



RE-ALLIANCE

Submission: Inquiry into Renewable Energy in Victoria

29 November 2021

About RE-Alliance

RE-Alliance is a community-based organisation working towards a renewable energy transformation that delivers long-term, meaningful benefits for regional Australians.

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Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations regarding the establishment of Renewable Energy Zones	
2.1	The Victorian Government leverage the VRET-2 to include projects that embody the principles of self-determination and free, prior, and informed consent from Traditional Owners. In doing this, the Government will improve Traditional Owner benefits in REZs and encourage industry standards.
2.2	As soon as possible, the Victorian Government invest in information campaigns to the public about the need for the energy transformation, why Renewable Energy Zones have been planned and what they will mean for people who live in them.
2.3	The Victorian Government seek detailed community input into the rollout of each REZ and work with NGO and civil society groups facilitating local-led planning.
2.4	The Victorian Government provide a framework for coordinating engagement and benefit programs across the REZ to ensure best-practice engagement, inclusion of community needs and ambitions, and to avoid confusion and engagement fatigue.
2.5	The Victorian Government establish a framework for, and support region-wide Community Enhancement Funds.
2.6	The Victorian Government support the establishment of, and participate in Industry Roundtables for each REZ.
2.7	The Victorian Government establish as soon as possible, local bodies in each REZ, employing local people to engage the community on upcoming stages in REZ development, coordinate project engagement programs, coordinate the establishment of a local-led regional fund, support local leadership by participating the development of local plans, listen to the expertise, needs, and ambitions of the local community, and facilitate the establishment of industry roundtables for each REZ.
Recommendations about Renewable Energy Transmission	
3.1	The Victorian Government work together with key regulatory bodies, local governments and local communities to ensure the timely roll out of the transmission infrastructure we need to replace all coal power by 2030
3.2	The Victorian Government work with transmission companies to ensure best-practice community engagement and community benefit-sharing programs, minimising community and ecosystem impacts and maximum regional benefits
3.3	The Victorian Government bring transmission planning functions into government, following recent moves by NSW DPIE.
3.4	The Victorian Government disseminate clear and regular communication with the public so an understanding of the need for building renewable energy transmission lines, and the local benefits, are widely understood.
3.5	The Victorian Government set targets for the number of local jobs, apprenticeships, and local content.

3.6 The Victorian Government invest in training programs to prepare our workforce for the amount of transmission projects required to meet the Step-Change scenario in the AEMO's ISP.

Recommendations related to large-scale renewables co-investment and co-ownership models

4 The Victorian Government support profits from large-scale renewables staying in local regions by setting co-investment and/or co-ownership targets and frameworks for projects within REZs.

Recommendations related to Jobs and Training

5 The Victorian Government invest in a comprehensive program of training courses to prepare our workforce for the energy transformation, and that this program focuses on regional training centres and regional job creation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Renewables and Regional Communities

The need to significantly reduce emissions this decade presents a great challenge for us in making the transition from fossil-fuels, to cleaner and cheaper renewable energy. However, the rollout of renewable energy infrastructure must be both fast and fair.

Regional communities are set to benefit the most from action on climate. They will benefit most from emissions reduction, preventing increasingly unpredictable cropping seasons, minimising impact of heatwaves on livestock, and species and ecosystem extinction. Regional communities are also set to benefit economically from renewables. The creation of new industries and jobs, the provision of lease payments to farmers hosting wind turbines and solar arrays, and manufacturing opportunities are just the beginning.

To maximise benefits to regional communities, state government planning systems must inform, include and seek the expertise of impacted communities in the development of individual projects, Renewable Energy Zones and renewable energy transmission lines.

This work is not an additional bonus. Including local communities in decisions and maximising benefits from renewables infrastructure is essential for the acceptance and success of large-scale renewable infrastructure. We have observed too often, that when local communities are not included, they naturally will not support and often actively and justifiably, oppose local development, in turn jeopardising individual projects and slowing the transition to renewables. Actors with vested interests seeking to prolong the use of fossil-fuels will often opportunistically leverage local dissatisfaction for their own benefit.

The rollout of wind, solar and batteries in Australia has seen the proliferation of innovative community benefit-sharing programs, whereby local communities impacted by the infrastructure are invited to profit or benefit from the project in some way, whether that is by being invited to become a co-owner, co-investor, apply for a community grant, or being involved in neighbourhood improvement programs. We have documented case studies of

these types of programs in our *Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom*¹.

1.2 About our Submission, & previous engagement

We welcome the opportunity to make recommendations to the Inquiry into Renewable Energy in Victoria by the Environment and Planning Committee. This submission draws on previous submissions to the Victorian Government, namely the [Submission to the Victorian REZ Development Plan Directions Paper](#) and the [Submission for the Consultation Paper on the Second VRET Auction](#) which outline some recurring themes based on our deep work with communities for a successful energy transformation.

Our submission touches on almost all aspects of the Committee's Terms of Reference; many of the topics covered here span multiple areas of concern at once. We think this is appropriate, especially in the context of Renewable Energy Zones to consider these issues holistically.

We have attached with our submission, two key reports: our report *Building Trust for Transmission: Earning the Social Licence to "plug in" Australia's Renewable Energy Zones*; and our *Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom*. This submission draws from the research and community engagement that went into building those reports.

Community support for renewable energy projects is core to Re-Alliance's work. In our VRET 2 submission we outlined some initiatives that are inline with our work and experience to make VRET 2 successful which this submission draws on.² Re-Alliance has also released the *Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom*,³ which has complemented work in the Central-West Orana (CWO) REZ in NSW where we are facilitating the development of a community plan for the REZ.

We would like to congratulate the Victorian Government for its leadership in accelerating the energy transition through its recent funding announcement for offshore feasibility studies and pre-construction development, climate legislation, VRET process and the establishment of VicGrid. Although much has been achieved there's still a lot more work to do to lower emissions within the constraints of a safe climate.

Decisions the Victorian Government makes over the next two years in developing the policy frameworks for Renewable Energy Zones, offshore wind and renewable energy transmission lines will have impacts for decades to come.

¹ *Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom*
https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/vicwind/pages/2631/attachments/original/1630471142/RE-Alliance_Community_Benefits_Handbook_WEB_01v1_%281%29.pdf?1630471142

² Submission Consultation Paper on the Second VRET Auction
https://www.re-alliance.org.au/submission_consultation_paper_on_the_second_vret_auction

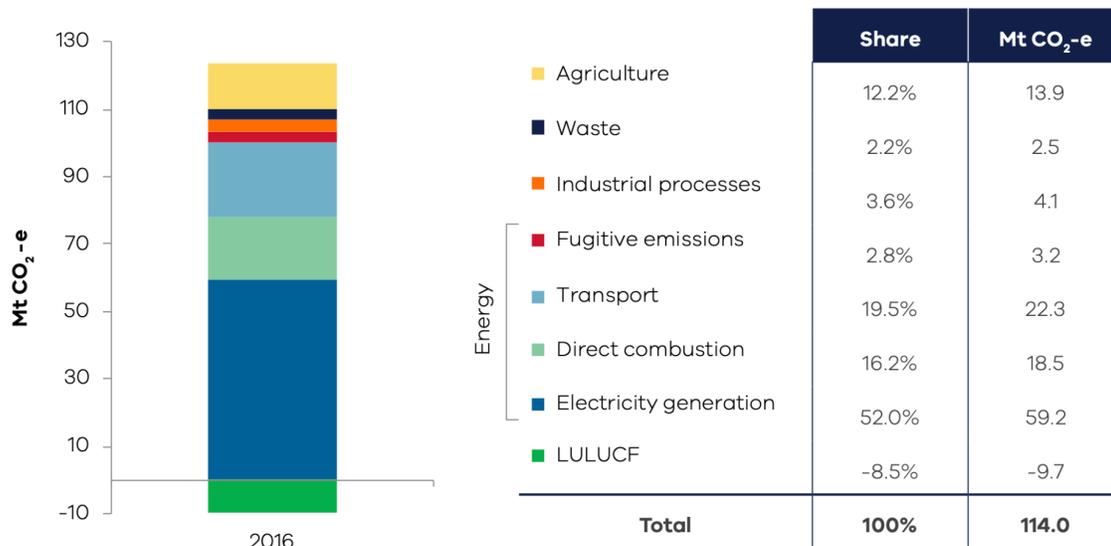
³ *Community Benefits Handbook: How Regional Australia can Prosper from the Clean Energy Boom*
https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/vicwind/pages/2630/attachments/original/1630468903/RE-Alliance_Community_Benefits_Handbook_WEB_01v1_%281%29.pdf?1630468903

1.3 The scale of the challenge

Since the Paris Climate Agreement, Australia has had the highest average annual coal power emissions per capita in the world.⁴ While the transition to renewable energy is well underway, electricity generation is still the largest source of emissions in the national greenhouse gas inventory, accounting for around a third (or 33.2 percent) of Australian greenhouse gas emissions in the year to March 2021.⁵ In the calendar year 2020, coal fired generation made up 54 percent of Australian electricity generation, while natural gas-fired generation made up a further 20 percent of total Australian electricity generation.⁶

The Independent Expert Panel: Interim Emissions Reduction Targets for Victoria (2021-2030) Final Report found that the electricity sector has the most emission out of all sectors.⁷

Figure 6.2 Victoria’s emissions by sector in 2016



We have the technology now to generate all our electricity from renewable energy. Moving to 100% renewable or above (noting that electrifying everything will require two to three times the current capacity generated) has many benefits aside from acting on climate, including creating jobs and reducing power prices.

⁴ Coal Power Emissions Per Capita show Australia and South Korea far beyond India and China - Ember <https://ember-climate.org/commentary/2021/11/11/per-capita-coal-power-emissions-show-australia-and-south-korea-far-beyond-india-and-china/>

⁵ Quarterly Update of Australia’s National Greenhouse Gas Inventory: March 2021, Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources p.11 <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/national-greenhouse-gas-inventory-quarterly-update-march-2021>

⁶ Australian Energy Update, Commonwealth of Australia 2021 p. 3. available at: <https://www.energy.gov.au/sites/default/files/Australian%20Energy%20Statistics%202021%20Energy%20Update%20Report.pdf>

⁷ Interim Emissions Reduction Targets for Victoria (2021-2030), 2019. Independent Expert Panel on Interim Emissions Reduction Targets for Victoria https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/420370/Final-Report_Interim-Emissions-Reduction-Targets.pdf

Not acting on climate will result in a deeper crisis for the people and the planet, including impacts to farming and regional communities. Climate change is one the [biggest drivers](#) for species loss and extinctions, a crisis that is accelerating and needs to be halted and reversed.

1.4 The acceleration of our energy transformation

While the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) 2020 Integrated System Plan (ISP) forecast that 63 percent of coal-fired generation is set to retire by 2040⁸, others including former Energy Security Board Chair, Dr Kerry Schott AO, have predicted "coal-fired power will disappear from the National Electricity Market by the mid-2030s if not earlier – cutting short the rated life of some generators by more than a decade".⁹ A growing chorus of international voices, including the International Energy Agency, are calling for wealthy countries like Australia to phase out the least efficient coal plants by 2030.¹⁰ The UN secretary-general António Guterres called on developed countries to phase out coal power by 2030.

A fast and fair energy transition is essential and entirely achievable. The Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated Systems Plan (ISP), currently being updated, includes some of the key network interventions that are needed for an energy transition in line with a safe climate—namely the step change scenario. The next ISP, which will be released in draft on the 10th of December 2021, will include an additional scenario that sees the energy grid prepare for high volumes of hydrogen exports.

1.5 Participatory local decision-making is essential for a fast and fair transition

Social licence for renewable projects is essential to our energy transition. When planned well, renewable projects build stronger, more resilient regional communities and economies. On the flipside, when local communities are not included in development or the rationale for the transition and there's a lack of local buy-in, there can be significant delays to new transmission and renewable generation infrastructure.

Recently in Maine, a new transmission line that was going to bring renewable energy from Canada to the US was rejected in a statewide vote after a sustained community and fossil-fuel funded campaign against it.¹¹ Germany is another example where tensions from new infrastructure have been hijacked by actors wishing to delay a move away from fossil-fuels. The causes of failures in social licence are complex. The solutions are not. Earning social licence for infrastructure is about including local communities in planning decisions and providing

⁸ Integrated Systems Plan, 2020, Australian Energy Market Operator <https://aemo.com.au/-/media/files/major-publications/isp/2020/final-2020-integrated-system-plan.pdf?la=en&hash=6BCC72F9535B8E5715216F8ECDB4451C>

⁹ Coal power likely gone by 2035: Schott available at: <https://www.afr.com/policy/energy-and-climate/coal-power-likely-gone-by-2035-schott-20211011-p58vug>

¹⁰ IEA Net Zero by 2050 Flagship Report, May 2021 available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050> and IEA Coal-Fired Power Tracking report November 2021 available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/coal-fired-power>

¹¹ Maine votes to halt construction of Hydro Quebec power line to U.S.

<https://financialpost.com/commodities/energy/renewables/maine-votes-to-halt-construction-of-hydro-quebec-power-line-to-u-s>

opportunities for locals to benefit, not just via new economic opportunities but by project proponents taking seriously their role as a new local corporate citizen and establishing partnerships that can help meet local needs and aspirations.

2. Renewable Energy Zones

The establishment of Renewable Energy Zones creates new opportunities for regions to benefit from entire new industries and billions of dollars of investment in renewables. They also present an exciting opportunity, and responsibility, for state governments to influence industry best-practice.

Earlier this year, RE-Alliance compiled a comprehensive submission to NSW DPIE, making a number of recommendations on how they can leverage REZ connection merit criteria to prioritise projects embodying best-practice community benefit sharing, in a number of different categories. It covered:

- best-practice community engagement,
- community enhancement funds to administer grants to community projects,
- regionwide funds to leverage smaller grant programs into more ambitious projects across REZs,
- first Nations benefits,
- co-investment and co-ownership,
- the development of renewable energy tourism and education opportunities,
- local procurement and employment.¹²

Following our submission, NSW DPIE have publicly indicated they will use their REZ merit criteria to maximise regional community outcomes, including prioritising renewable energy projects that propose best-practice community benefit sharing.

The concentration of new projects across single regions also comes with challenges. These challenges will require systems thinking and can include the following measures:

2.1 Traditional Owner Engagement

Frameworks established so developers make meaningful efforts to engage with relevant Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Organisations and that self determination principles guide engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians. These can build on the *Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future'*. Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy. 2020-2025 and DELWP's Aboriginal Energy. Such frameworks must embody the principles of free, prior, and informed consent.

¹²NSW DPIE Submission
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/vicwind/pages/2629/attachments/original/1629785372/Submission_to_Energy_Corporation_in_the_development_of_the_Electricity_Infrastructure_Investment_Safeguard_Merit_Criteria_.pdf?1629785372

Recommendation 2.1: The Victorian Government leverage the VRET-2 to include projects that embody the principles of self-determination and free, prior, and informed consent from Traditional Owners. In doing this, the Government will improve Traditional Owner benefits in REZs and encourage improved industry standards.

2.2 Making the case to the community

It is our experience that residents living in REZs have little awareness of the concept, rationale, or case for renewable infrastructure builds in the regions. We have not seen much in the way of effort from the Victorian Government to communicate with the local communities themselves about the REZs, the nation-building nature of the energy transformation, the opportunities, jobs, and benefits local communities will have and the paramount need to act on climate. Investing in this communication and engagement piece will be essential to earn trust of local communities and continue developing the REZs.

Recommendation 2.2: As soon as possible, the Victorian Government invest in communicating to the Victorian public about the need for the energy transformation, why Renewable Energy Zones have been planned and what they will mean for people who live in them.

2.3 Building local leadership

Energy transition communities around the country have begun organising amongst themselves for what they want to see delivered out of renewable investments, and how they can be involved in this change. Some of this community leadership work has been facilitated by the government, others by civil society.

RE-Alliance is facilitating the development of a community-led plan for the Central-West Orana REZ in NSW. We hope the plan will coordinate local efforts and aspirations and build an effective network of local groups who can advocate to industry and government about the outcomes they want the REZ to deliver for them.

These initiatives provide a way for leaders in the local community to channel community expertise, energy and interest productively.

Government should build on the regional *Roadmap to Zero Emissions* and support the capacity of leaders and community-led efforts to organise community-led plans for REZ futures. These measures would help regional communities become leaders, not subjects of the energy transition and support the energy transformation to enable a safer climate.

Recommendation 2.3: The Victorian Government seek detailed community input into the rollout of each REZ and work with NGO and civil society groups facilitating local-led planning.

2.4 Coordinating Engagement Across Renewable Energy Zones

Renewable Energy Zone residents will very quickly experience “engagement fatigue” and overwhelm if they are subjected to multiple engagement programs from individual projects in their area. As much as possible engagement programs should be coordinated across a REZ to avoid confusion and engagement fatigue.

Recommendation 2.4: The Victorian Government provide a framework for coordinating engagement and benefit programs across the REZ to ensure best-practice engagement, inclusion of community needs and ambitions, and to avoid confusion, overwhelm, and engagement fatigue.

2.5 Coordinated Community Enhancement Funds

Community enhancement funds are the most common types of community benefit programs. Multiple projects across a region administering small grants each year may cause duplication in the local community.

RE-Alliance has developed with communities and industry various models for REZ-wide coordinated funds. Coordinated, region-wide community enhancement funds could fund more ambitious local projects. The development of such programs must be careful to continue to benefit the areas impacted by renewable infrastructure, not regional centres. Such coordinated programs must have local residents as the decision makers, and should involve local council plans but not handover control of the fund to the council.

Recommendation 2.5: The Victorian Government establish a framework for, and support region-wide Coordinated Community Enhancement Funds.

2.6 REZ industry roundtables

To foster collaboration and group problem-solving across a REZ, RE-Alliance have facilitated two industry roundtables; one in the Central-West Orana REZ in NSW, and another in the South-West Victoria REZ. These roundtable discussions have been a fantastic opportunity for local project proponents to hear from the local community and to pass on questions and concerns to government as the REZ framework continues to be developed.

Recommendation 2.6: The Victorian Government supports the establishment of, and participates in Industry Roundtables for each REZ.

2.7 Local Coordination: A Latrobe Valley Authority for each REZ

The Latrobe Valley Authority has been a much-praised mechanism for coordinating investment, government decisions and local needs in the Latrobe Valley. A similar style of government agency should be established in the other REZs to coordinate the rollout REZs and ensure local priorities are captured in the REZ rollout.

Recommendation 2.7: The Victorian Government establish as soon as possible, local bodies in each REZ, employing local people to engage the community on upcoming stages in REZ development, coordinate project engagement programs, coordinate the establishment of a local-led regional fund, support local leadership by participating the development of local plans, listen to the expertise, needs, and ambitions of the local community, and facilitate the establishment of industry roundtables for each REZ.

3. Renewable Energy Transmission Lines

There is no transition without transmission. At this critical moment in Australia's energy transition away from fossil fuels towards renewable energy, one of the biggest barriers is adequate renewable energy transmission infrastructure.

AEMO's 2020 ISP indicates the planned and mooted transmission projects that will need to be completed to keep up with our current pace change. These transmission lines will be the largest pieces of renewable infrastructure that regional communities will host, and deserve particular attention in terms of regional development.

Our report, *Building Trust for Transmission: Earning the social licence needed to plug in Australia's Renewable Energy Zones*¹³, outlines the actions governments, energy regulators and transmission companies need to take to ensure impacted communities can benefit from—not simply tolerate—renewable energy transmission lines. We can support regional communities and enable a fast transition to clean power at the same time.

Renewable energy transmission lines should ideally involve all of the following local community engagement and benefit-sharing efforts:

- **Thorough community engagement program** to determine the best route, including transparency about what is in the realm of possibility (including, for example, when and where undergrounding the line is possible)
- **Clear and regular communication with the public** about the purpose and delivery of the transmission line. This will help prevent popular misconceptions and misinformation about transmission lines
- **Fair and transparent payments to farmers** hosting the infrastructure that adequately compensate for any adjustments businesses will need to make to continue farming around the transmission towers and underneath transmission lines
- **Neighbourhood benefit schemes to mitigate visual amenity impacts** of the line. These could include planting trees and upgrading roads
- **Community Enhancement funds** to provide local community groups with access to grant funding opportunities
- **Community benefit programs** that can ensure benefit sharing along the transmission corridor, for example community power programs

¹³ Re-Alliance, *Building Trust for Transmission*, 2021
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/vicwind/pages/2616/attachments/original/1628044697/RE-Alliance_July_21_Building_Trust_for_Transmission_Earning_the_social_licence_needed_to_plug_in_Australia's_Renewable_Energy_Zones-compressed.pdf?1628044697

- **Co-investment options** that invite impacted farmers and neighbours to profit from the transmission line

However, this is far from current practice. Engagement practice by transmission companies is improving, however a lot of damage has been done. Transmission companies are limited by the federal regulations including the RIT-T in terms of how much they can spend on payments to landowners and benefit-sharing measures.

Changes to regulations at state and federal levels, outlined in our report, would insert deeper community engagement and improved landholder compensation into the infrastructure pipeline outlined in the ISP.

Recommendations 3.1—3.6:

1. The Victorian Government work together with key regulatory bodies, local governments and local communities to ensure the timely roll out of the transmission infrastructure we need to replace all coal power by 2030
2. The Victorian Government work with transmission companies to ensure best-practice community engagement and community benefit-sharing programs, minimising community and ecosystem impacts and maximum regional benefits
3. The Victorian Government bring transmission planning functions into government, following recent moves by NSW DPIE.
4. The Victorian Government disseminate clear and regular communication with the public so an understanding of the need for building renewable energy transmission lines, and the local benefits, are widely understood.
5. The Victorian Government set targets for the number of local jobs, apprenticeships, and local content.
6. The Victorian Government invest in training programs to prepare our workforce for the amount of transmission projects required to meet the Step-Change scenario in the AEMO's ISP.

4. Community co-ownership and co-investing in large-scale renewables

In Australia, we have some fantastic examples of community-owned microgrids and entirely community-owned renewable projects. We encourage the Vic Government to do what it can to support these projects. RE-Alliance supports the work of the Community Power Agency, an NFP which resources communities wanting to set up these projects.

In contrast, our work and analysis focuses on large-scale renewable projects that support the whole-of-economy energy transformation we need in the time required. However, just because a project is large-scale and run by a national or international corporation, doesn't mean there aren't ways to keep some profits local. Perhaps the most direct way for local communities to benefit from renewable projects is for them to be invited to be part-owners in those projects.

Co-investment refers to models whereby citizens, in this case within a particular area, have pathways to share in the profits of a project. This could look like offering or gifting share holdings to project neighbours. **Co-ownership** refers to models where citizens are invited not just to benefit financially, but also to have decision-making power as co-owners of a project.

We have outlined co-investment and co-ownership models and case studies in our Community Benefits Handbook¹⁴ and Building Stronger Communities¹⁵ reports. These models align interests of industry and the community, and support profits to stay in the region.

Sapphire Wind Farm is the biggest wind farm in Australia to make investment available via a public offer. The investment model was co-designed with the community and its public offer saw almost 100 investors take up approximately \$1.8m in community shares. “At a time when we are in such severe drought, keeping the money local is extremely important,” says one investor, Adam Blakester who is the Executive Director of the not-for-profit Starfish Foundation.¹⁶

The first example of co-ownership came with Eurus/Windlab’s Coonooer Bridge Wind Farm. The wind farm is jointly owned with local community members, who had a seat at the table during planning. Here is an extract from a case study in our report:

As well as delivering these families a regular return on their shares, it gave them a seat at the table in decisions during the development process and a say in how the wind farm turned out. Altogether, a total of 33 local landholders own around 4% of the total project, which is worth over \$20 million. “I think it’s a really good way to do it,” says June Williams, resident of nearby St Arnaud and owner of a neighbouring farm at Coonooer Bridge.¹⁷

There is a lot more scope for community ownership or community investment in Australia which could be realised in VRET 2 - especially if the community benefit and engagement weighting was greater than VRET 1.

Recommendation 4: The Victorian Government can support profits from large-scale renewables staying in local regions by setting co-investment and/or co-ownership targets and frameworks for projects within REZs.

¹⁴ Re-Alliance, Community Benefits Handbook https://www.re-alliance.org.au/community_benefits_handbook

¹⁵ Re-Alliance, Building Stronger Communities <https://www.re-alliance.org.au/bsc2>

¹⁶ Re-Alliance, Building Stronger Communities <https://www.re-alliance.org.au/bsc2>

¹⁷ Re-Alliance, Building Stronger Communities <https://www.re-alliance.org.au/bsc2>

5. Jobs and economic benefits and implications of the transition

Direct jobs in renewables

Rural communities are set to be major beneficiaries of investment in renewables, with new jobs, lease payments for farmers, indirect jobs in manufacturing and additional community benefit programs.

The Clean Energy Council has estimated that “in 2019, at least 25,000 people were employed across the renewable energy industry and almost 10,000 of those jobs were in small-scale rooftop solar. By 2025 the renewable energy sector could employ as many as 44,000 people under AEMO’s Step Change Scenario. More ambitious scenarios, dependent on policy settings, could result in an even larger workforce”.¹⁸

Beyond Zero Emissions Million Jobs Plan suggests that there can be 1.8 Million jobs created by moving Australia to a low-carbon economy. There could be 8,000 peak construction jobs and 1,200 ongoing jobs associated with expanding the transmission network over a 5-year period.¹⁹ Modeling by the Climate Council shows that installing utility-scale renewable energy is the biggest job creator intervention.²⁰

There are significant clean export opportunities to complement the above mentioned jobs. A new report by ACF, WWF-Australia, ACTU and BCA called Sunshot: Australia’s opportunity to create 395,000 clean export jobs shows that clean energy exports could generate \$89 billion in new trade by 2040 through investment in clean energy exports.²¹

Offshore wind creates another opportunity for climate action and just transition. A recent study led by CSIRO, UTS and with strong support of the union movement found that there could be 5,000 – 8,000 jobs each year from offshore wind.²² The Victorian Government stated that Victorian offshore wind could “create up to 5,600 jobs, bring more than \$18 billion in new investment to Victoria and power around 3.6 million homes.”²³

¹⁸ Clean Energy Council, Clean Energy at Work

https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/resources/reports/Clean-Energy-at-Work/Clean-Energy-at-Work-The-Clean-Energy-Council.pdf?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=openday

¹⁹ Beyond Zero Emissions, The Million Jobs Plan

<https://bze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/BZE-The-Million-Jobs-Plan-Full-Report-2020.pdf>

²⁰ Climate Council, Clean Jobs Plan

https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Climate-Council_AlphaBeta-Clean-Jobs-Plan-200720.pdf

²¹ WWF, Clean exports detailed report

https://www.wwf.org.au/ArticleDocuments/853/Clean%20exports_detailed_report_vf.pdf.aspx?OverrideExpiry=Y

²² Offshore Wind Energy in Australia: Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre, Launceston, TAS.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/dl/nzrhz0bqwy3yu6y/BECRC_OWE%20in%20Aus%20Project%20Report_P.3.20.007_V2_e190721.pdf

²³ Vic Gov, Big Boost To Offshore Wind To Drive Jobs <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/big-boost-offshore-wind-drive-jobs>

Regional Training and Job Creation

In light of this economic opportunity there is a corresponding need for training and qualifications. Federation University has started the Federation University's Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre showing the need for jobs and investment in regional areas. However, this is not enough. In order to deliver the energy transition that is required there needs to be a larger strategic investment in jobs and training to ready the workforce.

Recommendation 5: The Victorian Government invests in a comprehensive program of training courses to prepare our workforce for the energy transformation, and that this program focuses on regional training centres and regional job creation.