



Renewable Energy in Queensland

The renewable energy industry has already delivered thousands of jobs and millions worth of investment into Queensland's regions and brought down power prices. Cheap, clean energy also opens up opportunities to unlock new industries in the Sunshine State, like "green" steel manufacturing and renewable hydrogen production.

From 2016 to 2018, a boom in the construction of solar and wind farms, plus thousands of households and businesses adding solar to their rooftops, led to the share of renewable energy generation rising from just 7% to an expected 23% by 2021. That's an impressive leap, but now progress has stalled.

What's the problem?

In 2019 no new large-scale solar or wind farms were committed to construction and Queensland is still unlikely to meet its 50% renewable by 2030 target. Recent analysis by Green Energy Markets* shows that Queensland is only on track to reach 37.5% renewables by 2030.

This is bad news for regional jobs and investment. Earlier analysis by Green Energy Markets found that the 108 large-scale renewable energy projects in Queensland's planning and development pipeline have the potential to create:

- Over 51,000 construction jobs
- Almost 2,500 ongoing jobs
- \$36 billion in investment
- Nearly 30% reduction in Queensland's yearly emissions

How the next State Government can act:

Implement a transition plan: Developing a pathway for reaching not just 50% renewable energy, but 100%, is essential to provide certainty for the industry and the transitioning workforce. Without a clear pathway for the Sunshine State's energy transition, large-scale renewable energy developers will focus on building projects in other states where there's more investment certainty.

Provide more funding for state-owned generators to invest in renewable energy: To maintain majority public ownership of Queensland's energy generation through the transition, the Queensland Government must allocate additional funding so that CleanCo can build, own and operate more large-scale renewable energy projects. State-owned corporations Stanwell and CS Energy should also be allowed to build and own renewable assets. The recent announcement of \$500 million for publicly-owned renewables is a start, but more is needed to maintain a majority of public ownership.

Invest in energy storage: Rolling out 50,000 household battery systems by 2025 will help Queenslanders further slash their electricity bills and provide vital energy storage that can soak up excess solar during the middle of the day. Other energy storage options that the State Government can invest in include: off river pumped hydro, hydro on existing dams as well as Virtual Power Plants (VPPs).

* Green Energy Markets is an independent renewable energy research organisation

