

ACT Government Climate Change Council

Annual Report 2011–12



ACT
Government

ACT Government Climate Change Council

Annual Report

20 October 2011 to 30 June 2012

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Letter of Transmittal

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

Dear Minister

In accordance with Section 19 of the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010*, I submit the first Annual Report of the Climate Change Council for the year ended 30 June 2012 for tabling in the Legislative Assembly.

The Climate Change Council was established under Section 16 of 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.



Professor Barbara Norman
Chair
Climate Change Council

24 September 2012

Forward: Message from the Chair

In its first few months the ACT Climate Change Council has commenced activity on a range of fronts. It has held 3 meetings over the reporting period. The Council has also established some important operating principles with an emphasis on openness and a willingness to engage with the ACT community.

Two submissions have been prepared by Council - a submission on ACT Government Weathering the Change Draft Action Plan 2 (March 2012) and a submission on ACT Government City to Gungahlin Transit Corridor Study (May 2012). Both of these are available on the Climate Change Council website (http://www.environment.act.gov.au/climate_change/climate_change_council).

The Council is committed to engaging with industry and the community in forming its advice to the Minister. This ongoing engagement program commenced with discussions with the ACT Property Council on opportunities for climate change action in the built environment.

Finally members of the Council participated more broadly in local community events, national and international forums to share knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of the critical issues that the ACT community may be facing in planning for climate change.

I would like to thank fellow Council members for their positive and valuable contributions to the meetings and wider community engagement. I would also like to thank the Secretariat to the Council for its ongoing support.

I look forward with Council members to a productive 2012-13.



Professor Barbara Norman
Chair
Climate Change Council

Terms of Reference

1. BACKGROUND

The ACT Climate Change Council (the Council) is established under the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* (the Act).

The Act establishes long term and interim targets for ACT greenhouse gas reductions as follows:

- peaking per capita emissions by 2013;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent of 1990 levels by 2020;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent of 1990 levels by 2050; and
- zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2060.

2. OBJECTIVE

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

1. The main function of the Council is to advise the Minister on matters relating to:
 - (a) reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
 - (b) addressing, and adapting to, climate change.
2. The Council also has any other functions given to the Council under this Act.
3. The matters on which the Council may *advise* the Minister include the following matters:
 - a) actions or strategies to achieve energy efficiencies;
 - b) actions or strategies to increase renewable energy use;
 - c) actions or strategies to achieve the targets;
 - d) community and business views on climate change, including:
 - i. barriers to addressing climate change; and
 - ii. proposed actions or strategies to overcome the barriers;
 - e) actions or strategies to encourage private entities to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change;
 - f) actions taken or strategies implemented by private entities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change; and
 - g) commercial, regional, national and international practices or policies, including technological developments, to address climate change that may be used in the ACT.
4. In exercising its functions, the Council:
 - a) must try to
 - i. consult representatives from business and the community, including environmental and conservation entities, on matters relating to climate change; and
 - ii. provide information to private entities to encourage entities to take action to address, or adapt to, climate change;
 - b) must consider

- i. the social, economic and environmental impact of issues relating to climate change; and
 - ii. national and international practices or developments in climate change; and
 - iii. any relevant report given to the Minister by an independent entity under section 12; and
 - iv. information available in any other report the Minister requires the Council to consider; and
- c) may consider any other relevant information.

3. PRIORITY TASKS

The initial priorities for the Council are to:

1. identify short, medium and long-term goals for the Council
2. advise the Minister on
 - a. strategies to achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets and adapt to climate change, as set out in the *Weathering the Change, Action Plan 2 (AP2)*;
 - b. play a key role in community and stakeholder consultation on AP2;
 - c. implementation of AP2, including assisting in identifying barriers and opportunities for implementation; and
 - d. assist in monitoring implementation and advising on potential updates of AP2.
3. play a leadership role in the community and encourage knowledge sharing on climate change issues
4. advise the Minister on adaptation strategies for the ACT;
5. contribute as appropriate, and as relevant to its terms of reference, to the development of related strategies including *Transport for Canberra – Transport for a Sustainable City*; the *ACT Planning Strategy – Planning for a Sustainable City*, the *Canberra Spatial Plan* and the clean economy strategy.

4. MEMBERSHIP

The Act sets out the membership of the Council as follows:

The Council must consist of at least 5, but not more than 9, Members appointed by the Minister.

The Minister must, to the greatest extent practicable, ensure that:

- a) the Council includes people with a broad range of skills and knowledge relating to addressing, or adapting to, climate change; and
- b) the following people are among the members appointed:
 - i. a person to represent the interests of business;
 - ii. a person to represent the community's interest in climate change;
 - iii. a person to represent climate change science;
 - iv. a person to represent environmental management;
 - v. a person to represent the built environment;
 - vi. a person to represent transport planning;
 - vii. a person to represent people who are socially or financially disadvantaged;
 - viii. an energy specialist;
 - ix. a public employee.

The Minister may appoint a person as a member only if satisfied that the person:

- a) is committed to addressing climate change; and

- b) has knowledge and experience in an area relevant to the operation of the Act.

The Minister must appoint a member of the Council (other than a member who is a public employee) to be the Chair of the Council.

The Council may also choose to elect a Deputy Chair.

A meeting may proceed with a quorum of three members present.

5. COUNCIL LONGEVITY

The Council shall exist from the date of its inception until such time as the Minister deems its function no longer required. Appointments to the Council will be for an initial term of three years.

6. REPORTING

For each financial year, the Council must prepare a report about the Council's activities during the financial year, including any advice given or recommendations made to the Minister.

The Council must give the report to the Minister within 3 months after the end of the financial year.

The Minister must, within 21 days after receiving the report, present to the Legislative Assembly:

- a) the report; and
- b) a statement responding to any advice given or recommendations made in the Council's annual report.

Advice to the Minister is coordinated through the Secretariat and provided to Minister in a form suitable for public release, should this be required.

7. OPERATION

The Council will meet four times a year, or as required. The Chair of the Council will chair the meetings. The Council Secretariat role will be provided by the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate.

Out-of-session arrangements will be as negotiated between the Chair and the Secretariat.

8. REMUNERATION

Council members are entitled to payment of daily sitting fees. These fees are set by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal. The Council Secretariat has established a process for the rendering and payment of accounts.

Meetings of three hours or more (including a reasonable component for preparation) attract a full day's rate. Meetings of less than three hours may be pro-rated in accordance with Determination 14 of 2011 of the ACT Remuneration Tribunal.

Members may also be paid a daily fee for aggregates of periods engaged in the business of the Council outside of scheduled Council meetings. Eligibility for each payment will be certified by the Chair.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment on behalf of the Council will only be made by the Chair or by a Member invited by the Chair.

To the extent possible, the Chair is to advise the Secretariat of comments sought and provided on behalf of the Council. Similarly, as far as is possible, the Secretariat will advise of Government initiatives or releases likely to be of interest to the Council or warrant public comment.

10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All Members will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest. Members will be invited to declare any changes to conflict of interest at the commencement of each meeting.

11. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

All correspondence between the Council and the ACT Government and with the Minister is subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* and regulations.

12. SECRETARIAT

Secretariat support is provided by the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate.

The role of the Council Secretariat is to provide administrative support at Council meetings, coordinate communications to Council members, administer sitting fees and support the Chair as required.

Preparation of reports and advice to the Minister from the Council will be the responsibility of the Council.

Membership of the Council

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

On 20 October 2011 the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development announced the composition of the first Climate Change Council including-

- Professor Barbara Norman, Foundation Chair, Urban and Regional Planning, University of Canberra, Deputy Chair, Regional Development Australia (ACT) and Co-Director of Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF);
- Professor Will Steffen, Executive Director of the Climate Change Institute at the Australian National University, Commissioner on the Independent Climate Commission and Co-Director of Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF);
- Dr Frank Jotzo, Director of the Centre for Climate Economics and Policy at the Australian National University and Deputy Director of the ANU Climate Change Institute;
- Ms Maria Efkarpidis, Director, Rock Development Group;
- Ms Lynn Harwood, Chief Executive Officer of Communities@Work; and
- Mr David Papps, Director General, ACT Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate and Chief Planning Executive.

The Minister announced that Professor Norman would chair the Council. At the first Council meeting the Council agreed to elect a Deputy Chair. A vote was taken and Ms Lynne Harwood was elected unanimously.

Membership of the Council did not change during the reporting period. The attendance of members during the reporting period is provided in Appendix A.

Administration

Annual report

Section 19 of the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* requires that the Council 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.

Member's fees

Remuneration for the Council is set by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal and reviewed annually. The Tribunal determined per diem remuneration of \$445 for the Chair and \$375 for the other members, effective from 1 November 2011.

Secretariat

The Climate Change, Energy and Sustainability Policy section within the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate provided secretarial support for the Council during the reporting period.

Gender report

The gender balance of the Council is taken into consideration when members are appointed. Within the reporting period the Council consisted of three female members and three male members.

Freedom of information

No freedom of information applications concerning Council business were received during the reporting period.

Activities of the Council

The Council met on three occasions:

- Meeting One- 8 November 2011
- Meeting Two- 1 February 2012
- Meeting Three- 16 May 2012

Dr Frank Jotzo and Ms Lynne Harwood attended the Canberra Loves 40% Forum on 23 November 2011 on behalf of the Council.

In June 2012, Professors Norman and Steffen representing their respective universities attended the Rio +20 conference held in Brazil. Prior to her departure, Professor Norman sought and received approval from the Minister to also represent the Climate Change Council at selected events at the Rio + 20 conference.

Submissions by the Council

The Council prepared two submissions to ACT Government processes where climate change was identified as a consideration.

- ACT Climate Change Council submission to the ACT Government Weathering the Change Draft Action Plan 2 (March 2012);
- ACT Climate Change Council submission to the ACT Government City to Gungahlin Transit Corridor Study (May 2012).

Stakeholder engagement

One of the roles of the Climate Change Council is to consult with representatives from business and the community on matters relating to climate change.

As part of its role in engaging with the business and community groups, the Council met with Ms Catherine Carter (ACT Executive Director) and Mr George Katheklakis (Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee) from the Property Council of Australia at its second Council meeting on 16 May 2012.

Appendix A: Members attendance

During the 2011-12 financial year the Council held three formal meetings. The Council held its initial meeting on 8 November 2011, with subsequent meetings held on 1 February 2012 and 16 May 2012.

Member	Number of meetings during the reporting period	Number of meetings attended
Professor Barbara Norman	3	3
Professor Will Steffen	3	2
Dr Frank Jotzo	3	3
Ms Maria Efkarpidis	3	2
Ms Lynn Harwood	3	3
Mr David Papps	3	2

Appendix B: Climate Change Council Budget

Climate Change Council

Expenditure 2011-12

Council sitting fees	\$ 5,140.00
Meeting venue hire	\$ 900.00
Hospitality	\$ 872.00
Total (excluding GST)	\$ 6,912.00