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Sustainability Fund Priority Statement Review  
Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning  
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18<sup>th</sup> December 2015

To whom it may concern,

**Re: Review of the Sustainability Fund Priority Statement**

The Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning's (DELWP) review of the *Sustainability Fund Priority Statement*. EAGA is a formal Alliance of seven councils in Melbourne's East, including:

- City of Boroondara
- Knox City Council
- Maroondah City Council
- City of Monash
- City of Stonnington
- City of Whitehorse
- Yarra Ranges Council

EAGA is committed to delivering mitigation and adaptation projects and advocating for initiatives that support sustainable, low carbon communities. Working together and as individual councils, we have demonstrated significant climate change action and innovation at the regional and local level. The support provided through the Sustainability Fund for projects developed and delivered by local government has been vital in carrying out this work.

EAGA welcomes the broadening of the scope of the Sustainability Fund to reinstate its support climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives. The following points are submitted with a view to improving the quality of projects that will eventually be supported by the Sustainability Fund:

1. The statement's first priority – "supporting, individuals, communities and industry to transition to a low carbon economy" – should be strengthened to reflect a greater emphasis on 'scale'. Whilst funding program's often have requirement for 'innovation' this should not necessarily be prioritised over scaling-up already proven approaches or initiatives.
2. The potential role of local government should be clarified in the first statement.
3. Greater clarity is required regarding the priority to assist "Victoria's ecosystems and native species to be more resilient to climate change". This may be addressed through the soon-to-be updated Victorian Adaptation Plan, but some specific guidance on the contribution of the Sustainability Fund to this objective would be welcomed.
4. Investment provided by the Sustainability Fund should be guided by the DEWLP's Climate Change Framework, when it is operational. Investment decisions should ideally be made by an independent panel, rather than at Ministerial discretion.
5. Additional clarity should be provided on how the fund (41.3 million) will be distributed amongst the priorities and whether there will be different levels of funding within each of those priorities. This could improve decision-making on behalf of those overseeing the Sustainability Fund. It is suggested that:
  - a. the Sustainability Fund not necessarily be distributed equally amongst each of the priority areas but rather that it should reflect policy priorities; and
  - b. additional levels of funding be established within the priority areas to support projects of different size.

As stated, EAGA is supportive of the new priority statement for the Sustainability Fund and seeks to work with the Victorian Government to improve it to ensure the funding of effective projects in the future.

Should you have queries or questions relating to this letter, please contact Scott McKenry, EAGA Regional Coordinator on [scott.mckenry@maroonodah.vic.go.au](mailto:scott.mckenry@maroonodah.vic.go.au) or 03 9298 4250.

Kind regards.



Cr Erin Davie  
 Executive Committee Chair  
 Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action  
 Councillor, City of Stonnington



*This submission has been approved through EAGA's formal governance structure as described in the EAGA Memorandum of Understanding 2012-16. The submission may not have been formally considered by individual member councils.*