



**EAGA**

EASTERN ALLIANCE FOR  
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The Hon. Lisa Neville MP  
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water  
c/o Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning  
PO Box 500  
Melbourne VIC 3002

Online: [www.delwp.vic.gov.au](http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au)

25<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Dear Minister Neville,

**Re: Victorian Climate Change Framework**

The Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) consultation for the *Victorian Climate Change Framework*.

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. EAGA acknowledges that climate change poses significant risks to Victoria and there is a clear need to support national, state and local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to its impacts. We therefore welcome the State government's commitment to restoring Victoria's position as a leader in climate change action and have a strong interest in ensuring that the Framework can effectively facilitate a robust response to climate change from all levels of government.

The recommendations provided within this submission are intended to assist the government to fulfil this commitment and establish a practical model for the implementation of the Framework. The scope of these recommendations therefore focus on the 'how', rather than the 'what', or types of actions that should be included within the Framework.

Specifically, EAGA recommends the establishment of a true **partnership** between state and local government to synchronise and maximise the effectiveness of local climate action across the state, by:

- Establishing a clear **purpose** as the partnership's foundation
- Setting out a clear set of **guiding principles** to reflect this intent
- Setting broad **objectives** and goals
- Providing appropriate **governance**

### ***Purpose***

The Framework's focus areas should consider that local communities are already working hard to effectively respond to climate change, often in tandem with their local governments. Local governments, in turn, are supported by Victoria's greenhouse alliances. The work of communities, local governments and alliances can be leveraged to greater effect when linked through a coordinated network of action across the state.

EAGA recommends that the Framework provides a shared understanding and commitment to a common agenda. This will provide a basis upon which to align local leadership with broader state government objectives, creating stronger outcomes for all parties. Elements of the purpose could include:

- Capacity building and knowledge exchange – by sharing best practice approaches and reducing inefficiencies of parallel or isolated programs
- Supporting for the scale up of effective action - particularly through strengthening smaller rural councils and supporting greenhouse alliances as effective and efficient mechanisms for regional action
- Effective collaboration across spheres of government - by bringing together broad local government interests for input into relevant state policy-making related to climate action

### ***Guiding principles***

The Framework's guiding principles should reflect this intent and provide a shared architecture for decision making. The guiding principles should include (but not be limited to):

- Establishing shared local goals and priorities - create a forum for collaboration and exchange between state and local governments and to establish shared goals and clear responsibilities, conducted with trust, respect, timeliness and accuracy
- Developing long term strategic resource allocation and funding - develop joint approaches to funding allocation that meet delivery expectations and acknowledge resource capacity and constraints and the existing networks and capabilities at the local level
- Pursuing alignment and cooperation in service delivery - increase communication between and within levels of government for delivery of climate action programs, particularly for outcomes relevant to both spheres of government
- Improving procedures for regular, effective evaluation and review - ensure progress towards climate goals, increase understanding of climate change and continually develop mechanisms for incorporating feedback into future action

## ***Objectives***

Setting broad goals and objectives can assist in establishing an appropriate architecture for the partnership. This could include (but not be limited to):

- Supporting the development and delivery of regional scale mitigation and adaptation measures that address the specific needs of each region's communities and the major activities of particular regions
- Working through regional alliances of local governments in order to gain commitment and support action from all 79 councils in Victoria
- Increasing the level of engagement on climate action within and across local governments and build an understanding of the local environmental, social and economic benefits of local climate action
- Building the capacity of smaller regional councils to take action on climate with their communities
- Strengthening the capacity of local greenhouse alliances so that they are effective facilitators of local and regional climate action amongst their local government members and stakeholders.

## ***Governance***

The partnership should be designed to better link the work of state and local governments in Victoria, as well as support collaboration across both levels of government and the communities they serve through an inbuilt governance structure that facilitates shared determination of priorities and shared development of programs.

For the partnership model to be successful, a primary feature must be that it is strongly linked and supported by key minister's offices (Climate Change, Water, Energy, Local Government and Planning) and that it positions local government and State Government stakeholders in a partnership context that supports the free exchange of knowledge, ideas, challenges and solutions.

Appropriate governance should include a ministerially appointed Advisory Committee (AC) would provide high level oversight of the partnership, oversee the implementation and evaluation of its programs and provide advice to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water on climate issues that affect local governments and their communities

The AC would also:


- act as a clearing house for resolving ongoing climate action issues between local governments and the Victorian Government
- act as a forum for strategic discussion and resolving inter-jurisdictional climate action issues between state and local governments
- bring together broad local government interests for input into relevant state policy-making on climate action
- provide a body to advise government on funding and priorities for investment
- provide a pathway for the Victorian Government to engage with local governments, local communities, and regional environmental and climate change stakeholders regarding climate policy, strategy and program design
- ensure that funding directed through LCAP to local governments is in line with the principals and priorities as set out in an agreed Framework
- work through regional greenhouse alliances to gain the commitment of all 79 councils in Victoria

- liaise with the peak local government bodies, Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association and LG Pro who will nominate suitably skilled people, recognised for their local sustainability leadership, to sit on the AC.

EAGA is willing to work in partnership with the State Government and DEWLP on implementing these recommendations and to ensure that robust approaches to mitigation and adaptation are adopted which represent the best value proposition for the community and all levels of Government.

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