

Joint Statement calling for a just transition to a safe climate future in the Northern Territory

1 November 2019

We welcome the Northern Territory Government's draft *Climate Change Response: Towards 2050* as a positive step towards a comprehensive response to the climate crisis facing the Territory, and indeed, the world.

As the Government's draft Response states, the question is no longer, '*Why should we act on climate change?*' We believe the question must be *what do we stand to lose if we don't?* The health and livelihoods of people and country depend on a rapid and just transition to a zero carbon future, alongside long term adaptation strategies.

As representatives of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations and community groups, we acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have cared for country sustainably for tens of thousands of years. We acknowledge the disproportionate effect that both the causes and impacts of climate change are having on Aboriginal land, culture and communities. Justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and respect for First Nations' knowledge must be the foundation of our collective response.

We support the aspirations of the Government's draft response for an economic future for the Territory powered by renewables. But now is the time for a detailed plan.

We urgently need the Northern Territory Government to commit to a comprehensive, long-term plan to reduce emissions and avoid the worst climate impacts, support people to adapt, build community resilience, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the transition to a clean energy future.

We call on the Northern Territory Government to commit to:

1. Within the next six months, legislate targets of 100 per cent renewables by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050, supported by interim targets and clear action plans for each Ministerial portfolio, with strong accountability mechanisms to achieve rapid decarbonisation across all industries and sectors.
2. No new fossil fuel developments, including a permanent ban on oil and gas fracking, recognising that the industry's emissions profile is incompatible with a safe climate future and undermines the Government's positive steps towards clean energy transition.
3. Immediately lead the way with the reduction in emissions from Government operations, embedding legislative commitment to mitigate climate change impacts into government decision-making, including all policy, budget, procurement and capital works decisions.
4. Leading the clean energy transition through public investment in renewable energy supply and infrastructure upgrades, supporting workers and communities to transition from gas and diesel power generation to clean energy jobs and opportunities. An equitable clean energy and low-carbon growth strategy is needed to ensure that all Territorians have the opportunity to share in the economic benefits of transition, but particularly those communities at the forefront of climate impacts. This includes ensuring jobs and income from new large-scale renewables projects flow to local communities, providing opportunities for public and community-owned and operated energy projects, and supporting workforce development in ecologically sustainable industries.
5. Supporting communities to lead their own solutions. This requires listening to communities to understand how they are experiencing climate change, recognising traditional and local knowledge, ensuring the climate change response is informed by the experience and expertise of local communities, and resourcing locally-driven solutions.
6. Adaptation planning to address the impacts of climate change already affecting our communities, including extreme heat, drought and more extreme weather events like cyclones and bushfires, prioritising planning with Aboriginal communities and low-income communities who are experiencing the impacts first and worst.
7. Building the climate resilience of our communities by addressing the existing vulnerabilities that exacerbate climate change impacts, including providing climate resilient housing, access to health services that are equipped to respond to climate risks, guaranteed access to adequate and potable water, energy and food security, disaster resilient infrastructure and sustainable economic opportunities for people to live and work on country, helping restore and revitalise land, water and climate.
8. Ongoing engagement with the community and across all sectors – including across all levels of government, with business and industry, and with the non-government sector – throughout the development and implementation of the Government's Climate Change Response.

With a response that is urgent, ambitious, collaborative and equitable, we can protect the future of our communities and country, for a Territory that is climate ready and thriving.

Signatories

Arid Lands Environment Centre

Australian Parents for Climate Action

Australian Youth Climate Coalition

CatholicCare NT

Caritas Australia

Climate Action Darwin

Darwin Community Legal Service

Environment Centre NT

Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation

Jesuit Social Services

Northern Territory Council of Social Service

NT Working Women's Centre

Original Power

Protect Country Alliance

Public Health Association of Australia NT Branch

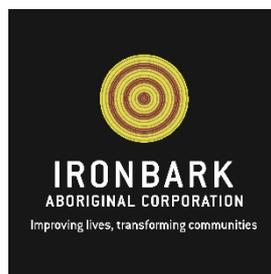
Relationships Australia

Seed Mob

Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (Purple House)



CatholicCare NT



PURPLE HOUSE



Australian Parents for Climate Action



Public Health Association AUSTRALIA NT Branch

