

Joint Statement on Renewables:

A Just Transition for Tasmania

"Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation [to climate change] will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all." Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group II.¹

The purpose of this statement is to bring together cross-sectoral voices and articulate a shared vision for the kind of renewable energy development we want to see in Tasmania.

The world is experiencing a climate emergency, and we face an urgent imperative to rapidly decarbonise and transition our economy, particularly our electricity sector, away from its reliance on fossil fuels.

Despite its reputation as a renewable energy powerhouse, Tasmania still relies on importing carbon-based energy from the mainland via Basslink. Additionally, the state is not on track to meet future electricity needs with renewables alone due to low buildout rates, limited grid capacity, declining hydroelectricity capacity, and projected increases in demand due to population growth and electrification.¹

We need to shift this trajectory by increasing and diversifying renewable energy production, and it is paramount that this occurs in ways that protect nature and communities.

With multiple stakeholders holding different interests, it can be difficult to reach broad agreement on where and how renewable energy projects should be developed. At times, this has led to fragmentation within the movement and created unproductive conditions for positive proposals.

Renewable energy, communities, and biodiversity do not need to be in conflict if we plan well. This joint statement seeks to counter anti-renewables rhetoric and incentivise a renewable future done right. The proposals in this statement represent just the beginning of our ambition; one step of many toward building a more environmentally sustainable and climate-friendly energy system for Tasmania.

We, the undersigned, call for a renewable energy future that:

1. Incentivises Consumer Energy Resources.

Greater investment is needed to support a grid that enables consumer energy resources (CER), including rooftop solar, household batteries, virtual power plants, electrification, and electric vehicles with vehicle-to-grid capabilities. These technologies can enable local energy storage and sharing solutions (e.g. microgrids) which can help meet demand, strengthen resilience and support the broader grid, with the right settings in place.

The government should develop policy frameworks to scale up CER deployment in homes and businesses. This could include setting CER or solar targets, publishing electrification and transition away from gas roadmaps, and allocating funding aligned with decarbonisation and equity goals. Affordability mechanisms like grants, rebates and improved feed-in tariffs are important and should be strategically targeted towards low-income households and renters to maximise uptake.

2. Sites Utility Scale Projects Strategically.

To minimise environmental, cultural, and land-use conflicts, project siting for medium and large-scale renewable energy projects must be guided by strategic, holistic, landscape-scale planning. Important considerations include: avoiding areas of high biodiversity value, prioritising degraded or previously developed sites, co-locating with other land uses such as agriculture, and designing transmission routes that minimise ecological impacts.

Best practice involves early engagement with Traditional Owners, local governments, landholders, and communities to validate desktop assessments and identify environmentally, culturally, and agriculturally appropriate areas for projects.

Government could facilitate the sharing of environmental data between government, industry, and environmental stakeholders to support coordinated planning and the co-design of integrated vegetation and landscape management. Transmission routes and other grid upgrades must also be planned to account for both direct and indirect environmental impacts, including the likely location of associated renewable energy projects.

3. Meaningfully Engages with Communities Throughout the Entire Project Life Cycle.

We call for meaningful engagement with all relevant stakeholders at the site of proposed projects, including residents, landholders, environmental groups, First Nations groups and regional organisations to identify place-based risks and opportunities, minimise impacts, and ensure projects reflect community values. Projects should be rewarded for demonstrating co-location and land use harmony. To foster greater community understanding, we endorse the creation of Local Energy Hubs as outreach centres to bridge the gap between proponents and communities, foster transparency, and ensure all voices are heard.ⁱⁱ

Proponents must engage meaningfully with local First Nations communities to enliven the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent.ⁱⁱⁱ This includes enabling genuine buy-in, and empowering local decision making and encouraging initiatives that support local natural and cultural values. We support the implementation of the First Nations Clean Energy Strategy, as designed by the First Nations Clean Energy Network.^{iv}

4. Ensures Communities Share the Benefits of the Projects.

Communities should directly benefit from the renewable energy infrastructure they host.

Renewable energy proponents should allocate a portion of their profits to community benefit schemes. This can be achieved by clear government requirements for proponents to contribute to community and regional enhancement funds managed by community representatives. Additionally, Tasmania should adopt a higher compensation structure for landholders hosting transmission infrastructure and near neighbours, ensuring they are appropriately remunerated for these impacts.

Broader community benefits including those related to environment, climate, education, health, homes and wellbeing should also be recognised and supported as legitimate outcomes delivered by proponents. Additional pathways for benefit sharing such as community co-investment and co-ownership should also be facilitated, giving communities an active role in development and decision-making.^v

5. Protects and Restores Nature Throughout the Transition.

Tasmania's unique biodiversity must be safeguarded. We call for a legislated and enforceable application of the mitigation hierarchy, requiring developers to avoid, minimise, and offset (as a last resort) environmental impacts, with the aim of achieving nature-positive outcomes.^{vi} All developments should demonstrate Biodiversity Net Gain wherever possible and align with national biodiversity targets, including the Australian Government's commitments to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030, prevent species extinctions, and restore priority degraded areas.^{vii}

As outlined in point 2, strategic siting remains the most effective way to minimise biodiversity impacts. Projects should avoid areas of high ecological value, be co-located with existing land uses where appropriate (such as agriculture), and be supported by meaningful restoration where impacts are unavoidable.

6. Plans for Decommissioning and Disaster.

Long-term energy strategies must include provisions for both end-of-life infrastructure and climate-related risks. All renewable energy projects should be required to include binding decommissioning plans, backed by financial assurance, that ensure sites are safely retired and rehabilitated, and that developers remain accountable for the full life cycle of the project. Tasmania should seek to encourage refurbishment and repowering of renewable energy projects, so great sites are retained, and communities and landholders can gain ongoing benefit from project upgrades and operations for as long as possible.

Additionally, climate resilience must be embedded into energy system planning. Funded emergency response plans are essential to manage the growing risks of extreme weather events that increasingly strain the grid. These risks should be integrated into state energy strategies to maintain system reliability and protect communities under future climate conditions.

7. Makes Homes Warmer, Healthier, and More Energy Efficient.

Reducing energy demand through household energy efficiency is essential to complement renewable supply, ease pressure on the grid, and enable smarter use of distributed energy resources.^{viii}

We call for policy initiatives that improve the energy efficiency of existing homes, such as white certificate schemes, improvements to minimum housing standards and targeted upgrade programs.

We call for clear policy settings and programs that improve the energy efficiency of existing homes, particularly for renters and low-income households who are often locked into inefficient housing. This includes mechanisms such as white certificate schemes (energy savings incentives), upgraded minimum housing standards for thermal performance, and targeted retrofit programs that deliver insulation, efficient appliances, and weather sealing.

Further, it is critical that new homes built should meet higher efficiency standards. This can be facilitated by increasing minimum energy efficiency building standards for new homes from 6 to 7-stars (NatHERS rating under the National Construction Code), aligning with other states like Victoria and helping protect households from rising energy costs.^{ix}

8. Keeps Our Energy in Public Hands.

Tasmania's energy system must remain publicly owned, transparently managed, and accountable to the public. While private development, for renewables and battery developments in particular, may have a role in complementing the public system, we strongly oppose any moves toward privatising existing public energy assets. Fair commercial rates should apply to private developers that access shared public infrastructure.

Tasmania has an opportunity to lead for people and the planet.

We stand ready to work with government, industry, and communities to help deliver a fair, smart, and sustainable energy future for Tasmania.

Signed:

Environment Tasmania	Climate Tasmania	Shelter Tasmania
Renewable Energy Alliance	Carbon Zero Initiative	Clarence Climate Action
Tasmanian Climate Collective	Australian Conservation Foundation	Richard Eccleston, Director of the Tasmanian Policy Exchange
Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing and Energy Council	Tasmanian Power Democracy	Supporting Our Loongana Valley Environment
Healthy Country Services and Consulting	Community Renewable Energy for Northwest Tasmania	Doctors for the Environment Australia



ⁱ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group II, Summary for Policymakers, “*Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*,” 27 February 2022, <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/resources/press/press-release/>

ⁱⁱ Local Energy Hubs, 2025, <https://www.localenergyhubs.org.au>

ⁱⁱⁱ Free Prior and Informed Consent is a specific right that pertains to Indigenous Peoples and is recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), read the “Free, Prior and Informed Consent Manual for project Practitioners” here: https://assets.nationbuilder.com/fncen/pages/448/attachments/original/1702270433/FPIC_FAO_ManuelProjectPractitioners.pdf?1702270433

^{iv} Commonwealth of Australia, “*The First Nations Clean Energy Strategy*” 2024, www.energy.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/First%20Nations%20Clean%20Energy%20Strategy.pdf.

^v Potentially facilitated through the current REZ framework, as explained in RE-Alliance, “Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia Can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom” RE-Alliance, Sept. 202, https://www.re-alliance.org.au/community_benefits_handbook

^{vi} As articulated in ACF and WWF’s guide for best practise renewables:

Australian Conservation Foundation and WWF-Australia. “Our Renewable Future: A Plan for People and Nature.” Australian Conservation Foundation, 7 Apr. 2025,

https://canopy.acf.org.au/m/490252feec98b062/original/2503_Nature_NaturePositiveRenewablesReport_FINAL_SinglePgs.pdf?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=acf-brand

^{vii} Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, “*Australia. Australia’s Strategy for Nature 2024–2030: Australia’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*”, June 2024, <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/australias-strategy-for-nature-2024-2030.pdf>

^{viii} Common Capital, “States of Transition Report: Renewable Energy Progress Across Australian Jurisdictions,” 22 June 2025, https://assets.nationbuilder.com/marine/pages/2258/attachments/original/1750644283/States_of_Transition_Final_Report_c.pdf?1750644283

^{ix} Victoria updated their standards from 6 to 7 stars in 2022, where research has shown energy efficiency improvements could save households \$300-\$1000 per year: https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/670300/7-star-new-homes-standards-factsheets-building-practitioners.pdf

