

## DRAFT SECOND READING SPEECH

HON ROGER JAENSCH MP

### *Climate Change (State Action) Amendment Bill 2021*

*\*check Hansard for delivery\**

Mr Speaker

Tasmania is a leader in addressing climate change, having recorded net zero emissions for the last seven years.

From 1990 to 2020, our net emissions reduced by 120.9 per cent while our economy has nearly doubled in size, and more than 50 000 jobs have been created.

This globally-significant achievement is due to a combination of our long-term renewable energy investments and our managed forest estate, along with ongoing emissions reduction in our waste sector. In addition, since November 2020, Tasmania now has capacity to generate 100 per cent of its electricity needs from renewable sources.

But modelling shows that, as our economy and population grow, and the risk of severe bushfires increases, we will need to do more to reduce emissions across all sectors to maintain our net zero emissions status.

The Tasmanian Government recognises that the climate changes already underway will affect our way of life, our industries and our environment, in our lifetimes. Climate projections, and the most recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, indicate that Tasmania is projected to experience increases in the severity and frequency of extreme weather events, including extreme heat and bushfires. Likewise, storm events will increase and result in heavier and more sustained rainfall, high winds, and coastal flooding and erosion, which will be exacerbated by sea level rise.

That's why Tasmania must contribute to the global response to reduce greenhouse emissions and build our resilience, to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

This Bill amends the Act in response to the findings of its most recent independent review, detailed emissions and economic analysis, and extensive consultation with business, industry and the community. Over 200 Tasmanians and organisations participated in the independent review, and over 60 written submissions were received on the draft Bill. I thank everyone who contributed.

The Bill proposes a number of key amendments:

- legislating for a statewide emissions target for Tasmania of net zero emissions, or lower, from 2030;
- consolidating the existing ten objects of the Act around five key themes, including explicit reference to a consultative partnership approach with business, industry and the broader community including local government; and consideration of the impacts of climate change on future generations;
- a requirement for the Tasmanian Government to prepare a Climate Change Action Plan at least every five years;
- a requirement for the Tasmanian Government to undertake a statewide Climate Risk Assessment at least every five years;
- a requirement for sector-based Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans to be prepared in partnership with industry, and updated at least every five years;
- a requirement for the Minister to prepare annual climate change reports, including an annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report and an annual Activity Statement; and
- a requirement for the Minister to table all key climate change reports in Parliament, including the Action Plan; Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans; statewide Climate Risk Assessment; Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report; and Annual Activity Statements; increasing the transparency and accountability, and raising awareness and understanding, of the Government's action on climate change.

#### *New emissions reduction target and Sector Plans*

The Bill legislates a statewide target of net zero emissions, or lower, from 2030. This will be the most ambitious legislated target in Australia, and one of the most ambitious in the world.

A whole-of-economy target provides a flexible approach that recognises different sectors have different opportunities to reduce their emissions, and some will require more time, support and technology than others to transition to a low emissions future.

The Tasmanian Government is confident that our target, while ambitious, is achievable. The Tasmanian Emissions Pathway Review identifies 16 economy-wide emissions reduction opportunities that, if implemented, are projected to not only achieve our target, but improve our net zero emissions profile over time. The identified actions include:

- increasing the uptake of electric vehicles;

- developing a renewable hydrogen industry;
- the use of innovative feed supplements to reduce livestock emissions;
- fuel switching by replacing fossil fuel boilers with - alternatives powered by renewable energy, including bioenergy technology;
- reducing agricultural soil emissions through precision agriculture;
- use of wood in construction in place of emissions-intensive building products;
- planting trees to improve agricultural productivity and on-island timber processing; and
- diverting organic waste from landfill.

Economic analysis demonstrates that these actions will not only reduce emissions, but can also improve productivity and increase demand for Tasmania's renewable energy and products, generating higher economic growth and employment. By 2050, our economy could be \$475 million larger, employing over 1 200 more Tasmanians as a result of these actions.

Importantly, the Tasmanian Government is already working to reduce emissions across our economy, through new investment in the waste, transport, energy and agriculture sectors. Recent examples include:

- Committing \$6 million in funding towards two industrial-scale organics composting facilities in northern and southern Tasmania, diverting organic waste materials from landfill and reducing associated emissions.
- Transitioning the Government fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030, reducing emissions associated with imported liquid fossil fuels and increasing the supply of used EVs in Tasmania.
- Supporting Metro Tasmania to trial zero emissions buses with over \$16 million in funding, in both northern and southern Tasmania. The outcomes of the trial will inform future emissions reductions across the Metro Tasmania bus fleet.
- Supporting the wider adoption of EVs to reduce transport emissions, with investment of \$1.4 million into a comprehensive statewide charging network;
- Replacing fossil fuel burning boilers in Government-owned facilities with renewable energy powered alternatives, with an initial commitment of \$10 million over four years.

- Installing solar panels in over 100 government schools, with an investment of \$5 million in the Renewable Energy Schools program to reduce energy costs and associated emissions;
- Supporting Norske Skog to consider alternative fuels for its new boiler, as part of a \$2 million State Government commitment to ensure the sustainability of its operations. According to Norske Skog, this could reduce emissions up to an estimated 160,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum.
- Supporting Sea Forest with an investment of over \$500,000 to further research the use of asparagopsis seaweed as a livestock feed supplement which could not only increase productivity but also reduce methane emissions.
- The Government and government businesses are also making significant investments to assist the State to reach 200 per cent self-sufficiency in renewable electricity by 2040 and significant green hydrogen production by 2030, both of which could facilitate emissions reductions across Australia and globally.

Many of Tasmania's major companies and industries already have well-established emissions reduction targets and goals, on the public record. For example, Liberty Steel Group (TEMCO) and the Australian red meat and livestock industry are aiming to become carbon neutral by 2030. Rio Tinto Bell Bay is seeking to reduce emissions by 50 per cent by 2030. Norske Skog, Tassal, Fonterra Australia, and the Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia industry association have a target of net zero emissions by 2050.

Given the substantial work underway across industries and sectors, the Government will not legislate additional sector-based targets, but will instead legislate the requirement for sector-based Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans.

The Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans will be developed by the Minister, in consultation with relevant portfolio ministers, and in partnership with industry and sector stakeholders. The Plans will incorporate and support existing targets and opportunities to reduce sector emissions, aligning our efforts with those directly involved in managing emissions, identify further actions to reduce emissions and accelerate the required investment, while increasing each sector's resilience to climate change and supporting productivity and economic growth.

The first Plans will be developed within two years of the commencement of the Act. Responding to consultation feedback, the Plans will consider both the target and the objects of the Act, and will be tabled in Parliament, ensuring accountability and transparency in the Government's response to climate change.

The Government will also continue to lead by example, through the development of an Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan for Government Operations. The Plan will include the various actions the Government is taking to reduce emissions, including our commitment to transition the Government vehicle fleet to 100 per cent Electric Vehicles by 2030. It will also include actions for the Government to adapt its operations, and increase their resilience, to climate change.

### *Objects*

In its current form, the Act has 10 Objects which establish the purpose of the Act.

The independent review found that the current objects of the Act are not explicit, that they overlap and are poor at guiding effective climate action.

Consolidating the Objects will clarify the purpose of the Act, ensuring a more robust legislative framework for evaluating climate action and the Act's effectiveness, consistent with contemporary best practice.

Responding to feedback on the draft Bill, the Bill's Objects now explicitly reference the important role of local government in responding to climate change, and the impact of climate change on future generations.

In addition, since the tabling of the Bill, the Government has received further advice and feedback on the impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing, which are projected to increase over time. The Government has listened and will be moving an amendment to the Bill to explicitly include the consideration of these impacts, in addition to the impacts on future generations, in both the Objects and the statewide Climate Change Risk Assessment, as detailed below.

### *Climate Change Action Plan*

The Bill legislates the requirement for the Minister to prepare a Climate Change Action Plan at least every five years.

This will ensure that the Tasmanian Government will continue to take action to grow a climate-ready economy, reduce emissions, build resilience, and adapt to climate change.

The Climate Change Action Plan will provide clear direction and accountability for the Government's short to medium-term climate change priorities and provide opportunities for industry and community input over time.

The Bill also requires that the Climate Change Action Plan is produced in formats that allow a broad range of the Tasmanian community to stay informed and participate in consultation on our climate change initiatives, including children and young people.

Importantly, while the Bill as tabled refers to the impact of climate change on future generations, and the preparation of the Action Plan in formats that are accessible to all Tasmanians, we have listened to further advice and feedback regarding the importance of children and young people being involved in decision-making that will affect their future lives.

On this basis, the Government will be moving a further amendment to the Bill to require that children and young people, as a distinct interest group, are consulted with in the development of Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan and in other relevant aspects.

The first Climate Change Action Plan will be prepared within six months of the commencement of the Act, and will include as key actions, the development of the first Climate Risk Assessment and commencement of the first Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans.

#### *Statewide Climate Change Risk Assessment*

Responding to climate change also involves adapting, and building the resilience of our community and environment, to the projected impacts of unavoidable climate change.

Responding to this, the Bill legislates a requirement for the Minister to complete a statewide Climate Change Risk Assessment every five years.

The Risk Assessment will inform the development of the Climate Change Action Plans and Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans, which will include actions to build resilience and adapt to climate change, as well as providing detailed information that the broader community can use to build its own resilience and adapt to climate change.

A key principle in the assessment of climate risk will be the consideration of its impacts on future generations, and as noted earlier, its impacts on the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians.

#### *Increased accountability and reporting*

Responding to consultation feedback, the Bill includes a number of requirements to increase the transparency and accountability in reporting of Tasmania's actions and progress towards our 2030 target.

This includes a requirement for the Minister to produce additional annual reports with sectoral details, including an annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report and an annual Climate Change Activity Statement, and that the Minister is to table all key climate change reports in Parliament, including the Climate Change Action Plan; Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plans; statewide Climate Change Risk

Assessment; annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report; and annual Activity Statement.

The Government also acknowledges the strong interest and expertise across the community in Tasmania's approach to reducing emissions and responding to the climate changes underway, and the importance of continuous communication and information sharing in this rapidly-changing field. That's why, following the passage of the Bill, the Government will establish a Climate Change Reference Group, to provide a forum for advice and feedback on strategic priorities and emerging opportunities in climate change mitigation and adaptation, as we work towards our 2030 net zero emissions target and increase community resilience to climate change.

The Climate Change Reference Group will be convened by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and will include members of relevant industry, community, business and stakeholder groups, state and local government and individuals with relevant expertise.

#### *Policy framework*

Some feedback on the draft Bill called for a legislative approach to consideration of climate change in government decision making. In response to the independent review, the Government will develop a whole-of-government policy framework to ensure that climate change is considered in the development of all relevant policies, plans and strategies.

This approach acknowledges the need for flexibility for decision makers, given the range of factors to be considered and the diversity of decisions climate change is relevant to.

The framework will include Ministerial guidelines; principles to guide decision making; guidance material and decision support tools; information on recent scientific, legal and market developments; and training opportunities. The framework will build the capacity and capability of the Tasmanian Government to embed climate change into decision making.

The framework will be informed by the statewide Climate Change Risk Assessment and will be important in the implementation of the Government's Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan for its operations.

Our 2030 target sends a strong message that Tasmania is committed to leveraging our unique advantages to their greatest effect to respond to climate change, protect our lifestyle and environment, and grow our economy and jobs. It is one of the most ambitious legislated targets in the world, but one which we believe Tasmania can meet by building on the significant work already underway in our community and economy, leading by example in the Government-sector, and harnessing the

knowledge and ingenuity of Tasmanians to accelerate our transition to a successful, resilient, and low emissions economy.

I commend the Bill to the House.