



ACT Climate Change Council Annual Report 2014–15



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
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 2015.

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 2014-15, 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.

Yours sincerely



Professor Barbara Norman
Chair
ACT Climate Change Council

20

August 2015

Mission

The Climate Change Council (the Council) is an advisory body to the Minister for the Environment (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.

Overview of 2014–2015

On 28 October 2014, the three-year term for five of the seven Council members came to an end.

Ms Lynne Harwood and Ms Maria Efkarpidis ended their terms on 28 October 2014. Over the three years Ms Efkarpidis provided valued sustainable development perspectives and Ms Harwood provided a voice for the financially and socially disadvantaged across the ACT community throughout the Council's endeavours. An Expression of Interest (EOI) process was undertaken from 14 July to 3 August 2014 to enable the appointment of suitable representatives to the Council.

On 23 February 2015, Professor Penny Sackett was appointed to the Council and Professor Barbara Norman, Professor Will Steffen and Dr Frank Jotzo were reappointed. They joined existing Council members Mr Toby Roxburgh and Ms Dorte Ekelund. Professor Norman was appointed as Chair of the Council and Professor Sackett as Deputy Chair for an initial one-year term.

During the 2014–15 reporting period, the Council held three formal meetings (8 August 2014, 4 March 2015 and 12 June 2015). The Council currently has sub-committees on community engagement, science communication, and infrastructure and urban planning.

Introduction

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 September 2011.

The Council was in operation during the 2014–15 reporting period for which this annual report applies, and consisted of eight members across the year, including two discontinuing councillors and a new councillor. The Council included experts in the energy sector, transport planning, social equity, built environment, environmental management and climate science, as well as representatives for business and community interests.

The Council's activities over the reporting period are consistent with directions set out under the Act. Councillors worked to identify and address barriers to achieving a dynamic and low carbon economy and society, while coordinating discussions and providing advice to the ACT Government on the path forward to achieve emissions reduction targets.

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 can be found at the end of this report.

Statutory obligations

The Council is established under the Act. 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 1 November 2014. 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 majority of the 2014–15 reporting period, membership included three female and three male councillors. From October 2014 to February 2015, one female and one male comprised Council membership until new appointments were tabled.

Freedom of information

No freedom of information applications concerning Council business were received during 2014–15.

Accountability and secretariat

The Climate Change section within the Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) provides the secretariat for the Council. Staff from this team attend Council meetings to provide support and record discussion points. 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.



Councillors at their 4 March 2015 meeting. Left to right: Professor Will Steffen, Dr Frank Jotzo, Ms Dorte Ekelund, Environment Minister Simon Corbell, Professor Barbara Norman (Chair), Mr Toby Roxburgh, and Professor Penny Sackett (Deputy Chair).

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 greatest extent practical, ensure the Council includes people with a broad range of skills and knowledge relating to mitigating or adapting to climate change.

Council terms

On 23 February 2015, Minister Corbell announced the appointment of Professor Penny Sackett and the reappointment of Professor Barbara Norman, Professor Will Steffen and Dr Frank Jotzo to the Council. They joined existing Council members Mr Toby Roxburgh and Ms Dorte Ekelund. Professor Norman was appointed Chair of the Council and Professor Sackett Deputy Chair for an initial one-year term.

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 linkages 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 a private strategic advisor. Professor Sackett has served on Australian, Dutch, European, and United States science and advisory panels. Much of her research career has centred on applying physics to questions in astronomy. In 2002, Professor Sackett was appointed to a five-year term as Director of the ANU Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics and the Mount Stromlo and Siding Spring Observatories. As Director of the Mt Stromlo Observatory when it was destroyed in the 2003 bush fires, Professor Sackett led the effort to rebuild and re-establish the international centre for research, training, and high-tech instrumentation. She resigned from the ANU in October 2008 to take up the post of Chief Scientist for Australia.

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 Principal Energy Engineer for E2Designlab. Mr Roxburgh is a Principal Electrical Engineer with over 12 years of experience in sustainable energy projects. Toby brings passion and experience from his work in the energy sector across fields including 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 Indigenous Affairs, 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 if required.



Professor Will Steffen is a Councillor on the publicly-funded Climate Council of Australia that 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 AR5 by the IPCC. He is a frequent contributor to the public and policy debate on climate change in Australia and internationally.



Dorte Ekelund is Director-General, 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 Federal Department of Infrastructure and Transport and Deputy Director General of the Western Australian Department for Planning and Infrastructure.

Discontinuing Council members

Maria Efkarpidis, Marketing Director of Rock Development Group, represented the business sector of the ACT community on the Council for a term of three years. Ms Efkarpidis provided valued sustainable development perspectives to deliberations from 20 October 2011 to 28 October 2014.

Lynne Harwood, Chief Executive Officer of Communities@Work, served as the Council Deputy Chair from 20 October 2011 to 28 October 2014. Ms Harwood represented the community sector, providing a voice for the financially and socially disadvantaged across the ACT community throughout the Council's endeavours.

Performance

Council meetings

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

Meeting 12 – 8 August 2014

The Council held its final meeting for 2014 (and first of the reporting period), with the three-year term for five of the seven Council members coming to an end on 28 October 2014. The Council considered the achievements of the ACT Government in working to address climate change over the past three years.

The Council received updates on policy development from EPD Climate Change Policy and Energy Policy teams. Key topics of discussion included large scale renewable energy projects and climate change adaptation.

Issues raised in discussion:

- Energy policies, including the review of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme (EEIS), the role of natural gas in the ACT, and the renewable energy target and auction processes.
- Carbon Neutral Government Framework, including Carbon Neutral Government Loan Fund and Enterprise Sustainability Platform.

Meeting 13 – 4 March 2015

Professor Penny Sackett attended her first meeting of the Council, along with reappointed Professor Barbara Norman, Professor Will Steffen and Dr Frank Jotzo. Existing Council members Mr Toby Roxburgh and Ms Dorte Ekelund also attended this meeting.

Minister for the Environment, Simon Corbell, attended part of the meeting to congratulate members on their appointment and reappointment. The Minister highlighted several areas, including the development of the climate change adaptation strategy, where Council advice would be valuable to the Government.

Issues raised in discussion:

Minister Corbell requested the Council to engage in the following three areas over the coming year:

- Northbourne Avenue corridor and precinct
- Renewable energy
- Increased community engagement by the Council on climate change issues

The Council discussed its forward work program, including development of a communications and community engagement plan.

Council considered an update from EPD officers on subjects including the NSW/ACT Regional Climate Model (NARClIM)—a joint modelling project between the ACT Government and NSW Environment Protection Agency—the Climate Change Action Plan 2 Implementation Update, the development of the ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment’s Implementation Status Report on Action Plan 2, the initiation of the EPD review of Action Plan 2, and the ACT Greenhouse Gas inventory.

Council identified eight areas where it would seek to engage over the course of the year:

- Northbourne Avenue precinct development urban design study
- Light Rail Master Plan
- Active Travel Strategy
- Preventative health action (in regards to adaptation)
- Master planning processes for town centres etc.
- Built/smart infrastructure
- Community engagement
- Linking ACT with other sub-national jurisdictions

Council considered preparing its own reports on international best practice for climate change mitigation measures put in place by cities and how ACT climate change policies compare to global best practice; and case studies of how climate change is being addressed in the Territory.

Meeting 14 – 12 June 2015

The final Council meeting for the 2014-15 reporting period was attended by Chair Professor Norman, Deputy Chair Professor Sackett and Professor Steffen, Dr Jotzo, Mr Roxburgh and representatives from EPD. Renewable energy, greenhouse gas emissions reporting and ACT membership of global climate change organisations were key topics of discussion.

Issues raised in discussion:

- Council discussed the possibility of the ACT raising its renewable energy target from 90 to 100%.
- Council noted that as the proportion of renewable energy supply increases in the Territory, Canberra's transport sector—instead of electricity—will become the largest emitter of greenhouse emissions.
- Council noted that ACT abatement initiatives such as the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme, which replaces halogen light bulbs among other activities, are well ahead of other Australian jurisdictions.
- Council members agreed to draft a letter to Minister Corbell making recommendations for an interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction target in the lead up to the Paris climate change conference in December 2015.
- Council proposed to counter negative comments in the Australian media regarding wind turbines by releasing its own positive social media on the Council's Twitter account.

Out of session activities

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

- **Nobel Laureates Symposium on Global Sustainability**

From 22–25 April 2015, Council Deputy Chair, Professor Penny Sackett, participated in the 4th Nobel Laureates Symposium on Global Sustainability- 4C: 'Changing Climate, Changing Cities', in Hong Kong. Minister Corbell attended the Symposium to discuss sustainability policy challenges and outline the future directions for the ACT's climate change policy.

Minister Corbell presented to the gathering of Nobel Laureates, representatives of city governments and NGO leaders on the theme 'Changing Climate, Changing Cities'. Professor Sackett facilitated discussion at the symposium on 'Visions for Places' that considered the role of local government, technology and community in realising specific city visions, commonalities and differences in responding to climate change.

The Symposium concluded with the Laureates releasing a memorandum called 'The Great Urban Transformation'. It called for strong international climate action and challenged city governments to adopt and meet targets consistent with the internationally-agreed 2°C safe climate guardrail. The memorandum notes that cities can be 'pioneers' by enacting local plans for greenhouse gas reductions that are sufficiently ambitious in magnitude and speed. Hence, local leaders can work to influence a strong, equitable and science-based agreement at the UN Climate Summit in Paris this December. Professor Sackett chaired the memorandum's drafting committee.

- **Presentation to community councils**

Council Chair, Professor Norman, presented to community councils on the ACT Climate Change Council and the climate change work of the ACT Government on 31 July 2014.

- **EnAACT Workshop**

Professor Steffen presented to key ACT Government representatives at the Enabling Adaptation in the ACT (EnAACT) workshop on Tuesday 2 September 2014.

- **Partnering with Business and Industry forum**

Mr Roxburgh presented at this event on Tuesday 25 November 2014.

- **Judging of the 2015 Actsmart Business Sustainability Awards**

Mr Roxburgh was a judge for the awards from 25-27 May 2015.

Media and social media

Council members have had a range of media and social media activities, including

- Barbara Norman, Tony McMichael, Peter Newman and Will Steffen, Light rail has benefits for all in a sustainable future, Canberra Times, 4 August 2014, page 5.



Deputy Chair Penny Sackett (front right) at the Nobel Laureates Symposium on Global Sustainability.

Advice to the Minister

During the 2014–15 reporting period, the Council provided advice to the Minister in person and through consultation with government officers.

Advice to the Minister:

The Council's advice did not take the form of formal recommendations, rather guidance on the topics outlined below.

- Climate Change adaptation
- Community engagement on climate change
- Energy
- Water
- Transport
- Planning and infrastructure

Advice through government officers:

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

- Interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets
- Draft ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- 90% 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

Telephone: 13 22 81 (Access Canberra)

Post: GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

Appendix A: Council members' attendance

During the 2014–15 reporting period the Council held three meetings. These were on:

1. 8 August 2014
2. 4 March 2015
3. 12 June 2015

Table 1: Number of meetings attended by Council members

Member	Number of meetings in reporting period	Number of meetings attended
Professor Barbara Norman (Chair)	3	3
Professor Penny Sackett (Deputy Chair)*	2	2
Professor Will Steffen	3	3
Dr Frank Jotzo	3	3
Ms Dorte Ekelund	3	2
Mr Toby Roxburgh	3	3
Ms Lynne Harwood [#]	1	1
Ms Maria Efkarpidis [#]	1	0

**Professor Sackett was appointed to the Council in February 2015, hence, only two meetings took place in the reporting period.*

The term of appointment for Ms Harwood and Ms Efkarpidis expired on 28 October 2014.

Appendix B: Budget

Climate Change Council	Payments in 2014–15
Remuneration – sitting fees * #	\$5455.00
Remuneration – out of session * #	\$1775.00
Venue hire	\$0.00
Hospitality	\$185.77
Miscellaneous	\$510.36
Total (excluding GST)	\$7926.13

* Ms Dorte Ekelund is not paid sitting fees as she is a member of the Council in her capacity as Director-General, Environment and Planning, ACT Government.

Payment of Council members for sittings and for out-of-session activities did not take into account the increased remuneration entitlement as determined by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal Amended Determination 11 of 2014, commencing on 1 November 2014. Another two payments were not paid due to delay. All outstanding amounts will be paid in the 2015–16 reporting period and will be reflected in the Council budget for 2015–16.