

2025 consultation

Submission type	Upload
Submitter	Better Futures Australia
Response ID	277513

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NSW - Net Zero Commission

A Better Future for NSW's Climate Change and Adaptation

11 July 2025

Dear NSW Net Zero Commission,

Re: Better Futures Australia/ICLEI/Ironbark Sustainability response to the NSW Net Zero Commission 2025 Consultation process

Better Futures Australia – Local Government & Cities Working Group, ICLEI Oceania, and Ironbark Sustainability are pleased to provide this submission in response to NSW Net Zero Commission consultation and appreciated the opportunity to provide expert climate change and adaptation advice to inform the NSW government.

Better Futures Australia is a network of partners amplifying climate work already underway by bringing together public and private sector leaders to scale success stories and demonstrate Australia's readiness for an ambitious national response to climate change.

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI Oceania) supports local governments across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific to accelerate climate action and sustainable urban development.

Ironbark Sustainability works with councils and their communities to reduce greenhouse emissions, tackle climate change and implement sustainability projects and programs.

We welcome the preparation of the Strategy and your consultation with the community regarding climate action across the state. This submission includes some key recommendations regarding:

- **Multilevel Governance**
- **State-wide local government climate program**
- **Reporting Standards**
- **Trusted information**
- **Science Derived Targets**
- **Climate Risk and Adaptation**



- **Sector approaches**
- **Vulnerable communities**

We would welcome the opportunity to participate in a dedicated consultation session to provide further information about local government views and requirements for the strategy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Multilevel governance

Local governments, and their communities, are on the frontline of responding to climate change and have a strong track record of delivering nation-leading work to reduce emissions and increase organisational and community resilience to climate impacts.

Ensure the strategy reflects their important role by including multilevel governance approaches, as recommended by [the Many Hands Make Light Work](#) and [Australian Local Government Climate Review](#), across local, state and federal governments, ensuring resourcing is provided to enable effective action.

Effective coordination between and across all levels of government is required to overcome the current fragmented approach to policy, funding and resourcing. Regional collaborations, such as the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, are particularly effective at addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation approaches.

Advocate for the Federal Government, as a signatory of the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships, to implement a multilevel governance climate policy and investment approach that recognises the role of local government.

State-wide local government climate program

Local government is an effective delivery mechanism for many state emissions reduction programs, and their connections with, and experience engaging with communities is a powerful resource for delivering on the Commission's objectives. Local Governments are responsible for programs under all sectors and a coordinated program can integrate planning, resourcing, infrastructure, community engagement and wellbeing.

Establishing a coordinated state-wide local government program would empower all spheres of government to fulfill their climate ambitions by promoting effective coordination between and across governments and their communities. The program should provide support for councils to mitigate emissions from their own operations, actions they can facilitate across

their community, effective monitoring and reporting and climate risk and adaptation measures.

WSROC's Western Sydney Energy Program is an example of regional coordination on emission reductions for local government and community. Since 2019, the program has achieved a 650 ktCO₂e reduction in emissions and saved \$75 million in energy bills. However much more could be achieved with resourcing for ongoing regional collaboration.

Accelerating existing initiatives, such as the Western Sydney and Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils and NSW Government's Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration program (JONZA) to provide funding and support for regional net zero pathways and projects that reduce emissions, scale efficiencies and outcomes.

Reporting standards

Provide clear guidance for local government on reporting standards, to bring them in line with the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards developed for businesses, and advocate for these to be adopted nationally. Please see Appendix 1 motion from the ALGA conference for further detail and the Table below (from the Australian Local Government Climate Review 2024) for additional recommendations across the three layers of Government.

Monitoring and evaluation actions

Table 13 Actions to support monitoring and evaluation of climate programs.

 Local government	 State government	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve monitoring and evaluation of climate projects and modify project delivery accordingly. • Communicate results of monitoring and evaluation to the sector. • Report on all Scope 1 and 2 emissions. • Explore Scope 3 reporting for council's inventory and supply chain and how council procurement policies and operations can influence the community. • Advocate for national reporting standards and resourcing to implement. • Create a long term monitoring and evaluation strategy. • Implement sector specific targets to monitor impact over time. • Establish procurement policies to prioritise the purchase of sustainable, low-emission products and services to influence the market towards more sustainable options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide systems to support councils to more efficiently and accurately gather Scope 3 emissions data. • Provide common tools for the creation and update of corporate emissions inventories. • Support standardised inventories for communities across states. • Provide projection estimates for localities so that strategic development across communities can be done in a compatible manner. • Implement sector and activity specific targets for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support standardised inventories for communities across the country. • Identify minimum climate disclosure reporting standards that could apply to local government entities. • Provide resourcing and nationally consistent training and systems for councils to monitor and report on corporate and supply chain emissions. • Develop and introduce guidance and standards for local governments that align with the voluntary reporting requirements on climate-related financial disclosures around governance, strategy, risk management, targets and metrics to manage systemic risk and promote a sustainable financial system within local governments. • Implement the updated ASSB climate reporting to require companies to begin to track and report Scope 3 emissions data. • Develop regional approaches and support for councils without staff to drive action.
 Federal government		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Climate Active processes and guidelines and provide accessible emissions factors for public use. 	

Trusted information

Local government is the most trusted level of government and can work closely with their communities to combat mis-information and address legitimate concerns regarding changes to infrastructure, disaster response and cost of living pressures. Resourcing councils to undertake community consultation, in line with regional partnerships would support all levels of Government to meet ambitious emissions reduction targets and maximise community benefits.

The report *Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government* highlights how council-led programs can build trust in home energy upgrades by offering independent, locally endorsed advice to residents. This trusted positioning is critical in overcoming public hesitation and misinformation ([Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government](#)).

Science Derived Targets

This consultation comes at a critical time for climate policy at a global, national and local level. Setting ambitious, [science-derived emissions reduction targets](#) is critical to enable rapid and deep greenhouse gas emissions reductions across all sectors and keep warming to 1.5 degrees. A strong NSW target will also influence national and international approaches to Nationally Determined Contributions and 2035 emissions reductions targets

At risk communities

Local government plays an important role in facilitating a just and equitable transition for the whole community. Resource constraints are particularly challenging for rural and regional councils which are disproportionately impacted by climate change and have a smaller revenue base. Ensure that less-resourced councils are provided with the tools to measure, report on and implement their emissions reduction activities, and that vulnerable communities are involved in policy design and implementation to ensure it is fit for purpose.

A strategic partnership between state and local government could establish a scalable home upgrade program to support energy efficiency and electrification for vulnerable and low-income households. Local government is well-positioned to implement such programs through trusted community connections and existing delivery models. For example, the report *Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government* outlines a delivery mechanism combining subsidies, low-interest loans, and integrated support to address energy poverty and accelerate electrification across at-risk communities ([Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government](#)).



Climate Risk and Adaptation

Councils are already experiencing the direct impacts of climate change from more frequent and severe storm, heat, flood and fire events, as well as coastal inundation and erosion. They are also feeling the pressures from rising temperatures on liveability and cost of living standards. Local government is also at the coal face of delivering adaptation actions across their community. Local risk needs to be matched with investment to enable rapid and deep emissions reductions and embed climate change risk management in council operations. More resourcing and urgent and rapid action from all levels of government is required to minimise increasing risks and damages from current and future climate impacts across the environment, energy, human health, infrastructure and service provision.

Climate risk and adaptation actions

Table 15 Actions to support effective climate risk management and adaptation across all levels of government.



Local government

- Develop council asset and community climate risk and adaptation plans.
- Ensure council-wide understanding and accountability of actions.
- Implement climate risk as core council business and reflect in CEO and key staff performance plans to align and integrate roles.
- Implement roles for local government in national, state, regional or sectoral plans.
- Provide cool spaces for community safety during heatwaves.
- Increase canopy in streets and public spaces shading commuter routes, parks and playgrounds, drought resilient planting.
- Support vulnerable councils and communities through knowledge and resource sharing
- Advocate for a local government climate sectoral plan.

- Advocate for effective resourcing to manage the costs of climate impacts and adaptation.
- Continue to share resources and strategies for climate risk and adaptation, focusing on scalable and adaptable projects to pool knowledge and resources, enhancing the ability of all councils to respond to climate impacts.
- Upgrade public infrastructure to account for extreme weather events.
- Participate in the Federal Community of Practice to share insights surrounding the management and disclosure of climate risks and opportunities for local government.
- Improve processes following natural disaster impacts.
- Consider impacts of climate change, including road placement, water sensitive design, isolation of communities, access and egress, vulnerability of services and access to services in Strategic planning.

- Build social resilience through community development.
- Provide regular bushfire, drought, flooding and other emergency education.
- Ensure council assets and community services are adapted to future conditions.



State government

- Legislate adaptation plans and regional adaptation strategies and frameworks.
- Coordinate funding to implement regional strategies and frameworks.
- Collaborate with the federal government to manage significant resources and infrastructure.
- Legislate and support all local governments to integrate climate risk assessments into all planning and development processes to ensure that climate resilience is a cornerstone of local governance.

CLIMATE REVIEW 2024



Federal government

- Provide a national risk and adaptation framework for local government.
- Set agenda and coordination for subnational governments.
- Expand disaster ready funding to provide consistent and reliable funding to councils (not grant based).
- Identify gaps and national priority regions for adaptation plans and resourcing.
- Identify and support LGAs most vulnerable to climate impacts with the least capacity to respond.
- Develop a fit for purpose guide for local government adaptation and planning.
- Coordinate climate change and emergency management responses across regions and states

- Address current and compounding issues of staff and service delivery burnout.
- Provide national, regional and local modelling on costs of climate impacts to assets.
- Provide national, regional and local modelling on costs of climate impacts to services, including cascading and indirect impacts.
- Support local government coalitions at the state and regional level.
- Work towards consistent national climate risk and adaptation legislation and policies.
- Fund vulnerable local government areas to better understand and prepare for climate risks.
- Provide long-term funding to enable long-term planning.
- Structure collaboration and communication between stakeholders to make funds go further.

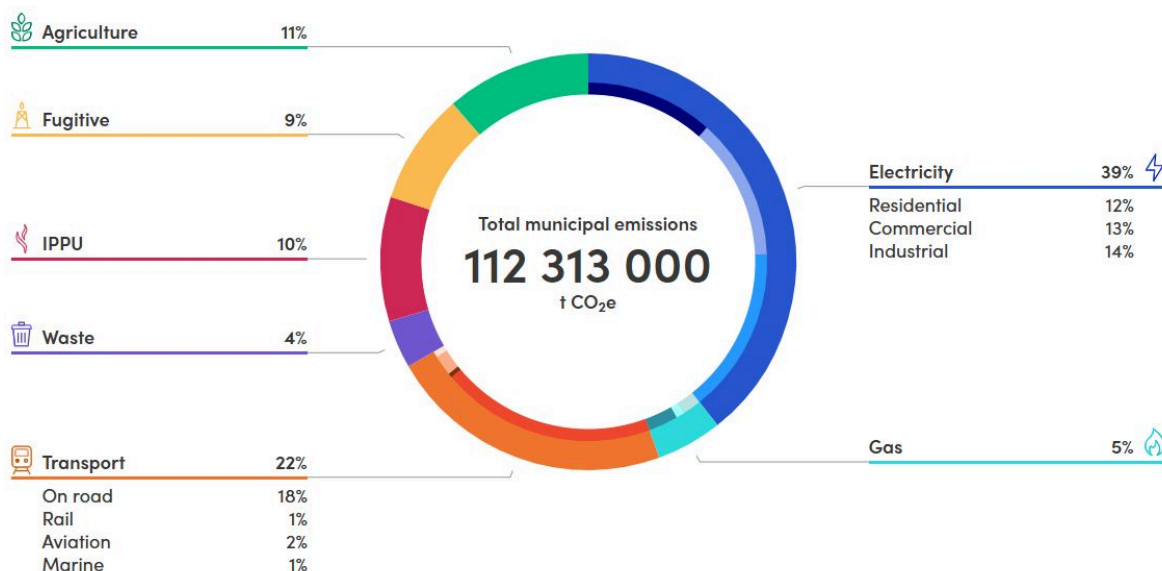
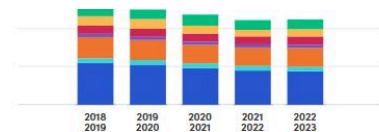


Sector approaches

As the electricity sector decarbonises, thanks in large part to NSW government policy, there are key sectors where emissions reductions will need targeted support, including Industrial Processes and Product Use, Fugitive emissions, gas use in manufacturing and Agricultural emissions in the dairy, sheep and beef industries. Devising policies in line with these sectors will be important to mitigating significant emissions across the state.

New South Wales

2022/23 state emissions snapshot



New South Wales

Total emissions time-series

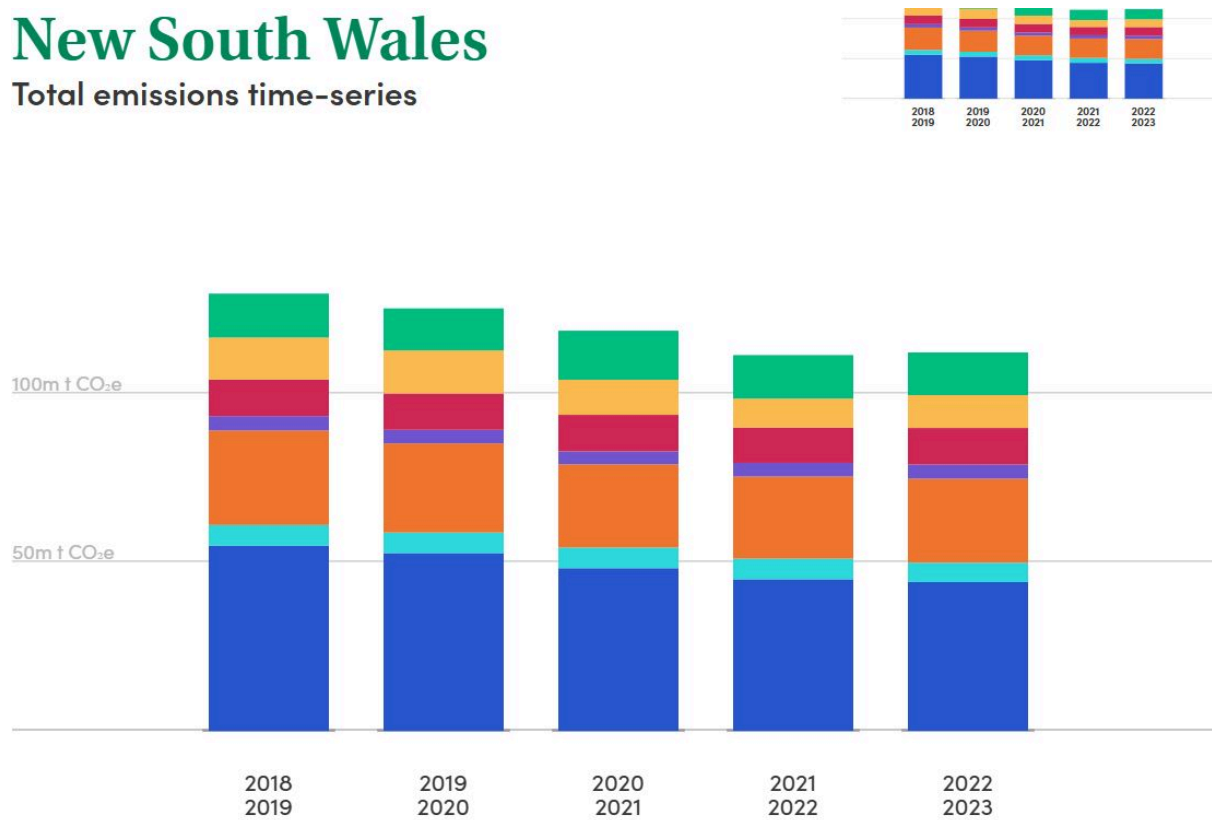


Figure 1. NSW emissions profile 2022/2023 (Snapshot Climate)



Sector approaches

The following section provides recommendations and actions to support multi-level governance climate action for both corporate and community-wide emissions. The tables are sourced from the Australian Local Government Climate Review 2024.

Electricity and energy

Support the development of a Property Linked Finance (PLF) market, building on existing Environmental Upgrade Agreement (EUA) legislation in NSW, to accelerate the electrification and decarbonisation of homes. PLF enables cost-effective upgrades by linking finance repayments to property rates, reducing the barrier of upfront costs. This approach is also recommended in Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government as a key financing mechanism to support a national household retrofit model ([*Repowering Australian Homes with Local Government*](#)).

Energy actions

Table 5 Actions to support corporate emissions reductions in the energy sector.



Local government

- Participate in renewable energy PPAs.
- Surrender renewable energy certificates to retain the emissions savings from renewable energy projects.
- Prepare feasibility studies to support CEUF applications.
- Install large and small-scale solar photovoltaic systems and, where appropriate, battery storage.
- Electrify all facilities.
- Implement high ESD standards for new builds and upgrades and demonstrate what can be mandated by other levels of government for the entire built environment.
- Implement systemic energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits for council buildings.
- Optimise the operation of major building and facility equipment.

- Build staff capacity to minimise energy and maintain optimised performance of equipment.
- Upgrade to high-efficiency computer servers, and optimise virtualisation and computer room air conditioning distribution.
- Upgrade street lights and open space lighting to LEDs and consider smart lighting.
- Develop technical specifications to replace minor works, plant and equipment.



State government

- Replicate policies like the Victorian Local Government Energy Saver Program. Continue and replicate programs like Victorian Energy Upgrade and Energy Saver Program.



Federal government

- Support Smart Cities funding to target council street upgrades.
- Develop ESD guidance resources for council buildings.
- Support business renewable buying groups.
- Deliver on the no-cost action of recognising Council targets and ambition in NDCs through Locally Determined Contributions (LDCs).
- Scale up support programs like the \$100 million Community Energy Upgrades Fund.
- Fund smart lighting upgrades nationally.
- Provide funding and resources to enable regional, state or national local government corporate programs to improve efficiency and scale of progress.




Energy actions


Table 9 Actions to reduce energy emissions across all levels of government.

 **Local government**

- Advocate to state and federal governments for effective business and residential solar programs and financing, as well as a stable and sustainable electricity grid.
- Encourage businesses to source 100% of energy needs from renewable energy sources via PPAs.
- Collaborate with State government for community led submissions and proposals on new renewable energy infrastructure.
- Support community uptake of large-scale renewables and innovative methods for local distribution of renewable energy.
- Engage with local builders through new developments and building processes to maximise energy efficiency.
- Partner with a builders' association (such as HIA, Tafe, Sustainable Builders Association) to run training sessions.
- Investigate feasibility of a residential and/or commercial Virtual Power Plant program.
- Educate, support and provide incentives to businesses and residents on electrification, renewable energy and energy efficiency opportunities for existing and new buildings.
- Establish local planning controls for low-emission, all-electric, climate-resilient new builds and upgrades that exceed national and state requirements to set best practices and demonstrate achievable standards.
- Partner with the Federal Government to research gaps, challenges and ways to improve National Construction Code Section J Energy Efficiency compliance processes for new buildings and upgrades.
- Implement low emissions civic infrastructure initiatives.

 **State government**

- Provide state level support for residential and business energy efficiency programs and financing.
- Provide residential/industry rebates and incentives to assist energy efficiency.
- Increase targeted grants for solar on residential and commercial properties.
- Increase renewable energy technologies on state government owned assets.
- Mandate smart metres for all new housing.
- Improve planning schemes for more sustainable buildings.
- Develop landlord tax incentives for energy efficiency measures, energy efficiency standards for rental properties, and mandatory disclosure of energy and water efficiency at point of sale or lease.
- Improve low emission, all-electric and climate resilient planning controls for new builds and major building upgrades (e.g. rooftop solar, no gas, light coloured rooftops).




 **Federal government**

- Upgrade civic infrastructure and planning zoning and controls to align with climate change risks (e.g. upgrade drainage systems to cope with flash flooding, prevent development in flood risk areas, develop defence mechanisms for estuarine inundation areas).
- Support low emissions civic infrastructure initiatives.
- Fund a national residential and business energy advice and financing program.
- Collaborate with state governments to ensure a stable and sustainable electricity grid.
- Collaborate with energy distributors to release national data on an annual basis, in a consistent format, for community emissions reporting.
- Increase targeted grants for solar on residential and commercial properties
- Rapidly electrify Australia's homes and workplaces.
- Improve energy efficiency of residential and commercial buildings.
- Ensure new homes are all-electric and phase out gas from current buildings.
- Improve National Construction Code Section J energy efficiency standards and Greenhouse and Energy Minimum Standards for a nationally consistent approach to energy-efficient and climate-resilient new builds, upgrades, and appliances.
- Continue to improve and expand programs to monitor and improve building performance, such as NABERS and the Commercial Building Disclosure program.
- Lead research into gaps, challenges and ways to improve local government NCC Section J compliance processes.
- Conduct research with all governments to identify barriers to low-emissions, climate-resilient urban development.
- Investigate why local councils often lose in planning courts and develop legal frameworks, incentives, and guidelines based on the findings.
- Research and support low emissions civic infrastructure (roads, footpaths, etc) initiatives.

Transport

Transport actions

Table 6 Actions to support corporate emissions reductions in the transport sector.

 <p>Local government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop EV fleet transition plans, starting with passenger fleet before moving to vans and utes. • Establish targets for fleet emissions reduction. • Install EV charging stations at council facilities. • Implement vehicle sharing programs. • Undertake feasibility studies and trials, and monitor technological advancement for heavy vehicles and light and heavy plant. 	 <p>Federal government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create low emissions standards for new vehicles. • Expand targets for EV adoption rates. • Create incentive schemes to expand the EV market, improving the range of brands and models, in particular for the lower end of the market. • Support and build upon the National Electric Vehicle Strategy. • Support the development of zero emissions specialist fleet vehicles like utes, street sweepers and garbage trucks.
 <p>State government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the installation of EV charging infrastructure through resourcing and strategic planning. • Provide grants for fleet purchasing and building electricity upgrades to support EV capacity. 	

The Western Sydney Electric Vehicle Roadmap 2022 demonstrates the role councils can play in the transition to EVs, alongside the barriers to wider EV uptake.

Developed by eight local governments under the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, the report explores the increase in capital costs for more expensive vehicles and the installation of charging infrastructure. It demonstrates that electric vehicle investment is likely to bring about a positive return within the next decade.

State government can support councils to invest in joint purchasing, financing, and grant applications to build skills surrounding the procurement and use of charging infrastructure.

Transport actions

Table 10 Actions to reduce transport emissions across all levels of government.

 Local government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create transport targets and plans. • Prioritise active transport precincts and collaborate with local community on design. • Increase shared transport and public transport infrastructure. • Support mode shift in urban areas and better design in peri urban areas. • Provide funding to fast track cycling and walking capital works plans and increase the number of protected bike lanes. • Implement street calming measures (e.g., bollards, medians, refuge islands, trees, lower speeds). • Mandate car share infrastructure in new developments. • Promote e-bike programs. • Educate community on shared and active transport options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer incentives like designated parking and discounted rates for EV users. • Plan to gradually remove on-street parking for ICE vehicles (with protections for vulnerable users). • Assist third parties in installing EV chargers and participate in regional EV charging network strategies. • Revise local government planning controls to require all new developments to have active transport and electric vehicle infrastructure. • Increase tree canopy to mitigate urban heat island effect, especially along pedestrian and cycling routes. • Investigate secondhand EV bulk buys for the community. • Increase public toilet access along key public and active transport routes. • Advocate for freight transport to be transitioned from on-road trucks to rail and for the electrification of diesel freight trains. 	 State government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with local government to design electric bus networks. • Make public transport planning and operation more accessible for local government and community to participate in. • Improve public transport services and active transport infrastructure. • Implement multi-tier governance strategy on EV charging infrastructure. • Develop strategies around how key freight infrastructure and routes will support electrification. • Boost public transport funding to 50% of transport budgets. • Boost active transport funding to 20% of transport budgets. • Power urban and regional train network from renewables.
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AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce lanes available to cars, and reduce speed limits. • Support regional and rural transport with a wide range of EVs to suit business and farming requirements. • Invest in Bicycle Networks, more separated/protected cycling infrastructure, and bike lanes on strategic routes – connecting schools, shops and railway stations. • Address gender and CALD barriers to accessing shared, public and active transport. • Invest in walkable neighbourhoods and shopping precincts. • Integrate bus and train timetables for more efficient travel. • Collaborate with councils to increase tree canopy to mitigate urban heat island effect, especially along pedestrian and cycling routes. • Identify priority areas for better cycle paths, safe road crossings, and missing pedestrian links. 	 Federal government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support shift from aviation to rail for domestic and commercial travel. • Shift road freight to rail, with co-benefits in road safety and infrastructure. • Provide incentives for the electrification of heavy vehicles. • Provide rebates for low emission vehicle purchases. • Help fund improved public transport services and active transport infrastructure. • Provide dedicated funding for state and local governments to deliver public and active transport infrastructure. • Set targets for avoid and shift measures for each transport mode. • Build fast trains or High Speed rail networks to link regions and state capitals to reduce need for air travel. • Develop nationally consistent light vehicle, e-bike and e-scooter road rules and infrastructure to protect all users • Provide a national e-bike subsidy. 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce dependency on and explore alternative solutions for aviation and shipping fuels. • Limit aviation demand by restricting airport expansion and imposing a frequent flyer levy. • Wind up business tax write offs for new petrol/diesel vehicles. • Electrify passenger fleet, prioritising vehicles that travel most like taxis, rideshare vehicles and government fleets. 
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Agriculture and land

Land use and agriculture actions

Table 12 Actions to reduce agriculture and land use emissions across all levels of government.



Local government

- Develop and implement urban forestry plan to increase tree coverage.
- Adapt local planning policies to support afforestation and tree protection on public and private land.
- Enforce local planning schemes and bylaw regulations, combined with incentives, to increase tree canopy and restore and conserve private and public land using a climate resilient approach.
- Require nature strips to have at least one tree and ensure residents, builders and engineers are aware of this requirement.
- Enforce and strengthen controls to limit the removal of existing trees and vegetation, including a significant tree register.
- Develop relationships with local farming communities and representative groups to collaborate on emissions reduction activities and studies
- Facilitate effective local advocacy and actions – establish regional officer roles to liaise with stakeholders.

- Support community based solutions and research into low emission farming practices.
- Integrate revegetation and climate resilience into local planning schemes and development controls
- Optimise council resources across the built, agricultural and natural landscape through strategic planning, protection, revegetation and regeneration.
- Engage local communities, landholders and Indigenous groups to promote revegetation and climate resilience.
- Provide education and resources for sustainable land management, effective tree planting projects and suitable plants and weed control.
- Support local projects like community planting, habitat restoration and urban greening.
- Increase implementation of sustainable and regenerative land management practices for agricultural, domestic, and public lands, reserves and parks.
- Encourage regenerative farming practices e.g. perennial ground covers, rotational grazing, minimising soil disturbance and chemical inputs.

- Ensure selection of tree plantings in new residential developments provide good shade in summer and allow sunlight access in winter.
- Ensure consideration is given to tree placement to optimise urban design and minimise shading of solar panels
- Encourage farmers to reduce pesticides/herbicides and fertilisers.
- Support education and knowledge sharing within the community about benefits of soil health in agriculture.
- Support local carbon offset purchases and local carbon sequestration projects.



State government

- Expand support for low emissions agriculture, consider developing agriculture-specific climate roadmaps similar to the [Queensland Government roadmap](#).
- Provide financial incentives to rehabilitate and conserve biodiversity and strengthen resilience to climate change.

AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Strengthen land management, vegetation clearing and conservation laws and land use planning controls and zoning. E.g: Limit clear-felling on private land during development; legislate protection of green areas on private land; end old growth forest logging; tighten restrictions on clearing remnant vegetation.
- Conduct periodic surveys of vegetation cover across the state and changes in urban heat.
- Provide the necessary statutory guidance and planning policies to support local government efforts to maintain their urban tree canopy.
- End wood supply agreements and wind up native forest logging.
- Fund programs investigating commercially viable solutions for transitioning agriculture to lower-emissions practices.
- Enforce and strengthen controls to limit removal of existing trees and vegetation.
- Collaborate with local and federal governments to identify, protect and enhance carbon sinks on both public and private land.
- Support local agricultural players to know their emissions baseline and understand mandatory reporting requirements.

- Set targets in collaboration with Natural Resource Management, agricultural bodies and industries to monitor emissions and policy/ program impact.



Federal government

- Support research on low emissions farming practices, manure management and fertiliser use.
- Increase funding to scale-up the production of methane-reducing feed supplements and other low emissions farming practices.
- Strengthen policies for environmental conservation and climate resilience.
- Increase funding for conservation programs like Landcare.
- Fund and share research on biodiversity, climate change impacts and land management.
- Strengthen laws to protect biodiversity, manage land use and reduce emissions.
- Partner with all government levels, NGOs, private sector, and Indigenous communities to enhance biodiversity and emissions reduction.

- Expand forest areas and increase the amount of stored carbon in Australia's forests.
- Create frameworks for carbon credits and offsets.
- Develop systems to monitor and report revegetation project progress (e.g. nationally consistent data to support urban forestry projects and systems).
- Reduce emissions from deforestation and expand forest and plantation areas.
- Provide a framework for local government to contribute to the Federal 30 by 30 target.
- Establish quantitative targets to drive ambition and support monitoring of progress against nature and climate commitments.
- Develop a robust local offset market that prioritises drawdown of greenhouse gas emissions and maximises co-benefits for First Nations and regional communities while supporting compliance schemes.
- Improve renewable energy and carbon offsets schemes, with voluntary renewable energy and carbon reduction efforts additional to Australia's NDCs.



Waste


Waste actions

Table 7 Actions to support corporate emissions reductions in the waste sector.

 <p>Local government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sustainable procurement policies and guidelines. • Implement flaring for landfills operated by Council. • Advocate for landfill flaring where this is subcontracted out to a third party, or make it a condition of service. • Performance contracting for recycling and waste services. • Implement complete Scope 3 emissions tracking to understand where emissions are occurring from procurement and waste activity. • Provide FOGO collection services. 	 <p>State government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish waste reduction targets and reporting. • Develop and incentivise circular economy strategies. • Regulate recycled material use • Establish criteria for environmentally preferable products.  <p>Federal government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate single-use plastics. • Fund local waste reduction programs and sustainable packaging research. • Develop recycling and composting regulations for residential, commercial and industrial operations. • Mandate and provide guidance on sustainable procurement.
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Waste actions

Table 11 Actions to reduce waste emissions across all levels of government.

	Local government		State government		Federal government
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in recycling facilities and FOGO collection services for households and businesses. Implement curbside recycling programs and community composting initiatives. Enforce local regulations on waste separation and disposal. Conduct educational campaigns on waste reduction and recycling for residents and businesses. Collaborate with businesses, community organisations and neighbouring councils to share resources and expertise. Advocate for circular packaging standards and packaging stewardship. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding for regional waste management facilities and infrastructure upgrades. Develop statewide recycling schemes and promote composting in public spaces. Implement landfill levies and mandatory recycling requirements. Provide resources and support for waste education programs in schools and communities. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support research and development of innovative waste management solutions and provide grants for infrastructure projects. Set national recycling targets and provide financial incentives for recycling initiatives. Develop national waste reduction policies and regulations, including extended producer responsibility schemes. Fund national public awareness campaigns and promote sustainable waste practices through media channels. Establish partnerships with international organisations and neighbouring countries to address global waste challenges and share best practices.

Industry and Resources

INDUSTRY AND RESOURCES

Fugitive emissions and those from industrial processes and product use make up 17% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.



Fugitive emissions stem from the mining industry including the extraction, production, processing, transmission, storage, and distribution of fossil fuels; primarily coal, oil, and natural gas.

Industrial processes emissions result from chemical reactions in manufacturing, including cement production, iron and steel manufacturing, and chemical processing.

Product use emissions arise from the consumption and disposal of goods, such as refrigerants, solvents, and aerosols, which release potent greenhouse gases during use and disposal.

Progress to date

Efforts to reduce fugitive emissions are predominantly tied to reducing fossil fuel consumption, as well as improving detection and monitoring technologies, methane capture and mitigation measures, and adopting best practices in resource extraction and processing industries.

Industrial processes emissions can be mitigated mostly through technology changes, including energy efficiency improvements, fuel switching, process optimisation, and the adoption of cleaner production technologies and materials.

Product use emissions reduction strategies focus on phasing out substances with high global warming potential, promoting product stewardship and recycling, and implementing regulations and standards for emissions reduction.

Role of local government

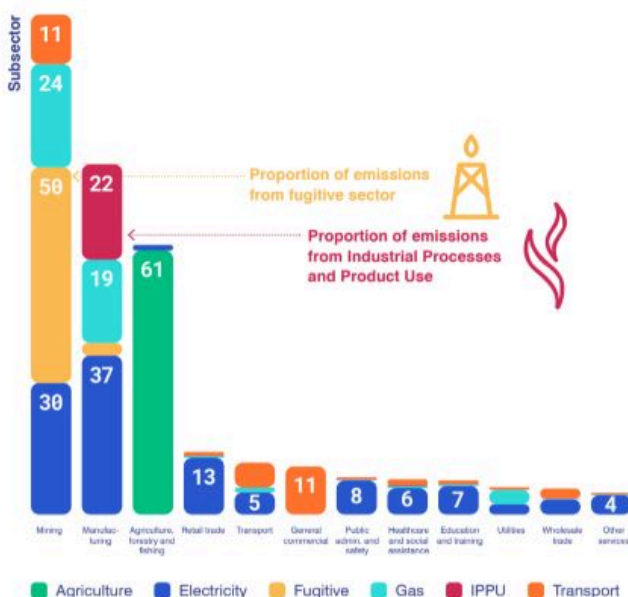
Local governments can play a strategic role in addressing fugitive and industrial processes emissions by regulating land-use planning, development approvals, and environmental management practices.

Initiatives at the local level include zoning regulations to control industrial activities, issuing permits for resource extraction and processing operations, and implementing pollution prevention and control measures.



AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Figure 8 Australia's 21/22 emissions by subsector from [Snapshot Climate](#) – Snapshot Pro. Emissions (t CO₂e) millions.



Local governments also engage with industries, communities, and other stakeholders to raise awareness, provide technical assistance, and facilitate compliance with emissions reduction requirements, such as new ASRS reporting standards.

Local governments can also highlight and champion the opportunities and challenges of their local businesses and industries to reduce these emissions and support effective policy development that can be implemented and supported using local knowledge.





betterfutures.com.au

Better Futures Australia is supported by Climate Action Network Australia and is a member of the Alliances for Climate Action, a global network of domestic multi-stakeholder coalitions committed to supporting the delivery and enhancement of their countries' climate goals and collaborating to build the groundswell of climate action across the world.

Appendix 1

[ALGA conference 2024 - Motion #141](#)

https://www.conferenceco.com.au/ALGA_NGA/NGA24_Business_Papers.pdf

Motion number 141 City of Adelaide SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to: Work with ALGA in leading a process to identify minimum climate disclosure reporting standards that could apply to local government entities for consideration by respective State Governments, delivering these standards by 30 November 2024, noting the drafting of recent legislation by the Federal Government and the drafting of a new Australian Sustainability Reporting Standard by the Australian Accounting Standards Board, both of which are due for implementation as of 30 June 2024 and which are already informing climate disclosure reporting approaches within Federal and some State agencies.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE Develop consistent guidance on standards for climate disclosure assessment and reporting at a local government level to ensure greater consistency in: (a) Assessing the impacts of climate change, covering physical and transition risks. (b) Determining the financial impacts which will be linked to national objectives for financing adaptation measures at a national level.

KEY ARGUMENTS The local government sector has been at the forefront of action on climate change for much of the past two decades, leading on work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop and implement climate change adaptation plans. Over the past 5 years though, the business sector has become increasingly active internationally, initially through voluntary climate disclosure reporting through the Taskforce on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and more recently emerging mandatory reporting. In Australia this will manifest in mandatory climate disclosure reporting via legislation soon to be introduced by the Federal Government backed by a new set up of complementary Australian Accounting Standards (Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards).

This will make climate disclosure reporting mandatory for many Australian businesses. Furthermore, large non-profit entities will also be impacted and some states already require agency reporting aligned to the TCFD. It has been argued that these are the most significant changes to corporate reporting in Australia for at least a decade and will affect all parts of the Australian economy either directly or indirectly via supply chain impacts. But to date, local government has not been considered even though the consolidated revenue, value of assets and staff numbers for many councils around Australia would meet many of the triggers for this reporting.



Without coordinated and clearer direction on reporting requirements and standards, Local Government will be the largest sector in Australia not to have national guidance on reporting requirements, which will impact governance, risk assessment and financing in the sector. Furthermore, greater consistency in reporting standards will assist with comparing governance and preparedness measures being implemented around Australia and create cost savings for when this work is delivered.