

VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE ALLIANCES ADVOCACY POSITIONS 2023-24: SUMMARY

#	Issue	Outcomes Sought	Government Policy / Opportunity	Activities	Partners
1	Federal climate policy and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the national emissions reduction target to be consistent with latest science Strengthen existing policy frameworks and support the implementation of new complementary policies to ensure interim and long term targets can be met Establish a vertically integrated climate policy framework that enables the three tiers of government to work in partnership around shared objectives Allocate sufficient funding for mitigation and adaptation measures at the local government level, based on shared objectives and the latest evidence base No new domestic coal or gas projects A robust local offset market that maximises co-benefits for First Nations and regional communities and supports compliances schemes (without compromising carbon budgets) Ensure all voluntary action taken to reduce emissions is additional to Australia's international obligations and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Energy Innovation Fund Emissions Reduction Fund and Safeguard Mechanism GreenPower Review Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Review National Energy Performance Strategy (NEPS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal submissions Direct engagement with the Minister for the Environment and local MPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAV, DEECA, SV, ERG, ALGA Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew Climate Emergency Australia Better Futures Australia ICLEI ClimateWorks
2	National energy market reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the proposed changes to the National Electricity Objective (NEO) adequately embed environmental and social outcomes Remove regulatory barriers and support research and development to ensure rapid integration of distributed generation and storage technologies Provide support for new and emerging business models and technologies, such as local electricity trading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule change proposals to Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) Essential Services Commission (ESC) inquiries and price reviews Australian Energy Regulator (AER) regulatory processes Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal submissions Coordinated engagement and lobbying with other Alliances and Councils Formal representation on Ausnet Service Customer Consultative Committee Cross sector workshops with Victorian energy distributors (DNSPs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew, One Million Homes Alliance Energy Consumers Australia DNSPs Total Environment Centre Climate Emergency Australia

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower energy users to reduce consumption through greater transparency in billing • Equitable tariffs for electricity use • Develop models to facilitate integrated planning between energy network planners and council land use planners • Encourage energy security that includes incentives for renewable energy storage and investment in climate resilience • Extend and strengthen the Renewable Energy Target and programs that enable communities to access clean power 	<p>Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GreenPower Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation on the National Energy Consumers Roundtable 	
3	Incentives and regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory energy disclosure and efficiency standards for commercial and residential buildings • Mandatory fuel efficiency and emission standards for light and heavy vehicles • Financial support and other assistance for businesses to undertake emission reduction actions, particularly to enable landlords to work with tenants • Stringent emission standards on coal fired generators • Energy efficiency programs for low income housing public/community housing and rental housing • Scale-up private sector investment in renewable energy projects and initiatives that fast-track decarbonisation of the grid • Support for local government electrification initiatives • Remove regulatory and market barriers to electrification of households and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Energy Efficiency Target • Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program consultations • National Construction Code • National Australian Built Environment Rating System • Victorian Environment Protection Action 1970 and Regulations • State Government election and budget • Victoria's 'Big Build' social housing program • Establishment of the SEC • Product Emissions Standards Act 2017 • Fuel Efficiency Standard Discussion Paper: Cleaner and Cheaper-to-run Cars for Australia • National Energy Performance Strategy (NEPS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions (e.g. ESC and VEU) • Participate in VEU consultation panel • EPA Brown coal-fired power stations licence reviews • Engagement with building industry • Engagement with unions • Engagement with institutional (and other) investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV • Alliances • Ironbark • DNSPs • VicRoads • EAHA • Better Building Finance • ACOSS • HAH • MBA • Plumbing union • Climate Emergency Australia • Energy Efficiency Council

4	Transmission / Distribution Network Service Providers (TNSP/DNSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local governments pay lowest costs on operation, maintenance and replacement (OMR) charges in each regulatory period • Ensure DNSPs allocate sufficient resources to partner with councils on large scale emissions reduction programs • Ensure DNSPs enable more renewable energy (distributed energy resources) through appropriate tariff structures • Upgrades to transmission networks to support higher penetration of renewables in priority renewable energy zones (REZ) • Free public access to consumption data to enable municipal emissions reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity Distribution Price Review (EDPR) • Integrated System Plan (ISP) • Regulatory Investment Tests for Transmission and Distribution • AER Contestability reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions to the AER, Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC), and Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) • Direct engagement with DNSPs and TNSPs • Ongoing consultations with DEECA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV • Ironbark • DNSPs • Other consumer advocates
5	Victorian Government climate and energy policy and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority initiatives are identified and the scale of investment is articulated in the Victorian Government budget • Clarity on roles and responsibilities and the liabilities of the two spheres of government (following Local Government Roles & Responsibilities project – LG RR) • Influence the development of the plans to maximise opportunities for collaborative programs and funding support for their implementation • Financial support and other assistance for businesses to take action on climate • Financial support for councils and communities to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts • Support for local governments to make and fulfil Emissions Reductions Pledges and/or their municipal reductions targets • Support for regions and communities impacted by the transition away from coal • Ensure VicEnergy Compare provide greater choice for renewable options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Climate Change Strategy 2020-25 • Regulatory reviews in energy sector • DEECAs' regional and sector based adaptation plans • DEECAs legal review of adaptation roles and responsibilities • Reviews of emissions reduction targets and interim targets • Updates to VicEnergy Compare website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions • Coordinated engagement with DEECA + consultation process • Funding applications for partnership projects with Victorian Government. Example: Large scale solar • Engagement with Solar Victoria • Engagement and funding support from Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) • Engagement with Sustainability Victoria (SV) • VGA representation on the Regional Climate Change Adaptation plan for Greater Melbourne Stakeholder reference group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEECA • EMV • MAV • SV • Better Building Finance (EUAs) • Solar Victoria •

6	Low income and vulnerable households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure support from Solar Victoria and DEECA to assist in the delivery of council and other community solar and energy efficiency programs • Ensure Victorian Government incentives are targeted, available and accessible to low income and vulnerable segments • Improve the thermal comfort and energy efficiency of social housing properties • Ensure heatwave response policies are coordinated across jurisdictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Homes package • State Budget • Sustainability Victoria's Health Homes program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECA and Solar Vic staff and Ministers office • Support energy advocates campaign for National Low Income Energy Productivity Program (NLEPP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew, One Million Homes Alliance, ACOSS, VCOSS, Climate Council • Greater Melbourne Heat Alliance and related Community Service Organisations (eg: Council of the Ageing (COTA)) • DEECA • Solar Victoria
7	Major road lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An equitable co-investment model for lights that are cost shared with VicRoads • Fast track approval of replacement options by distributors • Fast track upgrades of major road lighting to LED and smart lighting • Savings from smart lighting trials/projects are realised and captured through changes to metering arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Energy Efficiency Target • Australian Lighting Code review • AEMC rule changes • AER regulatory processes • Road Management Act 2004 • VicRoads Guidelines for Street Lighting Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECA, VicRoads and Minister for Roads • Directly engage with DNSPs, AEMC and AER • Trial project with Ironbark and AEMO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEECA, SV • Ironbark • ERG
8	Victorian Planning System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the Planning and Environment Act and the Climate Change Act to explicitly mandate addressing climate change at all levels of the planning process • Require every planning scheme amendment, at all levels of government, and at all levels of the planning framework, to include an assessment against relevant climate change considerations • Introduce mandatory climate change related minimum standards into planning schemes • Adopt science-based targets for high level policy, and align the planning system to the most up to date climate science • Implementation of recommendations from the Hansen report "Climate Change and Planning in Victoria" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Government Election • Plan Melbourne • DEECA consultation on Roadmap for ESD of Buildings and Subdivisions • Review of Victorian Planning Provisions • Victoria's 'Big Build' for social housing • Review of the Planning and Environment Act and Schedule 1 of the Climate Change Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with Minister for Planning, Local Government and Climate Change • Engagement with DEECA • Coordinated engagement with CASBE other Alliances and Councils and Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) • Joint letters to Ministers and MPs • Support MAV's existing consultation on land use planning with Minister for Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Melbourne • CASBE • MAV • PIA • Unions

9	Rates based finance mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure special charges schemes and/or residential EUAs are streamlined to minimise administrative overheads of community programs (such as Solar Savers) • Facilitate access to EUAs for businesses and households through state-wide programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to the LG Act 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions to LGV • Direct engagement with LGV legislative team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse Alliances • DTF • SV • Better Building Finance
10	Emissions from waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable councils to develop a shared long term goal for waste, thus providing investment certainty for the waste services sector to provide appropriate processing facilities and local waste management solutions • Further funding to assist councils to enable best practice delivery of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) programs, particularly to enhance communications to maximise uptake and minimise contamination rates and stimulate the market for end-use opportunities • Support circular economy opportunities, particularly reuse applications for waste materials • Fully embed consideration of climate impacts into waste and circular economy programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling Victoria • Victorian Waste to Energy Policy • Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) funding opportunities • Recycling Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emissions from waste discussion paper • SV/RMIT waste calculator • MRWWG FOGO guide working group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SV • Greenhouse Alliances • Recycling Victoria
11	Biodiversity land and water adaptation planning and response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure State-based adaptation plans support local government's priorities for WSUD and commitments under catchment based Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMPs) • Improve adaptation information and GIS based tools, particularly catchment and inland flood modelling and canopy cover • Ensure the planning scheme supports the expansion of blue/green infrastructure • Ensure stronger protection for vegetation on private land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for Victoria • Biodiversity 2037 • Native vegetation clearing regulation • Victoria's Future Climate Tool • Regional Adaptation Strategies • Natural Environment Adaptation Action Plan • DEECA's environmental accounts • Regional IWMPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting information exchange between council networks • Assist (but not lead development of) formal submissions • Engagement with DEECA's Adaptation Action plan leads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Planners Network (BPN) • MAV • Greenhouse Alliances • All CMAs • Living Melbourne

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the State adopts ambitious urban/rural greening and canopy cover targets and planting programs apply the ‘principles for policy makers’ 			
12	Protecting Community Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure resources to build regional partnerships between health, local government and other VGA members and community sectors to achieve coordinated adaptation measures to guard against the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change • Support regional programs that improve climate adapted liveability in urban areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans • Health Sector Adaptation Action Plan • Regional Adaptation Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greening programs • Victorian Climate Resilient Councils (VCRC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS Health and Wellbeing Division • RMIT, Deakin • Emergency Management Victoria • CAHA
13	Zero emissions transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a comprehensive electric vehicle charging network across the state • Remove regulatory barriers and establish robust policy frameworks to support the rapid transition to EVs • Funding for local governments and other VGA members to provide active transport infrastructure and programs • Increase investment in public transport and improve integration. Ensure that growth areas have access to effective public transport in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light and heavy vehicle emissions standards • National EV Strategy • Electric vehicle tax • Future Fuels Fund - ARENA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECA, VicRoads and Minister for Transport • Direct engagement with ARENA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Transport Coalition • Electric Vehicle Council of Australia
14	A sustainable Commonwealth Games 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A carbon positive games, with transparent emissions reporting • Villages and infrastructure that showcase best practice sustainable outcomes with low/zero embedded carbon • All options for active travel and low impact transport are maximised • The event is zero waste and demonstrates best case circular economy outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Victoria sustainability strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events • Engagement with Sport & Recreation Victoria • Package of key ‘asks’ for Commonwealth Games Delivery, Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy, Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee • Seek support from other relevant Ministers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sporting and tourism associations • MAV • SV • Transport / Waste / Circular Economy / ESD networks • Regional CEO network

1. BACKGROUND

This document is designed to build a shared understanding and commitment amongst members of the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances (VGAs) on the scope of advocacy issues and activities to be undertaken between July 2023 and June 2024. It also defines the VGAs' external engagement agenda on policy and strategic issues and sets out aims, principles, mechanisms and authorisation processes.

The plan also defines the actions the VGAs will collectively undertake to:

- Proactively advocate to governments and other stakeholders
- Establish partnerships and engage with the community to support advocacy activities
- Promote advocacy activities through media and web channels.

The majority of Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (VGA) members are local governments and as such, the advocacy positions discussed below are largely focused on outcomes related to local government. For clarification however, VGA advocacy represents all members of Greenhouse Alliances, where relevant to these members.

2. AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

2.1 Aims

- Build VGAs' role and profile in the local government sector and beyond
- Promote and facilitate policy and other solutions that are aligned with the latest climate science and limiting global warming to 1.5oC. This includes enabling effective mitigation and adaptation action, particularly the delivery of council and other initiatives
- Work collaboratively with other council networks (e.g. MAV, Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment, Eastern Regional Group of Councils), or other relevant networks, and advocacy groups to align objectives, key messaging and coordinate advocacy activities, particularly in areas where membership overlaps

2.2 Principles

VGAs will advocate collectively on issues on which there is consensus amongst VGA members, or sub-sets of VGA members (eg: regional members, metro members) rather than on issues of individual benefit/focus. In the instance where a VGA submission or initiative adopts a position or makes a statement that does not accurately represent the views of all members, this distinction will be explicitly stated.

2.3 Process

The following authorisation process for VGA's collective submissions is defined to reflect nimbleness and streamlined decision making:

- Authorisation is delegated to VGA Executive Officers and/or VGA Executive Chairs for all submissions that are consistent with VGAs' agreed advocacy priorities
- For formal submissions, the authorisation process involves:
 - the VGA Executive Officers draft submissions based on VGAs' agreed priorities

- the VGA Executive Officers circulate the initial draft for input from their memberships, according to their individual advocacy processes.
 - relevant input/feedback on draft submissions is then considered and incorporated creating the final draft, which are then circulated to VGA members (and at times other relevant networks) for approval. Minor comments only are expected at this time.
 - It will be assumed that VGA members approve unless explicitly stated to the contrary, with response required within 5 working days from receipt of draft (for proactive submissions) and within 3 working days for reactive submissions to external consultation processes, or as otherwise agreed.
 - If at any time this process is problematic, discussion is encouraged to amongst the VGAs to find a solution.
- VGAs may individually choose to formally support submissions made by other advocacy groups (through inclusion of their logo), acknowledging in some instances it may not be practical for VGA members to contribute to the drafting of the content
 - In the instance where a party decides to opt-out of a submission, they may request for their organisation's name to be removed from the list of participating councils
 - All formal submissions will include the following disclaimer:

“This submission has been approved through the greenhouse alliances’ formal governance structures but has not been formally adopted by individual members. The submission does not necessarily represent the views of all members.”

3. PROCESS FOR REVIEW

This document will be reviewed and reconfirmed by the VGA annually in May - June to ensure they are current for joint advocacy for the following financial year.

Each Greenhouse Alliance will be responsible for reviewing this document each year in according with its own advocacy policy.