

2 September 2024

The Hon Chris Bowen MP
Minister for Climate Change and Energy
Shops 3 & 4, 398 Hamilton Road
Fairfield NSW 2165

Delivered via email: Chris.Bowen.MP@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister

Australia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and 2035 emission reductions target

On behalf of our members, the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances (VGA) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) are calling on the Federal Government to set an ambitious 2035 emissions reduction target and recognise the contributions of local government within its 2025 NDC submission.

The VGA are formal partnerships of local governments and statutory agencies driving climate change action across Victoria's municipalities. The VGA deliver regional mitigation and adaptation programs that provide economies of scale and enable projects typically beyond the reach of individual councils and agencies.

As the peak body for Victorian councils, the MAV advocates for local government interests, initiates projects and services across priority areas for local government and supports the development of evidence-based research and policy.

Setting a science-based target linked to a national carbon budget

We are writing to you at this significant juncture in Australia's net zero journey as the Federal Government considers the Climate Change Authority's 2035 targets advice and prepares Australia's updated NDC.

As you are aware, we have a small window of opportunity to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C. To have the best chance of achieving a safe climate, it is critical that the Federal Government adopts a 2035 science-based target that is linked to a national carbon budget.

A carbon budget is the most appropriate way to achieve a 1.5°C goal and provides the most scientifically robust methodology over a targets and timetable approach. It provides Australia with the credibility to be part of global efforts to reach net zero.

Recognising the voluntary actions of local government as additional to the emissions reduction targets within Australia's Nationally Determined Contributions

Many Victorian councils already have a strong track record of delivering nation-leading work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Recent studies undertaken in the local government sector indicate that councils can unlock 7-15% of the abatement potential within their communities.¹ This includes a range of council interventions across several sectors including the built environment, land use, waste and transport.

Enhanced cooperation between national, state and local governments will help rapidly reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. This could be achieved through the implementation of a multilevel governance approach – one that would promote effective coordination between and across all levels of government and give those on the frontlines a seat at the decision-making table.²

As a signatory to the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP), Australia has committed to working with subnational governments in the planning, financing, implementation and monitoring of climate strategies, including NDCs.

¹ [EAGA Community Net Zero Technical Analysis \(June 2023\)](#)

² Melbourne Centre for Cities, Many Hands Make Light Work final report, July 2023 ([link](#))



We would welcome the Federal Government's partnership with the local government sector in the implementation of a CHAMP-aligned NDC. By working in partnership, we can set and meet ambitious emissions reduction targets and improve community acceptance for accelerated climate action.

In July 2024, the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly carried a motion calling on the Federal Government to act on its commitment to CHAMP – demonstrating strong support from the local government sector for enhanced cooperation. Given the differing levels of maturity across the local government sector when it comes to advancing climate action, the VGA and MAV see great benefit in collaborating with the Federal Government to enable coordinated action that results in rapid emissions reductions.

Australia must play our part in the global effort to address climate change, with a rapid transition to zero emissions or below across all sectors. As the risks and opportunities of climate change become increasingly clear, it is imperative that all levels of government work well together to accelerate the transition to zero emissions or below and to strengthen community resilience.

Ahead of the Better Futures Forum being held on 10-11 September 2024, we are seeking a meeting with you to discuss the opportunities for partnering with the local government sector in the development of Australia's 2025 NDC.

Yours faithfully

Cr David Clark
MAV President



Peter Mercouriou
Chair, Barwon South-West Climate
Alliance (BSWCA)



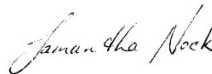
Cr Annette Death
Chair, Central Victorian
Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)



Cr Suzy Stojanovic
Chair, Eastern Alliance for
Greenhouse Action (EAGA)



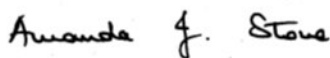
Samantha Nock
Chair, Gippsland Alliance for Climate
Action (GACA)



Cr Sam Spinks
Chair, Goulburn Murray
Climate Alliance (GMCA)



Cr Amanda Stone
Chair, Northern Alliance for
Greenhouse Action (NAGA)



Cr Chris Hill
Deputy Chair, South-East Councils
Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA)



Kelvin Walsh
Chair, Western Alliance for
Greenhouse Action (WAGA)



This letter has been approved through the Greenhouse Alliances governance structures but may not have been formally considered by individual members. The submission does not necessarily represent the views of all members.

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The Hon Josh Wilson MP, Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy - josh.wilson.mp@aph.gov.au

