

Statement

Stronger climate action in Australia is possible and essential

Work with us to make our cities safer and achieve bigger emission reductions

Australia's Capital City Lord Mayors commit to:

- Work together over the long term to accelerate practical climate action;
- Work with other levels of government to assist to meet – and where practical exceed – state and national emissions, renewables and adaptation targets;
- Advocate to the Australian Government to accelerate practical action, and assess raising the current national emissions reduction target;
- Mobilise business, community groups, schools, universities and NGOs in our communities, who share the sense of urgency; and
- Work with Mayors around the world via the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to champion and advance climate action happening in cities.

We call on the Australian Government to:

- Raise the level of action and ambition on climate policy in Australia through assessing a new national emissions reduction target which is better aligned with the United Nations ambition to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius;
- Work with Australian Mayors and local governments to deliver stronger emissions reductions through establishing a new national agreement for city climate action; and
- Strongly support local governments to better prepare their cities and communities for climate extremes.

We need to act fast and act together on climate policy. Leadership across all levels of government will give our communities confidence that there is a shared commitment to implement solutions to the climate crisis.

Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds, City of Hobart
Chair CCCLM
10 October, 2019

This is urgent for our cities

Australian cities have been at the forefront of climate action for many years – we have implemented innovative policies and programs that have led to emission reductions.

We have also had to manage the impact of increasing extreme events and temperatures on the safety of our cities and the health of our residents.

We have done this largely on our own until now. But we are now calling on the Australian Government to step up its collaboration with city governments to achieve a climate safe future.

The global average temperature increases that we live with today must be limited. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advises that if this average goes above 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels, we will see major and potentially irreversible disruption to our climate and many natural support systems. The IPCC concludes that global emissions must be reduced by 45% in the next 10 years and to net zero emissions well before 2050.

No level of government can do this alone. However, with all levels of government – federal, State/Territory and local – working together with industry and our communities here in Australia across the world, we at least have a chance.

Cities is where climate action is happening

Most Australian capital cities have committed to, and are fast approaching, 100% renewable energy, zero carbon, carbon neutral or absolute greenhouse reductions through transparent and verified actions:

- The ACT Government will achieve 100% renewable energy in 2020;
- The City of Adelaide will become a carbon neutral organisation in 2020 and is aiming for its community to be carbon neutral by 2025;
- Brisbane City Council became the largest carbon neutral organisation in Australia in 2017
- The City of Hobart has an emissions reduction target of 30% by 2020;
- The City of Melbourne is aiming for net zero emissions by 2020;
- The City of Perth is aiming for 30% below corporate BAU emissions by 2030; and
- The City of Sydney has a community-wide emissions reduction target of 70% by 2030.

The Council of Capital City Lord Mayors believes that Australia should undertake assessments of far deeper national emissions reductions. Our level of government stands by to act as a major partner in responding to the climate challenge.

Let's build on the role and experience of Australian cities to educate, empower, innovate and demonstrate effective action on climate. Local governments can work on the ground to tap the power of citizens and businesses to tackle climate change and provide innovative and sustainable solutions. We can facilitate practical approaches for a low carbon future with a just and equitable transition for all.

Cities are deeply concerned about the impact of climate extremes on our communities

Local governments are on the frontline when our communities are struck by drought, fire and flood.

Two freak weather events in Sydney and Townsville over the 2018 summer cost the Australian insurance industry a total of \$2.4 billion in claimsⁱ.

The current drought in eastern Australia is forecast to cut the country's GDP growth in 2018-19 by up to 0.75 percent or \$12.5 billionⁱⁱ. The Climate Council also projects that the property market is expected to lose \$571 billion in value by 2030 due to climate change and extreme weather in a Business-As-Usual scenario.

Disruption hurts our community cohesion, damages public infrastructure and increases the costs of managing our cities. Many cities are declaring a Climate Emergency as part of a global movement of more than 900 jurisdictions, but cities need far more support for adapting to these climate change threats.

About us

The CCCLM represents the interests of the Lord Mayors (and ACT Chief Minister) of Australia's eight capital cities. Australia's capital cities are the nation's economic engine room, accounting for \$1181 billion, or 68% of Australia's GDP in 2016-17. Capital cities are home to 68% of Australia's 2.2 million businesses, accommodating 8.7 million workers. [Australian Capital Cities: Places for people](#)

Globally, about 10,000 cities and local governments, representing more than 800 million people, have pledged to contribute to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement by taking ambitious climate action through the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy which is led by ICLEI: local governments for sustainability for the Oceania region.

www.lordmayors.org

<https://www.gcom-oceania.org/>

ⁱ Insurance Council of Australia

ⁱⁱ Climate Council Extreme Weather Report, February 2019