

THURSDAY 13 AUGUST 2020

**A call to party leaders: ACT NOW ON CLIMATE
The Territory needs a Climate Change Act**

The impacts of climate change are already being felt by Territorians and they are hitting our most vulnerable communities hardest.

Extreme heat, reduced rainfall, health impacts, energy poverty, food insecurity, service disruptions, species loss and ecosystem damage are not distant threats – they are urgent challenges that demand an urgent response. Aboriginal people, particularly those living in remote communities, are on the frontline of these impacts, as life gets hotter and harder across our regions. These impacts are being experienced with a less than 1 degree increase in average global temperatures, yet the world is on track for significantly greater warming within our lifetimes.

Despite the Northern Territory facing some of Australia's most extreme climate impacts, we do not yet have a robust legislative framework for climate action.

Aboriginal people have cared sustainably for country for tens of thousands of years and they continue to do so. Recognition and promotion of Indigenous leadership, knowledge, sovereignty and self-determination must be central to our climate change response.

To protect our shared future, we call on all parties to commit to, if elected, **introducing a Climate Change Act that legislates a target of net zero emissions by 2050, in line with globally agreed goals of the Paris Agreement.** The Act should:

- **Explicitly recognise the value and expertise that Aboriginal people bring to deepening our understanding of the impacts of and responses to climate change** and include Aboriginal people in approaches to prevention and adaptation, particularly in remote Australia.
- **Provide for legislated 5-yearly interim targets** that set a clear pathway for emissions reduction across all industries and sectors. Targets should be determined by independent experts and be sector specific, with Ministerial responsibility for reporting on progress within their portfolios.
- **Set clear objectives, binding principles, and the mechanisms by which climate considerations will be embedded across government decision-making**, including all policy, legislative, regulatory, budgeting, procurement and capital-works decisions.
- **Establish an independent expert NT Climate Advisory Council**, with a central role for Indigenous representatives, to provide independent oversight and evidence-based and transparent advice to assist government deliver its obligations under that Act. Bringing together traditional and contemporary Aboriginal knowledge and practices with mainstream scientific approaches is necessary to facilitate effective and inclusive place-based solutions.
- **Embed the requirement for detailed regional adaptation planning** based on detailed and up-to-date understanding of the Territory's exposure to climate change risks and impacts to prepare our communities for the changes and challenges ahead.

- **Be appropriately resourced in its implementation to help communities adapt and facilitate a just transition to a clean energy economy** – prioritising communities most vulnerable to climate impacts, in particular remote Aboriginal communities and low-income households, centring justice at the heart of all climate solutions and ensuring no Territorian is left behind.

Climate change threatens all that we love about the Territory. Acting now on climate change creates the opportunity for transformational change across all sectors of our society and economy.

A Climate Change Act will provide the clear and comprehensive framework we need to guide government decision-making in the best interests of current and future generations, and send a clear signal to industry and investors that the Northern Territory Government is serious about a clean energy, sustainable future.

Signatories

Alice Springs Landcare

AMSANT

Anglicare NT

Anindilyakwa Land Council

Arafura Solar

Arid Lands Environment Centre

Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union QLD/NT

Banatjarl Strongbala Wimun's Grup

Blackfella Films

Dr. Catherine Pendrey, General Practitioner

CatholicCare NT

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

Central Land Council

Climate Action Darwin

Climate Change Exchange

Climate and Health Alliance

Community and Public Sector Union

Darwin Community Arts

Darwin Community Legal Service

Dawn House

Elbow Workshop

Dr Ellie Woodward, Public Health Registrar

EnviroCollective CDU

Environment Centre NT

Environmental Defenders Office

Dr. Fiona J Walsh (PhD Botany and Anthropology), B.Sc. (Zoology), fionawalshe@ecology.edu.au

Frank Shadforth, Owner, Seven Emu Station

Fridays for Future

Guts Dance

Hilary Tyler, Emergency Physician

Housing for Health Incubator, University of Sydney

Jesuit Social Services

Professor Jon Barnett, Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow, School of Geography, Faculty of Science, University of Melbourne

Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation

Kim Hopper, Small Business Owner

Landcare NT

Labor Environmental Action Network Northern Territory

Climate Transformations Research Cluster, Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, University of Melbourne

Michael Hewett

Neil Murray, Island Home Music Pty Ltd

North Home

North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency

Northern Territory Council of Social Service

Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission

Northern Territory Working Women's Centre

Original Power

Protect Country Alliance NT

Public Health Association NT Branch

Rachel Perkins, Film Maker

RePower Alice Springs

Rod Moss, Author and Artist

Sandra Howlin, Lecturer Building Design and Drafting Charles Darwin University, Environmental Sustainable Design Consultant, Architectural Technician/Associate

Dr. Simon Quilty, Senior Lecturer ANU Research School of Population Health

Smart Energy NT

Associate Professor Susie Moloney, Centre for Urban Research, RMIT University

Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation

Tiwi Land Council

United Workers' Union

Watch This Space



