

2025 consultation

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This document is a submission to the Net Zero Commission's 2025 consultation. As part of the consultation process, the commission has committed to publishing the submissions it receives. Submissions do not represent the views of the commission.

2025 consultation questions

1. What can you tell us about your experience of the impacts of climate change and how can the commission seek to reflect and respond to this in its work?	The impacts of climate change are not limited to natural disasters and extreme weather events. They include everyday impacts on all residents of NSW including increased summer temperatures, less predictable weather, increased insurance premiums, increasing food costs, increasing variability of agricultural output, and reduced services resulting from the strain that extreme weather events place on local and state government budgets. The commission's work should increase understanding of these various impacts among both government stakeholders and the broader population.
2. What actions can the commission take to engage across the community to help drive the shifts needed for the net zero transition and for effective climate change mitigation and adaptation?	The commission has an important role to play ensuring that the community understands the urgency of climate action, the solutions that are available now, and the different outcomes that may result from different courses of action being replicated on a global scale. For example, there is very limited understanding in the community of the difference between a 1.5 degree pathway and a 2.5 degree pathway, and without this understanding it is very difficult to make decisions about either mitigation or adaptation. The commission should also be at the forefront of communicating with communities about what climate impacts they are likely to experience over the coming decades and what can be done to prepare for these. This knowledge is lacking across most of NSW, including at local government level, meaning communities are likely to continue to be taken by surprise by increasingly severe climate impacts.
3. How should the commission best engage with First Nations people to learn about cultural knowledge and practices to support adaptation, and what information and evidence should it draw on to inform its understanding of these practices?	This should be led by and respond to the needs and expectations of First Nations people. Government and the commission need to genuinely listen to, appreciate, reward and learn from the knowledge and wisdom of first nations people.
4. What additional mechanisms, support, or incentives can meaningfully empower and enhance First Nations people's involvement in climate mitigation, adaptation and environmental stewardship?	This should be led by and respond to the needs and expectations of First Nations people.
5. What additional information and evidence should the commission	The commission should ensure that its assessments are informed by the latest and best available science, and that its assessment of potential emissions reduction opportunities is not

consider when assessing progress towards NSW's targets for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions?	limited by an assumed lack of political will. In providing frank and fearless advice to government the commission should be clear that there are many opportunities to decrease emissions rapidly that have to date not been seriously considered, let alone enacted, in NSW.
6. The speed of deployment of electricity generation and infrastructure is a key risk to emissions reduction targets. What more could be done to fast-track deployment?	More could be done to increase the rate at which distributed solar and battery storage are being taken up by households and businesses. In our local area less than 10% of households and an even smaller percentage of commercial properties have rooftop solar panels. Rooftop solar and batteries are very popular, quick to install and deliver immediate benefits, so increasing their uptake should be a priority for government. This should include a concerted effort to solve the 'split incentive' issues that lock most renters and commercial tenants out of the potential benefits of rooftop solar and batteries.
7. Are the measures now in place sufficient to ensure community engagement and benefit sharing from the build out of infrastructure for the energy transition?	No. There are opportunities for a fairer grid that puts communities at the centre, locating most generation and storage at a household and neighbourhood level and encouraging households and businesses to generate, store and share power locally to reduce the need for additional distribution and transmission infrastructure. Communities and community groups like ours would be keen to participate in - and help to design and build - an energy system that gave them agency and opportunity, however the current system is very difficult to understand and engage with. For example, one of our local councils held a 'community battery information session' at which we were told that the only way to have a 'community battery' in the LGA was to write letters to our MPs in support of a proposal by Ausgrid. The primary 'benefit' of the proposal was artwork on the outside of the battery. This is the opposite of engaging or empowering communities to participate in and benefit from the energy transition.
8. Are First Nations communities adequately engaged and included in sharing the benefits of the transition? What more could be done, and by whom?	First Nations communities should answer this question and their responses should be taken seriously by government and the commission.
9. What are likely to prove the most effective approaches to accelerate rapid decarbonisation across freight and passenger transport?	Active transport - walking, cycling, e-bikes, e-scooters and electric micromobility - has the potential to decarbonise passenger transport much faster than waiting for a society-wide shift to electric cars. Cities such as Paris, London and Barcelona have achieved rapid increases in active transport rates by providing safe separated infrastructure for walking and cycling however this option has never been taken seriously in NSW. The results of our community surveys consistently show that active transport is the most popular option for emissions reduction among our local community, and a lack of safe active transport infrastructure is the key issue preventing the more widespread uptake of these healthy, low-impact, low-emissions transport options.

10. What specific actions or policies could increase uptake of emissions reduction strategies in agriculture, both in the short and long term?	The most effective way to reduce emissions from agriculture would be to reduce the number of cattle and sheep in NSW. As the commission's consultation paper makes clear, cattle and sheep are responsible for the vast majority of agriculture emissions in NSW. Our local area is a well known destination for vegetarian and vegan food and most members of our community are well aware of the fact that meals can be healthy, nutritious and delicious without red meat. Reducing the number of cows and sheep in NSW would also free up huge amounts of land that could instead be used to absorb carbon emissions.
11. Given the uncertainties in land-sector net emissions, how should NSW incorporate this sector into the states climate policy and emissions profile?	The commission should be very wary of claimed emissions reductions from changes in land use. Various estimation methods should be applied and the most conservative (least optimistic) adopted to avoid this sector contributing to an unnecessarily positive picture of NSW's total emissions. The commission's document and reports should always provide views of total emissions data that exclude claimed reductions from the land sector as well as views that include these reductions, and clearly highlight uncertainties and risks of any land sector data included.
12. What specific actions could increase carbon storage and resilience of the existing carbon stock in the land sector and meaningfully enhance the application of First Nations people's knowledge and practices?	
13. What policies or programs at a sectoral level could complement the Safeguard Mechanism to support the accelerated decarbonisation of heavy industry in NSW?	
14. What measures could accelerate industrial heat electrification in NSW, where technology is viable?	
15. What short to medium term measures could be prioritised to address the systemic challenges regarding waste generation and resource recovery?	

16. How could transparency of how coal mines meet their Safeguard Mechanism obligations be improved?	
17. What measures would lead to coal mines prioritising on-site abatement over offsetting?	Government needs to force coal mines to reduce their own emissions instead of purchasing questionable offsets.
18. What measures should be considered beyond the Safeguard Mechanism to reduce emissions of the resources sector, particularly methane emissions, to meet NSW's emissions reduction targets?	Government needs to force large emitters to reduce their own emissions instead of purchasing questionable offsets.
19. What additional measures could accelerate electrification and increase energy efficiency of new and existing buildings?	Minimum energy performance standards for rental properties; requirements that all new and renovated homes and buildings be all-electric; a right to rooftop solar for residential and commercial tenants; mandatory disclosure of energy efficiency on real estate ads for sales and rentals; government support (rebates, tax credits, etc.) for insulation and energy efficiency upgrades; a service to support and guide strata committees to complete necessary upgrades; a state-wide zero interest loan scheme to support households to electrify and make houses more efficient. All these options are well understood and very popular with communities like ours however the political will has to date been lacking.
20. How could social equity be better addressed in the transition to an electrified built environment?	Renters are currently left behind with very few renters able to access rooftop solar, home batteries or at-home EV charging. Most rental homes are very poorly insulated which leads to astronomical heating and cooling bills as well as health issues for tenants. Government should follow Victoria's lead and put in place basic minimum conditions to prevent tenants from the health and financial impacts of low quality inefficient housing. Upgrading social and community houses to be efficient and electric should also be an immediate priority for government.
21. What approaches could NSW consider to eliminate refrigerants with a GWP >10 from buildings?	
22. What should be included in an emissions monitoring framework for NSW in the context of the transition to net zero,	

including any specific metrics and indicators?	
23. The adaptation objective is for NSW to be more resilient to a changing climate. The Act allows for regulations to further define the adaptation objective. What does a more resilient NSW look like to you?	The foundation of a more resilient NSW is communities that understand what climate impacts they are likely to face over the coming decades and what their options are to prepare and/or respond to them. Without this baseline level of understanding communities will continue to be unprepared for and shocked by increasingly severe climate impacts. Communities can never be genuinely resilient if they don't know what kind of climate impacts are likely to be in their future.
24. What additional information and evidence should the commission consider when assessing progress towards the adaptation objective?	The commission should adopt a metric to measure public awareness of predicted climate impacts over various timeframes e.g. 1-5 years and 20-50 years. For example, coastal communities should be aware of predicted sea level rise, storm surge risk, flooding risk etc. - without this baseline information they will be unable to prepare for or react to these impacts. Inner city communities like ours should similarly be aware of anticipated impacts including flooding, increased heat, extreme weather events, and sea level rise.
25. How can adaptation planning better use the NSW Government's climate change projections (NARClIM)?	
26. What other information or tools are needed to support decision-makers in NSW?	Transport planning models and financial models that measure the systemic benefits of a mode shift to active and public transport.
27. What initiatives should the commission consider in assessing NSW's preparation and responses to extreme heat and humidity events in NSW?	Minimum energy efficiency, insulation and cooling standards for rental properties and any new homes and commercial buildings.
Are there any other pieces of evidence or feedback you would like to add?	