



EASTERN ALLIANCE  
FOR GREENHOUSE ACTION

Maroondah City Council  
Braeside Ave  
Ringwood VIC 3134  
www.eaga.com.au  
Ph: 03 9298 4250  
Mob: 0431 133 592

UNFCCC Taskforce  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
PO Box 6500  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Online: [www.dpmmc.gov.au/forms/unfccc-submissions](http://www.dpmmc.gov.au/forms/unfccc-submissions)

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Australia's post-2020 emissions reduction target**

The Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Federal Government's consultation on the Post 2020 Emissions Reduction Target. 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

The Alliance is committed to delivering mitigation and adaptation projects and advocating for initiatives that promote sustainable, low carbon communities. Consequently, we urge the Government to take action that is consistent and proportionate with the voluntary measures currently being undertaken by Councils, businesses and communities across the country. This means ensuring that Australia adopts a stringent emissions reduction target that is in line with stabilising atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>-e concentrations and protecting Australia's national interest. We therefore urge the Government to consider EAGA's position on the following issues in response the question posed in the issues paper:

***Q1. What should Australia's post-2020 target be and how should it be expressed? In responding to this question you could consider the base year (e.g. 1990/2000/2005), the end year (e.g. 2025/2030), the type of target and why the suggested target is preferred.***

EAGA supports a strong ambitious target that is consistent with the need to limit an increase in global temperatures to 2°C, as agreed to by the global community at Cancun in 2010.<sup>1</sup> Critically, the issues paper does not mention the 2°C goal, despite clear international consensus based on the latest climate science. As described by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), adoption of an emissions budget is an appropriate approach for defining the limit on emissions that is in line with this goal. For

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<sup>1</sup> [http://unfccc.int/key\\_steps/cancun\\_agreements/items/6132.php](http://unfccc.int/key_steps/cancun_agreements/items/6132.php)

Australia, to fairly contribute to the 2°C goal, total emissions need to be limited to around 8-11 billion tonnes between 2013-2050.<sup>2</sup> On current emissions levels this budget would be exhausted by 2030-2035. EAGA therefore recommends the adoption of a target of 40% below 2000 by 2030. This is in line with the position of the Climate Change Authority who recommends a target of between 40-60% by 2030 below 2000 levels and zero net emissions by 2050.<sup>3</sup> EAGA also requests the government commit to 2050 as an explicit date for decarbonisation to allow for long term direction in climate policy and to provide sufficient certainty for investment decisions.

**Q2. What would the impact of that target be on Australia? In responding to this question you could, for example, consider the impact on our economy, jobs, business and on the environment.**

Whilst EAGA's recommended targets are ambitious, achieving these goals is both realistic and achievable. The 'Pathways to Deep Decarbonisation in 2050: How Australia can prosper in a low carbon world' report, released 23 September 2014, finds "that Australia can achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and live within its recommended carbon budget, using technologies that exist today, while maintaining economic prosperity. Major technological transitions and many activities are needed in some industries, but no fundamental change to Australia's economy is required. The technologies required for decarbonisation are currently available or under development."<sup>4</sup>

EAGA, along with the other Victorian Greenhouse Alliances, have a long history of demonstrating how emissions reductions activities can lead to positive economic and social benefits. A more stringent target will have flow-on effects for these types of activities by decreasing financial barriers and unlocking investment. A recent study undertaken by EAGA demonstrated that Victoria alone could benefit from an additional \$4.5B of direct investment and 18,000 new jobs through low cost abatement activities, such as retrofitting the State's ageing building stock.<sup>5</sup>

**Q3. Which further policies complementary to the Australian Government's direct action approach should be considered to achieve Australia's post-2020 target and why?**

EAGA supports a broad based, long-term approach centred on the national interest, rather than a narrow set of sectoral interests. This will require the adoption of a suite of complementary policy measures to facilitate Australia's decarbonisation pathway. EAGA supports the following approaches:

- Implementation of a carbon pricing mechanism in step with major trading partners
- A long term renewable energy target that provides certainty for investors
- Introduction of mandatory energy efficiency standards, particularly for the performance of new and existing buildings, vehicles and appliances
- Maintaining the institutions that provide independent, evidence based advice so policy makers can make informed decisions (such as the Climate Change Authority) and investment support for abatement activities (such as the Clean Energy Finance Corporation)
- Implementation of long-term, ongoing, strategic and financial support for developing countries, to assist them to take climate action and build resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/verve/\\_resources/AustraliasPost2020EmissionChallenge\\_FINAL\\_LM.pdf](http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/verve/_resources/AustraliasPost2020EmissionChallenge_FINAL_LM.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.climatechangeauthority.gov.au/reviews/targets-and-progress-review/part-c/chapter-9-australia%E2%80%99s-2020-and-2030-goals>


<sup>4</sup> <http://www.climateworksaustralia.org/project/current-project/pathways-deep-decarbonisation-2050-how-australia-can-prosper-low-carbon>

<sup>5</sup> <http://eaga.com.au/wp-content/uploads/EUA-Finance-for-the-Regions-Summary-Report-2013-12-02.pdf>

In summary, EAGA urges the government to adopt an ambitious and strong emissions reduction target that is informed by internationally recognised climate science which urges immediate and comprehensive action. EAGA is happy and willing to work with the Australian Government to ensure consistent and robust approaches to emission reduction which represents the best value proposition for Australia and the global climate.

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 Bill Bennett  
Executive Committee Chair  
Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action  
Councillor, Whitehorse City Council

