

Climate Change Reference Group



Terms of Reference

I. Background

The *Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008* (the Act) was amended in November 2022 to strengthen Tasmania's legislative framework for action on climate change. The amendments were developed in response to the most recent statutory independent review of the Act and informed by the Tasmanian Emissions Pathway Review, detailed economic analysis and extensive consultation with business, industry and the community.

The amended Act establishes a whole-of-economy emissions reduction target of net zero emissions, or lower, from 2030 and a requirement to develop sector-based Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans, in partnership with industry, to ensure a balanced and practical approach to transition the state's economy to a low emissions future. This approach recognises that sectors have different opportunities to reduce their emissions, and some will require more time, support and technological advancements to transition.

Other measures of the Act include:

- establishing a legislative requirement for the Tasmanian Government to prepare a climate change action plan at least every five years, to ensure continued action to grow a climate-ready economy, reduce emissions and adapt to climate change

- establishing a legislative requirement for a statewide climate change risk assessment to be completed every five years
- clarifying the objects of the Act, to set a clear framework for the government's action on climate change. This includes supporting a consultative partnership approach with relevant business, industry, scientific, environmental and community bodies, children and young people, local government, and the Tasmanian community
- measures to increase the transparency and accountability of the government's climate change response, including a requirement to table in Parliament additional annual reports on greenhouse gas emissions and climate activity.

The above key strategic priorities and related government commitments are to be delivered over the next six to 24 months. Achieving these timeframes will be challenging without timely communication, information and feedback between leading Tasmanian organisations actively working in this area.

2. Purpose and Role

The purpose of the Climate Change Reference Group (the Reference Group) is to provide strategic advice and feedback to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT), to support the achievement of Tasmania's net zero emissions target and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The Reference Group is advisory and is not a decision-making body. The role of the Reference Group is to provide a forum for:

- advice and feedback on key climate change strategic priorities
- information on emerging opportunities in climate change mitigation and adaptation
- timely communication and information sharing.

3. General

3.1 Membership

Membership of the Reference Group is at the invitation of the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and is on a voluntary basis. Additional Members may be appointed over time.

Members are appointed until 30 June 2024. Should it be determined that the role of the Reference Group extends beyond this date, the Minister may extend member appointments.

The Secretariat functions and administrative support for the Reference Group will be carried out by ReCFIT.

3.2 Chair

The Minister will convene meetings and act as the co-Chair, together with a delegate from the Premier's Youth Advisory Council.

If the Minister is not available, the CEO of ReCFIT will be the Acting co-Chair.

3.3 Meetings and Agendas

It is envisaged that meetings will be held on a quarterly basis, with the first meeting occurring in early 2023. The dates for the first twelve months will be agreed at the first meeting.

Meetings will be run in person or online through MS Teams. Electronic meeting invitations will be sent out by the Secretariat at least 10 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

To support timely information flows, additional meetings and the consideration of matters out of session can occur with the agreement of the Chair.

3.4 Agenda, Papers and Minutes

The Chair will set the agenda for each meeting. Members can propose items for discussion with the agreement of the Chair.

In respect of Members' time, commitments and respective expertise, any papers will be kept to a minimum and will be provided in an easy-to-read format. Papers will be distributed at least five working days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Minutes will be prepared by the Secretariat for endorsement at the next scheduled meeting.

3.5 Communications and Confidentiality

Members of the Reference Group shall not publish details of the Reference Group's activities without the agreement of ReCFIT.

Reference Group members are to maintain the confidentiality of any meeting papers and discussions unless otherwise allowed for. However, Reference Group members may share papers within their organisation, if needed, to seek input on issues for discussion.

A meeting summary will be developed following each meeting and distributed to members, which may be shared within members' organisations.

Information on the Reference Group will be communicated to the public via the Minister for Environment and Climate Change or the ReCFIT website www.recfit.tas.gov.au