

Response to Climate Impacts in the Northern Territory

Dear Chief Minister and Members of the Northern Territory Parliament,

We are calling on you to develop a comprehensive climate policy to:

1. **Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 (mitigation)**
2. **Develop climate resilient communities (adaptation)**

Anthropogenic climate change – climate change directly attributable to human activity – poses a severe risk to the Northern Territory.

Impacts. The impacts of climate change on the NT include: increase in extreme heat days (over 35 degrees Celsius)¹; increase in severity of extreme weather events; changes to water availability; and an increase in sea-level rise and extreme sea-level events.^{2,3}

Climate change threatens Territorians: it will impact our food and water security; our health; and the ecosystems we depend on.^{2,3} This will have adverse long-term economic consequences. We note that the most marginalised and vulnerable members of our community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, are often the least responsible for ecological risks and threats but are the most affected by their emergence.

Net zero emissions. Consistent with our ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement, we *must* reduce our GHG emissions to net zero. All other Australian States and Territories (except for Western Australia), have committed to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050.

The Northern Territory Government has already shown a commitment to reducing our emissions (*Northern Territory Roadmap to Renewables*). There is substantial potential to further reduce emissions and reduce climate change-related risks posed to Territorians.

Opportunity. We need to manage future risk, make robust decisions, and take advantage of opportunities including: stimulating long-term investment and economic growth; ensuring healthier communities; and protecting our environment and existing infrastructure.

An enforceable whole of government approach needs to be implemented that protects people and country and ensures the ongoing liveability of NT communities.

We urge the Northern Territory Government to develop a comprehensive climate policy that has emission reduction targets and a plan for a just transition to a low carbon economy.

¹ Hanna, E., & Ogge, M. (2018). *Cooked with gas: Extreme heat in Darwin*. The Australia Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.tai.org.au/content/cooked-gas-extreme-heat-darwin>

² Earth Systems and Climate Change Hub. (2017). *Climate Change Science for Northern Australia*. Aspendale. Retrieved from [www.http://nespclimate.com.au/climate-change-science-for-northern-australia/](http://nespclimate.com.au/climate-change-science-for-northern-australia/)

³ Hennessy, K., Page, C., McInnes, K., Walsh, K., Pittock, B., Bathols, J., ... Suppiah, R. (2004). *Climate Change in the Northern Territory*. CSIRO. Retrieved from http://www.cmar.csiro.au/e-print/open/hennessy_2004a.pdf

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