

A Safe Climate Act

Background

We need a strong legislative and regulatory framework to meet the challenges of a warmer, less climatically stable future.

Tasmania's *Climate Change (State Action Act) 2008* is an outdated and ineffectual framework that contains little, other than an antiquated 2050 target¹ and regulations requiring publication of certain information in the state greenhouse gas accounts.²

The Act needs to be replaced with a modern framework with provisions that drive meaningful action.

The Greens' Safe Climate Bill creates a framework for improving Tasmania's responsiveness to climate issues.

Safe Climate Act

A Safe Climate Act will set binding annual emissions reduction targets, including sectoral targets. It will require a plan to meet these targets, a sequestration plan, and an adaptation plan. The Act will also establish a parliamentary Standing Committee on a Safe Climate, and a Safe Climate Commission.

Safe Climate Commission

The Safe Climate Commission is an independent, statutory body with a broad range of advocacy and practical functions. The Commission will have a role in providing advice to the public, industry and government. It will provide feedback and input to comment on government policy and compliance with the Safe Climate Act.

The Commission will also have a broader role engaging with the community and business sectors. Some of the Commission's powers include gathering and publishing emissions data from the highest Tasmanian emitters, developing a range of carbon accreditation standards, and the power to hold citizen juries.

Safe Climate Committee

A Safe Climate standing committee will provide ongoing Parliamentary oversight and leadership on climate related matters, and make recommendations to Parliament.

¹ *Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008*, Tasmania, [Section 5](#).

² *Climate Change (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) Regulations 2012*, Tasmania, [Section 6](#).

The establishment of a standing committee will ensure Parliament always has an entity examining contemporary matters relating to the climate emergency. The committee will examine and report on emissions, policy, and the adequacy of government responses to the climate emergency.

Climate Action

The Safe Climate Act establishes an emissions abatement framework with targets of a 4% reduction every 4 years (approximately 1% per year) for whole-of-state emissions, and for emissions from each sector.

Emissions reduction targets apply to direct emissions and don't count sequestration as a net target does. Additional targets can also be prescribed.

The Tasmania Government would be required to develop an emissions abatement plan, which contains measures to meet the legislated targets.

In order for a government to not introduce measures to meet a target, it would have to show that meeting the target would be unreasonable or unduly harmful. This creates a framework where climate action is the norm, and the onus of proof is on arguing against, not for, emissions reduction.

The Bill also sets a process for developing and updating a plan for carbon stores, to increase the amount of carbon sequestered in Tasmania. The plan relates to soil, vegetation and any other carbon store that may be prescribed.

A carbon store, under the Act, can be an organic or synthetic system. This allows for the framework to adapt to future technologies.

There are also requirements for State, and Local Governments, to develop and review adaptation plans. Adaptation plans must model the impacts of the climate emergency on Tasmania, and contain measures to address these impacts to protect life and property.

The State climate adaptation plan must also assess legislation that may need amendment for the purposes of climate adaptation. The Bill contains provisions to allow a council to request cost recovery for costs associated with the development of municipal climate adaptation plans.