

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

Signatories:

Wendy Morton	Executive Director, Northern Territory Council of Social Service
Dave Pugh	CEO, Anglicare NT
Julie Edwards	CEO, Jesuit Social Services
Rosalie Schultz	Public Health Association NT Branch
Michael Fonda	Doctors For Environment NT
Stephen Schwer	CEO, Tourism Central Australia
Donna Ah Chee	CEO, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
Walter Shaw	CEO, Tangentyere Council
Joel Bowden	General Secretary, The Unions NT Executive
Sue Mckinnon	Chair, Landcare NT Inc.
Tony Burns	CEO, Helping People Achieve
John Patterson	CEO, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT
Shar Molloy	Director, Environment Centre NT
Jimmy Cocking	CEO, Arid Lands Environment Centre
Kelly OShanassy	CEO, Australian Conservation Foundation
Nicola Beynon	Head of Campaigns, Humane Society International
Martin Rice	Acting CEO, The Climate Council
Dominique Rowe	Program Director, Greenpeace Australia Pacific
Lyndon Schneider	National Campaigns Director, The Wilderness Society
Kelly Albion	Campaigns and Communications Director, Australian Youth Climate Coalition
Amelia Telford	National Director SEED
Cam Walker	Campaigns co-ordinator, Friends of the Earth Australia
Joseph Scales	National Director, Solar Citizens
Ben Oquist	Executive Director, The Australia Institute
Blair Palese	CEO, 350.org Australia
Vanessa Petrie	CEO, Beyond Zero Emissions
Donna Luckman	CEO, Alternative Technology Association
Kate Smolski	CEO, Nature Conservation Council of NSW
Mark Wakeham	CEO, Environment Victoria
Craig Wilkins	CEO, Conservation Council SA
David Barnden	Principal, Environmental Justice Australia
Dr Nicole Sleeman	General Practitioner, Wuchopperen Health Service, Cairns.
Associate Professor Tim Cohen	ARC Centre of Excellence for Australian Biodiversity and Heritage, GeoQuest Research Centre - Co-Director, School of Earth and Environmental Sciences/SMAN, University of Wollongong
Professor John Church	Climate Change Research Centre, University of New South Wales
Professor Mark L Wahlqvist AO	Monash University
Professor John Quiggin	VC Senior Research Fellow School of Economics, University of Queensland