



**ACT**  
Government



# ACT Climate Change Council

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

Providing climate change advice to the Minister for the Environment



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## Letter of Transmittal

Mr Simon Corbell MLA  
Minister for the Environment and Climate Change  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister

It is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Report of the ACT Climate Change Council for the year ended 30 June 2016.

The Climate Change Council was established under Section 16 of the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* (the Act) to advise the Minister on matters relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and addressing and adapting to climate change. The Climate Change Council was formally established on 20 October 2011.

This report has been prepared pursuant to section 19 of the Act, and outlines the Council's activities during 2015–16, the advice given and recommendations made to you as Minister. Subsection 19(3) of the Act provides that within 21 days after receiving this report, it must be presented to the Legislative Assembly.

In presenting this annual report, I thank my colleagues in the Council for their continued professionalism and dedication in advancing the interests of the ACT by providing credible advice on climate change matters and engaging with the community and business sector throughout the year.

The Council wishes you the very best in the next steps of your career. As Minister you have provided strong and consistent leadership on the critical issue of climate change. It has been a pleasure advising you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Barbara Norman  
Chair  
ACT Climate Change Council

September 2016



# Introduction

The Climate Change Council (the Council) is an advisory body to the Minister for the Environment and Climate Change (the Minister). The Council's main function is to provide advice on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. The Council also plays a pivotal role in informing climate change policies in the ACT and in providing leadership to the community, working to raise awareness of climate change risks and community benefits from effective climate action, influencing community views and attitudes, and encouraging everyone to take action towards a decarbonised economy and a more resilient Territory.

The Council was formed in 2011 following the passage of the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* (the Act), which was enacted on 5 November 2010. The Minister announced the inaugural membership of the Council on 20 October 2011.

ACT residents are welcome to raise an issue with the Council, invite Council members to attend a local event or alert them to recent climate change news or research. Contact details for the Council are at the end of this report.

## Statutory obligations

The Act sets out the functions of the Council and outlines how they are to be exercised:

- S. 17 Functions of the Council
  1. The main function of the Council is to advise the Minister on matters relating to
    - a. reducing greenhouse gas emissions
    - b. addressing, and adapting to, climate change.

Subsection 18(4) provides that in exercising its functions the Council must try to consult with representatives from business and the community, including environmental and conservation entities, on matters relating to climate change. The Council must also make efforts to provide information to private entities to encourage action to address, or adapt to, climate change.

Section 19 of the Act requires the Council to provide an annual report about the Council's activities during the financial year, including any advice or recommendations made to the Minister. The Council must give the report to the Minister within three months after the end of the financial year.



# Administration

## Remuneration

Remuneration for the Council is set by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal and reviewed annually. The Tribunal determined per diem (per day) remuneration of \$485 for the Chair and \$410 for the other members, effective from February 2015. The attendance of members at Council meetings and official events conducted during the reporting period is provided in Appendix A. A summary of Council expenditures is at Appendix B.

## Gender report

The gender balance of the Council is taken into consideration when members are appointed. For the 2015–16 reporting period, membership included three female and three male councillors.

## Freedom of information

No freedom of information applications concerning Council business were received during 2015–16.

## Accountability and secretariat

The Climate Change section within the Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) provides the secretariat for the Council. The records of Council meetings are publicly available on the Council's webpage on the EPD website: [www.environment.act.gov.au/cc/climate\\_change\\_council](http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cc/climate_change_council).



# Membership

In line with the Act, the Council must comprise at least five, but not more than nine, members appointed by the Minister. The Minister must, to the greatest extent practical, ensure the Council includes people with a broad range of skills and knowledge relating to mitigating or adapting to climate change.

On 23 February 2015, Minister Corbell announced the following Council members under the Act:

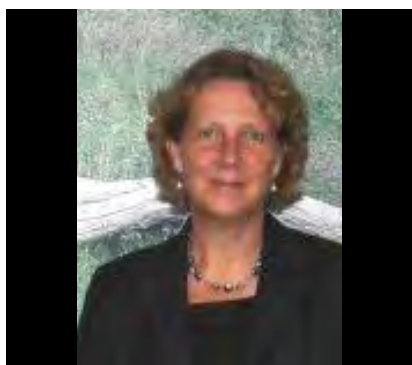
- » Professor Barbara Norman
- » Professor Penny Sackett
- » Mr Toby Roxburgh
- » Professor Will Steffen
- » Dr Frank Jotzo
- » Ms Dorte Ekelund

The appointments of Mr Toby Roxburgh and Ms Dorte Ekelund expire on 31 December 2016. The appointments of Professor Penny Sackett, Professor Barbara Norman, Professor Will Steffen and Dr Frank Jotzo expire on 1 March 2018.

Image below: Members of the ACT Climate Change Council. Left to right: Professor Will Steffen, Dr Frank Jotzo, Ms Dorte Ekelund, Minister for the Environment and Climate Change Simon Corbell, Professor Barbara Norman (Chair), Mr Toby Roxburgh, and Professor Penny Sackett (Deputy Chair).

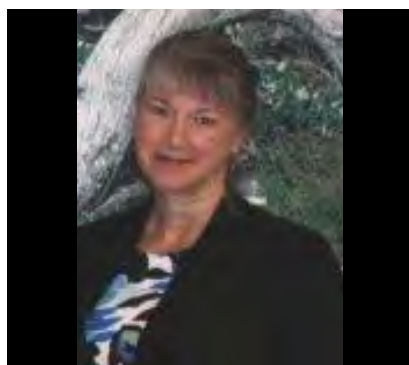


## Council members



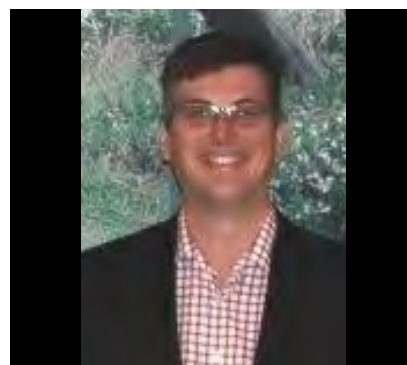
**Professor Barbara Norman (Council Chair)** is the Foundation Chair of Urban and Regional Planning in the Faculty of Business, Government and Law at the University of Canberra. Professor Norman is Director of Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF) and an Adjunct Professor with the Australian National University (ANU). Professor Norman is a Life Fellow and past National President of the Planning Institute of Australia and a Life Honorary Fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute (UK).

Professor Norman advises public and private sectors in Australia and has strong international links within Asia, Europe and the United States. She was a contributing author to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) Working Group 2 (WGII) 'Impacts', 2014, and was awarded an Australian Centenary Medal for her contribution to the community through urban and regional planning.



**Professor Penny Sackett** (Council Deputy Chair as of February 2015) is a physicist, astronomer, former Chief Scientist for Australia and, currently, an Adjunct Professor with the ANU Climate Change Institute and private strategic advisor.

As Chief Scientist for Australia (2008–2011), Professor Sackett provided independent advice to the Australian Government on matters of science and innovation, and was a vocal champion of evidenced-based decision making. She spearheaded the effort to introduce long-term, cross-portfolio and cross-disciplinary foresight into the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council, and opened new channels of communication to the Australian public on matters of science, particularly those related to sustainability such as climate change and food security.



**Toby Roxburgh** is the chair of the Canberra branch of the Australian Institute of Energy and a Founding Director at Beast Solutions. Mr Roxburgh is an electrical and electronics engineer with more than 13 years of experience in sustainable energy projects. His work in the energy sector includes fields such as education, policy, planning, sustainable design, energy efficiency, district energy, renewables, microgrids and peak demand reduction.

Mr Roxburgh has been involved in demand management projects for ActewAGL, district energy delivery for the City of Sydney, remote solar PV systems for Indigenous communities through the Australian Government's Indigenous Affairs Group, infrastructure savings for the ACT Government, renewable energy microgrids for campuses and developments, net zero carbon emissions solutions, and helping independent energy utilities operate off the electricity grid.



**Professor Will Steffen** is a Councillor on the publicly-funded Climate Council of Australia, which delivers independent expert information about climate change. Professor Steffen is a climate change researcher at the ANU in Canberra. He is the sustainability theme leader of Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF). He previously served as the Science Adviser to the Australian Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Professor Steffen has served as Executive Director of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, an international network of scientists studying global environmental change based in Stockholm, Sweden and is currently a guest researcher at the Stockholm Resilience Centre. His research interests span a broad range within the fields of climate and Earth System science, with an emphasis on incorporation of human processes in Earth System modelling and analysis, and on sustainability and climate change, with an emphasis on urban areas. Professor Steffen was a contributing author to the IPCC AR4 WGI report.



**Dr Frank Jotzo** is an Associate Professor at ANU, Director of the Centre for Climate Economics and Policy at Crawford School of Public Policy and an ANU Public Policy Fellow. Dr Jotzo has research expertise in the economics and policy of climate change (including mechanisms and policy design for greenhouse gas control), policy frameworks for adaptation to climate change and international climate policy, as well as energy policy and land-use change policy.

Dr Jotzo has published widely, has advised governments and consulted for international organisations. He was an advisor to the Garnaut Climate Change Review, advisor to Indonesia's Ministry of Finance, consultant to international organisations and was a lead author of Chapter 3 and the Technical Summary of the IPCC AR5. He is a frequent contributor to the public and policy debate on climate change in Australia and internationally.



**Dorte Ekelund** is Director-General of the Environment and Planning Directorate, ACT Government. Ms Ekelund is experienced in urban development coordination, infrastructure planning, statutory planning, planning system reform and governance reform. She has a strong interest in climate change adaptation and mitigation, water quality planning, environmental management, living and housing affordability, and the integration of transport and other infrastructure investment with strategic land use planning.

In her current role, Ms Ekelund is responsible for overseeing the development of policies and programs that promote sustainable living and resource use, strengthen the Territory's response to climate change, and provide an integrated planning and land use system that contributes to the sustainable development and future of the ACT. Previous roles include Executive Director of the Major Cities Unit at the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure and Transport and Deputy Director General of the Western Australian Department for Planning and Infrastructure.





# Performance

## Council meetings

The Council meets at least four times a year to discuss climate change matters relevant to the ACT. In this reporting period, the Council met four times in addition to sub-committee work, and continued to consult with representatives from business and the community on climate change matters.

### Meeting 15–10 August 2015

The Council discussed the possibility of introducing interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and amending the existing 1990 baseline to be in-line with future Australian Government targets.

Guests included Mr Larry O'Loughlin and Ms Phoebe Howe from the Conservation Council ACT Region and Ms Jodie Pipkorn from SEE-Change, who updated the Council on their respective organisations.

The Council heard presentations from EPD representatives. Mr Tony Carmichael presented on the relevance of climate change to planning issues in the Territory. Ms Antonia Harmer gave an update on the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme and was widely congratulated on her team's terrific work.

### Meeting 16–23 October 2015

In this last meeting for 2015, the Council discussed new approaches to social media and community engagement on climate change issues that affect the ACT. Comment was provided on a number of current ACT Government projects:

- » The draft ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy – Living with a Warming Climate
- » Living Infrastructure Discussion Paper
- » Review of AP2, the ACT's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Mr Tony Carmichael of EPD presented the Mawson group centre and Woden town centre master plans and the Light Rail Master Plan for consideration by the Council members.

Professor Norman, Professor Steffen and Dr Jotzo noted their continued preparation for the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21 – Paris) in December. To conclude the year the Council discussed their ideas for 2016.

### Meeting 17–12 February 2016

The Council provided their perspectives on the outcomes from COP21, noting that realistic hopes have been achieved and that 2016 is a decisive year for global action. The conference focused significantly on the important role of sub-national governments, coinciding with the release of the Council's report, Sub-national Climate Policies: How Does the ACT Compare?.

Presenters at the meeting included Mr Mark Hemmingsen from Canberra EV, who spoke about the benefits of electric vehicles in Canberra, and Mr Andrew Zelnik from EPD, who discussed the use of energy consumption tracking software in achieving carbon neutrality in ACT Government operations by 2020.

## Meeting 18–20 May 2016

The Council discussed transport emissions in the ACT, the City and Gateway Urban Renewal Strategy, Single Conservation Agency, ACT Basin Priority Project (ACT Healthy Waterways) and the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy.

Ms Peta Olesen, Climate Change (EPD), presented to Council on transport emissions in the ACT. Council discussed the potential opportunities.

The Council sub-committees provided updates on their activities including proposed future Council work to undertake a Carbon Neutral Precincts report and an annual State of the Climate Science report for the ACT.

The Council met with the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, Dr Kate Auty, who outlined her work priorities for 2016.

## Publications

Council members collaborated in a range of reporting activities associated with the work of Council sub-committees. These included:

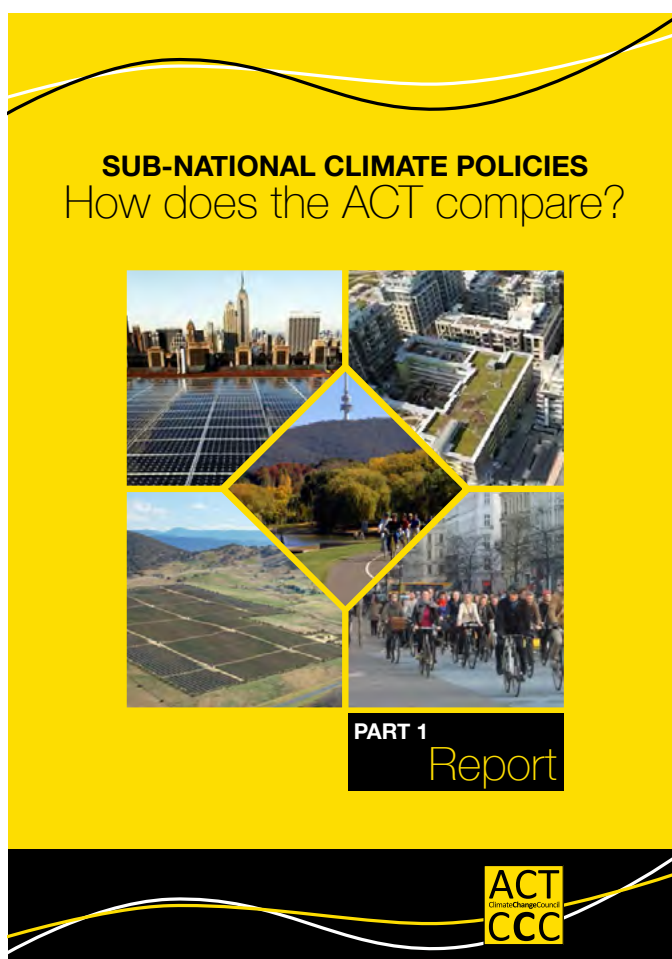
### Sub-national climate policies: How does the ACT compare?

A report by the ACT Climate Change Council shows the ACT Government's climate change policies and emissions reduction targets are among the best in the world.

The report compares the climate targets and actions of the ACT with other Australian jurisdictions and major cities, as well as 18 international sub-national jurisdictions. The report was prepared by Climate Change Council members Professor Penny Sackett and Dr Frank Jotzo with senior ANU researcher Luke Kemp.

### Letter to the Prime Minister of Australia

The Council wrote to the Prime Minister of Australia expressing their deep concern over the funding cuts to climate science within CSIRO, noting that the annual climate projection reports, produced by the CSIRO in conjunction with the Bureau of Meteorology, allow an understanding of the efficacy of mitigation efforts and the necessary characteristics of local adaptation measures.



## Out of session activities

Council members engaged in a range of activities out-of-session, including high-level presentations. These included:

### COP21

In December 2015 the 21st Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21), also known as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, agreed to a legally binding and universal agreement on climate, with the aim of keeping average global warming to well below 2°C.

Council members Professor Barbara Norman, Ms Dorte Ekelund and Dr Frank Jotzo attended the conference. Professor Will Steffen represented the National Climate Council as a point of contact for the conference in Australia.

Council members provided the following perspectives on the COP21:

- » The conference set and achieved realistic objectives.
- » 2016 is the decisive year for action.
- » The severe impacts of climate change were highlighted.
- » There was a focus on the action by sub-national governments. Recognition was given for sub-national governments showing leadership.
- » Significant discussion that 2°C temperature increase is too much and therefore the collective ambition needs to be greater in reducing emissions.

### Draft ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy launch

The draft ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy – Living with a Warming Climate sets out a series of actions that help our Territory adapt to inevitable global temperature increases and the associated impacts such as extreme weather events and increased fire risk. The draft strategy was released for public consultation on 22 February 2016 at the Rivers Fire Station by Minister Simon Corbell and ESA Commissioner Dominic Lane. Members of the Climate Change Council, Chair Professor Barbara Norman, Professor Will Steffen, Ms Dorte Ekelund and Mr Toby Roxburgh attended the launch.



## Media and social media

Council members have participated in a range of media and social media activities during 2015/16, including:

- » Professor Steffen chaired the launch of Tim Flannery's new book *Atmosphere of Hope*, September 2015.
- » Professor Steffen presented on 'Climate Change 2015: The Road to Paris' to the Bermagui Institute, September 2015.
- » Dr Jotzo appeared on ABC 666 radio with host Alex Sloan to discuss the ACT Renewable Energy Target and lead-up to COP21, October 2015.
- » Professor Norman appeared on ABC 666 radio with host Alex Sloan to discuss cities and climate change, October 2015.
- » Professor Norman appeared in the Canberra Times commenting on the ACT light rail, October 2015.
- » Dr Jotzo published an article on a coal tax as a supply-side climate policy, November 2015.
- » Professor Steffen presented on 'Climate Change 2015: The Road to Paris' to the University of the Third Age, ACT Branch, November 2015.
- » The Council's Secretariat released social media for the five year anniversary of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Act 2010, November 2015.
- » Professor Norman and Mr Roxburgh represented the Council at the launch of the Review of AP2 at the ACT Legislative assembly, November 2015.
- » Professor Sackett was a keynote speaker at Canberra's People's Climate March, 29 November 2015.
- » Professor Norman, Ms Ekelund and Dr Jotzo attended COP21 events in Paris, November–December 2015.
- » Professor Steffen appeared on ABC 666 radio with host Alex Sloan to discuss the climate benefits of urban trees in Canberra, January 2016.
- » Professor Sackett was interviewed by ABC 702 radio (Sydney) on the announcement that the CSIRO would cut climate science, 5 February 2016.
- » Professor Steffen presented on climate science and post-Paris outcomes to an ACT Conservation Council event, February 2016.
- » Council members participated in the community consultation on the draft ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, February–April 2016.





## Advice to the Minister

During the 2015–16 reporting period, the Council provided advice to the Minister in person and through consultation with government officers.

### Advice to the Minister:

In July 2015, and as a pre-cursor to the COP21, the Council wrote to the Minister advising that the Council considered it timely and appropriate to review the emission reduction targets of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and to offer comments and suggestions regarding the Territory's current performance and future targets.

The Council issued eight recommendations and statements of support in response to climate change actions and policies in the ACT:

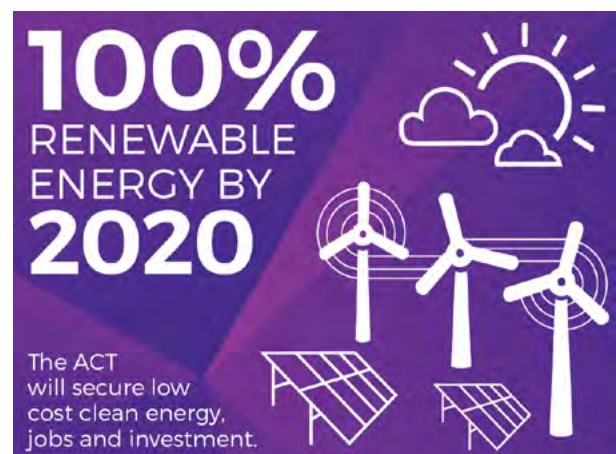
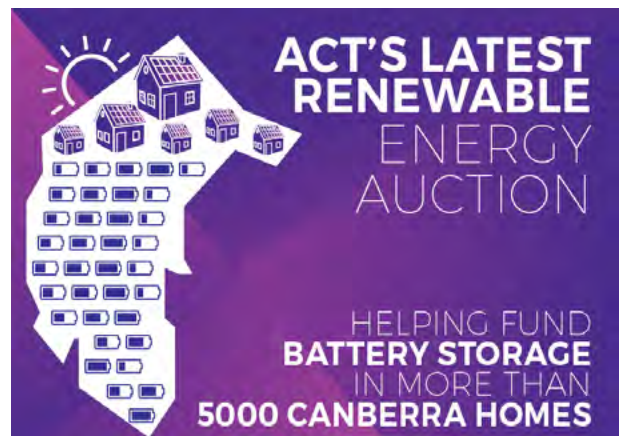
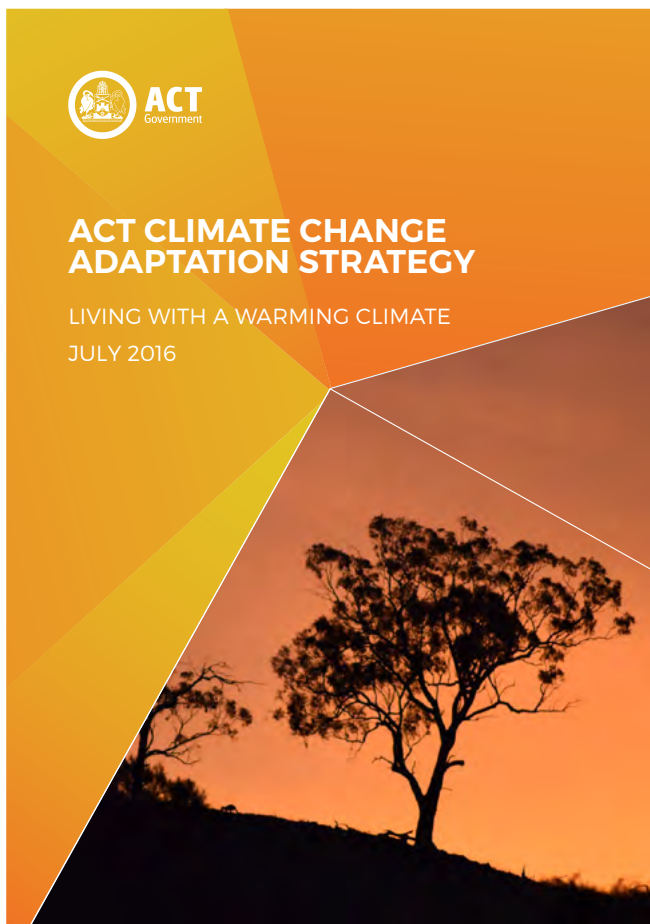
1. We recommend that current or future greenhouse gas (GHG) targets for the ACT be expressed using the same base year as Australian national targets, anticipated to be 2005.
2. We recommend that ACT GHG emission targets be established for 2025, 2030 and 2040 that correspond to the scientifically and economically sound levels represented by the 'deep decarbonisation' pathway project analysis, namely reductions of 55%, 60% and 75%, respectively, on 2005 levels.
3. We recommend that the current ACT 2050 target of 80% reduction on 1990 levels be recast as an 85% reduction on 2005 levels.
4. Furthermore, we suggest that by expanding its renewable energy program the ACT can add an 'extra 15%' onto the 2025, 2030, 2040 and 2050 reduction targets, bringing them to 70%, 75%, 90% and 100%.
5. We strongly encourage the ACT Legislative Assembly give its bipartisan support for the most immediate of these new targets in 2025 and legislate to establish monitoring against this target.
6. We strongly support the successful approach the ACT Government has taken to meeting its very ambitious renewable electricity supply target for 2020. In particular, we note the benefits accruing to the Territory through its leading practice in rolling out renewable energy systems, benefits that include an affordable future electricity supply and a broadening, growing educational and industrial base. The ACT stands as an excellent example of how effective climate action is consistent with significant economic and social co-benefits.
7. We applaud the ACT for taking a steep emission reduction pathway to 2020, a pathway that delivers more climate benefits than the national trajectory. Opportunities for a different sort of leadership are described in the next point.
8. Finally, as the ACT takes rapid and effective action on reducing emissions from the electricity sector, the transport sector will soon become the Territory's most significant GHG emitter. We note that the ACT Government is taking action to develop a more integrated, resilient transport system for Canberra and we are ready to work with the ACT Government and the Legislative Assembly to ensure significant emission reductions are achieved as the city's transport system is transformed.

This advice contributed to the ACT Government's decision to increase the Renewable Energy Target from 90% to 100% by 2020 and to bring forward the date by which the Territory is to achieve the principal target of zero net emissions to 2050 from 2060.

## Advice through Government officers:

Members of the Council engaged in discussion with ACT Government officials, principally from EPD, on:

- » interim GHG emissions reduction targets
- » draft and final ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- » 100% Renewable Energy Target and Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme
- » Northbourne Avenue corridor and precinct
- » increased community engagement by the Council on climate change issues
- » energy efficiency opportunities in government operations and infrastructure.



## Join the Council on social media

The Council has a growing interactive media presence on three social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The Council invites the community to connect with them.

Facebook – Search for ACT Climate Change Council on Facebook.

Twitter – The Council’s Twitter handle is @act\_ccc

LinkedIn – The Council’s page is at <https://au.linkedin.com/pub/act-climate-change-council/a0/702/b51>



## Contact the Council

The community and stakeholders are invited to contact the Council via the Council’s secretariat.

Email: [climatechangecouncil@act.gov.au](mailto:climatechangecouncil@act.gov.au)

Telephone: 13 22 81 (Access Canberra)

Post: GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601



## Appendix A: Council members' attendance

During the 2015–16 reporting period the Council held four meetings:

- » 10 August 2015
- » 23 October 2015
- » 12 February 2016
- » 20 May 2016

### Number of meetings attended by Council members

Member	Number of meetings in reporting period	Number of meetings attended
Professor Barbara Norman (Chair)	4	4
Professor Penny Sackett	4	4
Ms Dorte Ekelund	4	4
Professor Will Steffen	4	4
Dr Frank Jotzo	4	4
Mr Toby Roxburgh	4	4

## Appendix B: Budget

Climate Change Council	Payments in 2015–16
Remuneration – sitting fees * #	\$9,400.00
Projects	\$30,360.36
Miscellaneous	\$1,131.99
<b>Total (excluding GST)</b>	<b>\$30,892.55</b>

\* Ms Dorte Ekelund is not paid sitting fees as she is a Council member in her capacity as Director-General, EPD, ACT Government.

# Remuneration for Council members for sittings and out-of-session activities is determined by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal Amended Determination.



