Jacobs Final Report recommends the development of sectoral 'Decarbonisation and Resilience Plans' and this recommendation has been accepted by the state government. However these plans are to be developed by the

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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Minister in consultation with industry and are not required to be completed until 2025. This does not reflect the urgency of the situation and does not guarantee public participation in the process.

Sectoral Decarbonisation and Resilience Plans should be framed to achieve sectoral targets that are, in total, consistent with an overall 2030 emissions reduction targets. Initial planning and commencement of activities is needed urgently to meet 2030 targets.

Phasing out of fossil fuels

Development of new fossil fuel sources is inconsistent with a rapid reduction in emissions. A ban on new fossil fuel developments in Tasmania will need to be carefully planned to ensure that it is not subject to legal challenges.

- 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.
- The state government should announce an investigation, to report in less than six months, on what legislative changes would be required to prevent any future development of oil, gas or coal resources in Tasmania.
- Large users of fossil fuels and all government organisations and agencies should be required to report on usage and develop plans showing how their use of fossil fuels will be phased out.

Provision of independent science-based advice

A revised Act should make provision for the establishment and guaranteed ongoing resourcing of an independent advisory body to ensure that the best possible account is taken of emerging climate science in the overall program of activities established under the Act.

An independent statutory authority to oversee and assist the transition

Adequate mitigation and adaptation responses will transform our society and bring about the rise and fall of industries, trades, and physical assets. As well as legislated targets, this requires management by an independent agency that can provide expertise, planning and support that is consistent across electoral cycles.

Public participation and parliamentary oversight

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 emissions, and information on sectoral plans to reduce emissions.

- A revised Act should provide for resourcing of public engagement and consultation activities across all aspects of climate adaptation and mitigation policies and plans.
- The independent statutory authority should have the mandate to collect and make public information on greenhouse gas emissions in Tasmania by sector and fuel type.
- Parliament should establish a Standing Committee with representation of all political parties and independent members to monitor government activities in response to climate change.

More information

- The position paper by Climate Tasmania and the Tasmanian Independent Science Council [Action for Climate: How can lutruwita/Tasmania be a real leader?](#)
- Our [briefing paper](#) which explains in more details the process by which the Act is being reviewed and amended.
- Climate Tasmania's [submission to the review](#) of the Climate Change Act
- Climate Tasmania's [Drafting Instructions](#) which set out the requirements and arrangements for an effective Climate Act.