



# SUBMISSION ON “A CLIMATE OF OPPORTUNITY” SUMMIT PAPER

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) welcomes the leadership being shown by the Victorian State Government on climate change. Climate change is already threatening our region and if left unchecked has the potential to devastate our region. We look forward to strong State Government leadership that will help us unlock the renewable energy potential in our region and help our households and businesses become more energy efficient. We also look forward to leadership and support from our State Government to help our communities become more resilient. Energy, along with water, is the bedrock of our communities and we will have to change how these resources are used over the next few years and decades. Resilient communities handle change far better and can develop innovative local solutions.

### 1.1 CVGA – WHO WE ARE

The Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance is one of the oldest and biggest Alliances in the state. Its members are: Buloke Shire, Campaspe Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Ballarat, City of Greater Bendigo, Gannawarra Shire, Hepburn Shire, , Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Northern Grampians Shire, Pyrenees Shire, Rural City of Ararat, Swan Hill Rural City Council, Bendigo Access Employment, Bendigo Bank, Bendigo Health Care Group, La Trobe University, North Central CMA, Origin Energy, University of Ballarat, VLGA and several individuals.

Its vision, established some years ago based on the then climate change science, is for a thriving region that will reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2010 and to zero net emissions by 2020. While this appears to be an ambitious target, the current science indicates that we may need to move even more quickly.

### 1.2 PROCESS FOR MAKING THIS SUBMISSION

The members of the CVGA have been considerably involved in the development of this submission.

- Rebecca Falkingham, Manager Director, Policy and Projects, Office of Climate Change, Department of Premier and Cabinet has briefed us on the Government’s plans for developing its approach to climate change
- We have had a guest speaker giving us the background on emissions trading
- we have brainstormed information to be included in this submission
- And finally, all members have had an opportunity to comment on and improve this submission.

Nevertheless, this submission does not necessarily represent the views of all of the CVGA's members. Getting this level of sign-on would require organisational resources and it was not felt necessary to expend these resources at this stage.

## **2 STRUCTURE OF THIS SUBMISSION**

This submission is divided into three parts:

1. comments and recommendations on the climate change context in which the government should be developing its policies and programs
2. Comments and recommendations on gaps in the summit paper's proposed strategic directions
3. Comments and recommendations on the strategic directions proposed in the Climate of Opportunity Summit Paper.

## **3 CONTEXT FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

The context in which planning for climate change needs to be made clear in terms of urgency, complicating factors and the regulatory and policy environment. The Summit paper has understated the urgency and complexity, particularly in the following areas:

### **3.1 CLIMATE CHANGE AND PEAK OIL – AN INTERTWINED ENERGY EMERGENCY**

Both climate change and peak oil are energy crises and both are going to impact severely on our communities and their resilience: indeed, this impact has already begun. Both crises should have been addressed by detailed planning and action beginning at least 20 years ago.

Even if we very quickly get a replacement for oil, it is likely that this replacement will take far more energy to produce the equivalent of the energy in a barrel of oil than it does now to pump up a barrel of oil (energy returned on energy invested, or EROEI). This means that we not only have to decarbonise our economy, but also to reduce significantly our energy needs and reliance on materials and food that depend on oil. If we just deal with climate change, we could make at least three mistakes:

1. Assume that we have enough oil to help us transition to a low carbon economy, and that we can have an orderly climate change transition. Oil wars and food riots already occurring indicate that we may not have a smooth transition path.
2. Focus on carbon reduction primarily through, eg, bio sequestration or carbon capture and storage rather than developing energy descent strategies as well as carbon descent strategies. Note that energy descent does not imply a reduction in productivity: rather it implies decoupling energy from development and there are many examples around the world where this concept is being demonstrated in ways that bring multiple benefits.
3. Focus on big infrastructure projects rather than encouraging re-localisation which is an essential ingredient of energy descent. For example, water and food captured or grown locally and used locally can significantly reduce energy needs and carbon use while still maintaining a high standard of living. There are many innovative agricultural systems being developed, such as aquaponics, which can apply to local scale food production. Note: some products are better produced on a big scale and greater energy efficiencies can be gained in the production of these products. CVGA is proposing a hard edged look rather than a romantic look at what should be done locally and what is better done on a large scale

### 3.2 WATER AND ENERGY

Water and energy are also closely coupled. It takes energy to pump or desalinate water supply and water to power large -scale coal or nuclear plants and unfortunately Victoria will have less water as a result of climate change. Thus water needs to be a part of any energy planning and given the climate change forecasts for reduced water in catchments as much as possible water should be used locally and for food production. Future energy supplies therefore need to be far less reliant on water than the current energy systems.

### 3.3 CLIMATE CHANGE – EXCEEDING IPCC WORST CASE SCENARIOS

Professor Garnaut’s interim report indicates that many of temperature and sea level rises are tracking on the upper level of the IPCC’s worst case scenarios, and that the emissions during this century are exceeding the worst case IPCC scenario. Unless these disturbing trends are severely curtailed we are in danger of exceeding a 5 degree warming by the end of this century. None of the scenarios available for Victoria appear to reflect the worst -case scenarios. Adaptation planning needs to take into account worst-case scenarios particularly when the science is saying that the worst case scenarios are looking more likely to be accurate than other scenarios. Mitigation strategies need to be applied urgently and widely to reduce the chance of the worst-case scenario becoming the reality for Victorians at the end of this century.

### 3.4 FEDERAL/VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY INTERFACE

Any Victorian State Government action needs to work with Federal Government policies and programs. The intersection between the two levels needs to be spelt out and explained in terms of estimated emissions reductions and impact on our economy and social structures. The paper addresses the Victorian policies and this is useful but only part of the picture. In saying this, it is understood that the federal policies and programs are evolving quickly. However, until it is understood what impact the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and associated complementary programs are estimated to have on our emissions, we cannot know the size of the complementary state measures needed to ensure we mitigate our emissions as urgently as the science indicates.

The Victorian policies and programs also need better communication to the local government level so that they can plan to engage their communities better in any opportunities these policies and programs provide. CVGA, for example, would be interested in hosting state government communications on the VEET scheme.

### 3.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Peak oil and water should be included in climate change action and planning
2. Both mitigation and adaptation should be based on the latest science and updated regularly. The latest indicators suggest a need for faster action than is suggested in the Climate of Opportunity paper.
3. Victorian climate change policies and programs should be clearly linked to Federal Government policies and programs and the interaction between the two clearly spelt out in terms of implications for emissions reductions and opportunities for mitigation.
4. The impact and opportunities of State Government energy and climate policies and programs should be better communicated.

## 4 GAPS IN THE SUMMIT PAPER PROPOSED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The summit paper asked whether all relevant strategic directions had been canvassed. The CVGA feels that the following areas have not been canvassed in the 10 proposed strategic direction.

### 4.1 CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME – ADVOCACY ROLE FOR VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT

The Victorian State Government has a role to play in advocacy on the carbon pollution reduction, as well as developing complementary measures. It needs to ensure that the Carbon pollution reduction scheme and Federal Government complementary measures result in a rapid de-carbonisation of our economy while also reducing our dependence on oil.

#### 4.1.1 SCIENCE BASED TARGETS

The Victorian Government has a role to play in advocating for national greenhouse gas reduction targets that are based on science and which will lead Australia to adapt and innovate to a low carbon economy. It could adapt leading targets itself.

#### 4.1.2 AUCTION PERMITS FUNDING

Local Governments in particular will be dealing with the consequences of failing to mitigate in time as well as with the changes needed to help a rapid mitigation program. They will be dealing with the people whose spending power may be reduced, and the businesses that may fail because they rely on that spending power. They will need to attract business that will thrive in a low carbon economy and maintain services and support to bolster community resilience. The Victorian State Government therefore should be ensuring that money raised through the auctioning of the “permission to pollute” permits should be directed to the provision of infrastructure that will enable people to adjust less painfully to a low carbon and energy economy and to local governments to assist communities make that change.

## 4.2 GOVERNMENT’S ROLE IN INFRASTRUCTURE

### 4.2.1 NOT JUST INDIVIDUAL CHANGES

Many of the proposed strategic directions imply that the government is seeking ways to ensure that individuals change their behaviours, and change these behaviours on a very broad front. Such community and individual development and engagement is very important, but needs to be done within the context of government programs that enable a transition to low carbon and energy lifestyles.

Such programs include rapid improvements in and coverage of:

- Walking, cycling, public transport and rail freight infrastructure
- Urban settlements with low energy use designed in right from the start
- Power transmission networks that are flexible enough to allow embedded local renewable energy and reductions in power lost in transmission
- Broadband speed and connections

- Low energy public housing
- Localised government services, such as health, libraries, youth spaces, education
- Refitting of older houses, particularly for renters
- Programs that identify local energy efficiency and renewable energy potential

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#### 4.2.2 PLANNING

The State Government has a very important role to play in planning and building, a sector that has one of the highest emissions and one that will play a long-term role in the on-going energy use of households. The latest research indicates that the five star rating system is not working - modern houses are using more energy than older houses. The star rating system does not, for example, prohibit down lights – in a display home in Bendigo there were 25 down lights in the garage.

Local Governments are almost powerless to address such issues without a strong planning framework. The State Government should learn from the leadership being displayed in the United Kingdom and require that from 2016 all new homes are energy and water efficient. The State Government can build as examples public housing projects to lead the building industry into the skills needed.

Similarly, strong planning policies need to be developed for subdivisions, enabling local governments to have the legislative backing to require subdivisions that will reduce the energy requirements of their occupants. The State Government's Smart Energy Zone program learnings needs to be built into every subdivision

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#### 4.2.3 ENERGY PLANNING

What will it take to begin de-commissioning coal fuelled power stations? This is a question that the State Government should be addressing. A plan for how this can be achieved should be developed and then be a major guide for programs that lead to a reduction in base load capacity, and an increase in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Market forces can find the cheapest solutions but we need to have a vision of what those solutions need to achieve. This vision and the detail of this vision are currently missing.

Elements of an energy plan could include:

Base Load: The energy plan could start by identifying the major factors that lead to the need for base load power. Such factors could include off-peak water heating, street lighting and industrial processes that could be more efficiently powered through local co-generation plants.

Having identified these factors, it could:

- Identify programs that would lead to the quickest and most efficient way of rolling out programs that lead to the reduction in base load and implement them
- Advocate for improvements to the carbon pollution reduction scheme or the National Energy Market or other blockages to the roll out of such programs
- Inform Victorians of the success of such programs on overall emissions reductions.

Decoupling energy from growth: The plan should identify major drivers that couple energy and growth. Targeted energy efficiency programs can then be developed to assist a transition to growth without energy growth.

Renewable energy: The State Government needs to have a clear goal about the amount of renewable energy that needs to be embedded into the grid to provide energy security, and develop programs to provide this energy. CVGA members indicated that funding for an already rich industry to develop carbon capture and storage should be redirected to developing and commercialising local renewable energy:

- Modelling suggests that local renewable energy projects will create a job base that exceeds the job losses from coal mining
- There are local resources that can be developed for renewable energy with more investment, such as bio energy from waste, carbon sequestering mallee, plantations and algae.

A major investment related to such works will be an upgrade of our grid system. The plan for doing this needs to be developed.

National energy market system failures: There may be adjustments that need to be made to the national energy market to ensure that the industry has incentives for reducing the carbon intensity of the industry and the Victorian State Government could play a lead role in developing the appropriate policies.

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#### 4.2.4 POWER DATA FOR LGAS

Local Governments have great difficulty getting information on how much power is being used by their communities. Planning without information and feedback on the success of programs is very difficult. Without this information it is difficult to inspire communities. The Newcastle Climate Cam cannot be replicated in Victoria. The State Government needs to take a lead role in providing this information or changing the underlying factors to ensure that power companies have incentives to provide this information.

### 4.3 GOVERNANCE

A rapid deployment of energy efficiency, renewable energy and community resilience programs is needed.

A resilient community is one that:

1. has **diversity** in the systems on which it relies – more than one source of food, energy and water, for example
2. Has **redundancy** or modularity in these systems – ie, if electricity is disconnected for some reason, other energy sources are available for high priority uses or a local renewable energy source kicks in to provide the local power.
3. Has fast **feedback loops** that enable its leaders and community members to detect quickly a problem with any important system and to react quickly to fix any problems. eg, power data for local communities and government.

All of the above rely on well networked communities and community leaders who have good communications and trust developed between them and who have worked together to develop innovation local solutions.

The Climate of Opportunities paper does not address any governance models for how these programs will be delivered.

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#### 4.3.1 ALL OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE SUPPORTED BY A CARBON NEUTRAL BUDGET

A first step is for the State Government to have a very clear structure and direction on how it will deal with climate change and peak oil. At the moment, from an outside perspective, it is difficult to understand which department is doing the actual planning and delivery of energy planning, efficiency and renewable energy programs and whether the programs have a common vision of what is needed to be achieved.

The State Government budget should only accept submissions from departments that clearly show that they are emissions neutral or are an investment in providing services that will enable communities to be more resilient.

Communication on climate change and peak oil will be an important part of the state government's role. As polls and the Federal election show, many people and organisations are concerned about climate change. However, while we may no longer be in denial about climate change, we are apparently in denial about the impact this will have on our lives. There will be changes beyond swapping light bulbs and turning off switches, and some of these changes will be challenging and take people out of their comfort zone. Local governments will be at the forefront of managing this change but State Government will need to be providing clear messages on impacts and how they will be managed. The recent political response on the rising cost of petrol has done little to prepare us for a future of increasing oil prices and the same mistake should not be repeated with climate change.

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#### 4.3.2 SECTOR AGREEMENTS BETWEEN STATE GOVERNMENT AND MAJOR SECTORS

The South Australian Government is developing sector agreements with major sectors, including local governments, which identify its responsibilities in helping that sector to mitigate and adapt, and the responsibilities of that sector. British Columbia has done a similar thing. The Victorian State Government may want to explore this form of governance as a way of achieving more efficient action on climate change.

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#### 4.3.3 PROGRAMS NOT PILOT FUNDING

Investing in a low carbon and energy future will take government funding. It will require that programs complementary to the ETS are funded on an ongoing basis, not just as pilots. Pilot or grant based funding take a lot of effort for organisations to apply and administer (reporting requirements add to the burden) and programs that develop promising networks and early action lose momentum by start-stop funding. The good news is that Government funding can leverage enormous community work. The Castlemaine 500 project has resulted in community groups starting in Maldon and Kyabram, for example. Initial funding provided an example and an opportunity for these groups to coalesce around an issue.

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#### 4.3.4 THE RIGHT RISK MANAGEMENT

Climate change, peak oil and water means that more than ever governments, businesses and communities will have to work together to create new ways of doing things that at the moment we can't imagine. Each of these groups can bring quite a different perspective on how to develop innovative solutions, and that diversity of views and knowledge is a strength (resilience principle 1 – see 4.3 above). However, both businesses and governments often bring a narrow focus on risk to the table. What is the financial risk of doing this, what are the political risks, for example. Research has shown that government advisors and politicians believe that they are more progressive than their constituents or the public but often are not. They therefore propose solutions that are more conservative than the public would accept. Government grants and program applications can take a long time to put together because of an emphasis on risk, and then once agreed become rigid project

management tools. Quick feedback loops (resilience principle 3) that suggest projects and programs need to be changed can be ignored in order to meet rigid project milestones. Somehow a command and control system that is often built deep into government programs needs to be able to work with a more nimble approach that is needed for us all to work out new ways of living.

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#### 4.3.5 LGAS HAVE A ROLE IN MORE THAN ADAPTATION

The roles assigned to local governments in the summit paper appear to revolve around information dissemination, planning for climate impacts on council and community infrastructure and preparing for emergencies from flooding and drought. The role should go far beyond this. Local governments can and do:

- identify renewable energy resources and lead in the provision of them
- have strong trusted networks with local businesses and communities and can help them develop energy efficiency measures
- have trusted networks with the social organisations and provide support to those people who may be impacted by rising prices
- encourage local resilience through the provision of spaces and support for community development and innovation
- develop local transport planning and improve walking and cycling facilities and culture
- Provide leadership and visioning on how our communities can thrive in a very changed world.

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#### 4.3.6 REGIONAL STRENGTHS

The Government should be considering what governance structure is necessary to provide the support for local governments to carry out the roles identified above, and to ensure a rapid deployment of energy efficiency, renewable energy and resilience programs.

It could do this by providing a significant increase in funding to local governments, sourced possibly from the auctioning of “permission to pollute” permits.

It could also seek to get regional synergies by funding regional programs. The Greenhouse Alliances have been modelling such a governance structure and future regional organisations could be based on some of the learnings from the Greenhouse Alliances and other regional alliances.

### 4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The CVGA recommends that as part of developing its responses to climate change the State Government:

1. Institutes a whole of government response to climate change
2. Ensures that the State Government budget invests far more in a lower carbon and energy future.
3. Leads Australians to a future that may be quite different from today’s lifestyles.
4. Develops an energy plan for Victoria that will lead to the closing of coal fuelled power stations

5. Develops an appropriately funded governance structure that will lead to the rapid uptake of renewable energy, energy efficiency and community resilience projects.

## 5 SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following comments are offered on the specific strategic directions set out in the summit paper. The strategic directions overlap to some extent and so comments offered in one section may well apply to other sections.

### 5.1 POSITIONING VICTORIAN INDUSTRY TO CAPITALISE ON THE NEW JOBS, NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND NEW MARKETS THAT WILL FLOW FROM THE TRANSITION TO THE LOW CARBON ECONOMY.

*Ensuring Victoria is well placed to benefit from the global transition to low carbon economies through a solid skills base and research and development capacity that will support the development of new industries.*

- identify renewable energy opportunities (eg, fuel from algae, bioenergy), and particularly those that have can resolve several problems at the same time, for example improving farm resilience, improving local food supplies, increasing local energy security). Invest in the development of these.
- Work with all levels of education to identify the skills needed in a low carbon and energy economy, and support these organisations to change curriculum as needed
- Identify particular sectors that may need to change the most (eg farmers) and identify the skills they will need and work with educational organisations and trade associations to help develop the needed skill set.
- Work where appropriate at a regional level to create regional innovation and synergies

### 5.2 SUPPORTING AN EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME WITH COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES THAT SMOOTH THE TRANSITION FOR THE VICTORIAN ECONOMY (INCLUDING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE).

*Supporting the development of an Australian emissions trading scheme through complementary measures that address price issues, encourage energy efficiency and less energy use, and support low emissions technology research.*

- Recognise that ETS is only one of the structures needed to address climate change and that it is not the main or only instrument needed. The Europeans have developed a good framework of what is needed.
- Advocate to ensure that the ETS will maximise emissions reductions
- Advocate for science based emissions targets.
- ensure that an ETS rewards innovation as well as carbon reduction
- Ensure that local communities and farmers can benefit from the ETS by being able to sell carbon credits. Ensure that communities and sectors understand the new markets.
- Research soil carbon for inclusion in future carbon market off-setting programs
- Ensure continued support for programs that have been working in the past but now need to ramp up significantly. For example, the minimum energy standards for appliances needs to be extended to many more commercial and household appliances
- Invest in low energy and water city and town design
- provide incentives for people who rent out houses to ensure that they are energy efficient

- Increase the supply of housing available for low income households.
- Invest in public transport within cities and between towns and cities. Invest in rail freight.
- Support an Australia wide requirement that new houses will need to be energy and water self-sufficient by 2016. Identify the underlying systems that may block this sort of development and work to overcome these barriers.

### 5.3 PURSUING COST EFFECTIVE EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS IN SECTORS OF THE VICTORIAN ECONOMY NOT COVERED BY THE ETS.

*Pursuing actions that seek emissions reductions from sectors not covered by the national emissions trading scheme, including research and development and participation in carbon offset credit schemes.*

- recognise that most of Victoria's businesses will not be covered by an ETS, especially at first, and continue and increase all state government programs that promote energy efficiency.
- Educate communities on how the various state government programs and policies work and can be accessed. eg, how will local governments engage on the VEET scheme?
- roll out energy efficiency programs in a way that is sustainable to the organisations running the programs (ie, not grant driven)
- provide education and support on the developing carbon off set market to ensure that people know how best to participate in the market
- Ensure that energy efficiency programs deal not just with electricity reductions but also fuel reductions. For example, encouraging local food production will reduce transport costs for communities and will have the double benefit of assisting low income families.
- Increase the VRET target

### 5.4 ENSURING THE CONTINUED SECURITY, EFFICIENCY AND AFFORDABILITY OF VICTORIA'S ENERGY SUPPLIES BY ENCOURAGING LOW-EMISSION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY OPTIONS.

*Encouraging the Victorian energy sector to take up low emissions and renewable energy options through actions to remove red tape and support for research and development in new technologies to support this goal.*

- Increase the MRET/VRET targets – the demand for green power exceeds the amount being produced.
- Put funds into renewable energy not carbon capture and storage.
- Improve the security by placing a priority on renewable energy systems that are embedded locally and require little water to run
- Develop bio energy potential in the regions and integrate it with farming and waste
- Support the development of non-food source transport bio fuels, through, eg, investment in algae sourced fuel
- Improve the current feed-in-tariff to one that truly supports the investment by individuals in renewable energy
- Develop guidelines that will assist local groups to develop their own community-owned energy and identify and remove barriers to such community owned energy.
- Develop an energy plan for the State and for regions
- provide data on how much energy is being used at a level that will assist community planning

- Require that power distribution companies must accept power from local renewable energy generators, even if it means upgrading lines and other infrastructure. Develop the policies and funding arrangements that would allow this to happen
- Develop incentives in the national energy market for power distributors to act on environmental and security grounds, not maintaining a supply basis

#### 5.5 ASSISTING HOUSEHOLDS TO ADJUST TO THE RISING COST OF ELECTRICITY, FUEL AND OTHER COMMODITIES.

*Ensuring that price impacts of the ETS will be minimised for households through continued actions to encourage reductions in household energy use and targeted energy efficiency measures to low income households.*

- Invest in public transport and increasing the housing stock for people on low incomes
- Regulate for improved housing energy standards and appliance energy standards
- Legislate to ensure that households and businesses receive information that is immediately accessible to them on the energy they are using
- Roll out programs in priority household improvements necessary to reduce energy consumption – eg, insulation, thermometers, sealing. Ensure that the organisations responsible for rolling out these programs are funded appropriately.
- Roll out behaviour change programs based on the considerable learnings from pilot projects
- Establish programs that will assist householders regain lost skills in growing food in a water and energy reduced way
- Target sectors that have connections to low income households and provide them with training and funds to carry out programs to help these households reduce their energy needs
- Facilitate bulk buying of materials that will reduce energy costs – eg, insulation, renewable energy, light bulbs
- Cross-subsidise low energy users by charging high energy users more.
- regulate energy efficiency standards for rental homes
- improve the star rating for new homes so that they actually reduce their energy consumption
- improve state planning policies and frameworks to ensure that new developments minimise energy needs

#### 5.6 INCREASING OUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND ADAPTIVE NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES.

*Making sound decisions by being better informed of potential climate impacts and responses, and gaining a better understanding of what can drive Victorians to change their behaviour in regards to energy and transport use.*

- Keep updating the research and provide updates based on the latest science
- Facilitate regional seminars
- Provide information on the risks if we are facing the increasingly likely “worst-case” scenario
- Facilitate the provision of space and a supportive community of practice for those towns and communities who are developing transition plans of some sort. Publicise these to other towns. Do not try to control this process through the usual bureaucratic reporting requirements.

- Provide a clear and consistent and science based message to the public on the likely impact of climate change
- Provide Victorians with appropriate choices (public transport, walking, cycling networks and energy efficient housing) to help them reduce their energy needs.
- Provide good leadership as the realities of the scale of change needed start impacting on householders. Do not go to water as prices rise but keep the focus on the opportunities and the need.

## 5.7 INCREASING THE CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE OF THE STATE'S REGIONS AND COMMUNITIES.

*Assisting communities and regions adapt to changes and be prepared for high risk events that are linked to climate change, such as drought, flood, bushfire and changes to water supply.*

- Develop a clear understanding of resilience with LGAs and explain this understanding
- Roll out a detailed risk assessment process for all councils and major businesses
  - use a common process that involves the community and a common template so that regional approaches can be identified
- Provide funding to local governments to assist in the adaption and communication that will be necessary
- Help communities adapt to fewer recreational facilities through the development of alternative recreational facilities.
- Be clear about the level of change needed. Adaptation strategies need to be flexible enough to build on for a 2 degrees warming, then a four degrees warming. Actions that adapt to a 2 degrees warming should not stop further adaptation.
- Help LGAs and communities understand that climate change, peak oil and water will lead to many changes and that they can have power over how they adapt to those changes. Some changes, for example, will be reduced spending power in towns (rising petrol and financial costs) which may lead to impact on businesses. Bring the community together to solve this sort of risk.

## 5.8 ASSISTING OUR NATURAL ASSETS AND ECOSYSTEMS TO DEAL WITH THE PRESSURES AND CHALLENGES THAT CLIMATE CHANGE WILL BRING.

*Protecting our ecosystems by increasing the resilience of our natural assets where possible and ensuring our response to climate change recognises our broad environmental goals.*

- Refer to the State Government's current green paper process on biodiversity and climate change
- Encourage carbon sequestration that supports bio diversity
- Promote linkages of bio diversity to enable species to move in response to climate change
- Ensure that plantings are designed to survive in the "worst-case" scenario

## 5.9 SUPPORTING VICTORIAN INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO GET ACTIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE.

*Fostering opportunities for Victorian communities to take action toward a low carbon future through neighbourhood groups and networks, and empowering individuals to make a real contribution to solving climate change.*

- Provide some base funding to local action groups, along the lines of Landcare
- Roll out programs, not highly competitive grants

- Provide a community of support via information, bulk buying assistance, networking, without imposing bureaucratic structures that waste group energy and reduce innovative thinking
- Listen to opportunities that such groups identify and develop appropriate support for innovative ideas.
- provide a one stop shop for programs and grants
- identify common approaches taken by the groups and develop support for these common approaches
- require that all funded activities have quick feedback loops to keep them nimble to changes needed

#### 5.10 ENSURING VICTORIA CONTINUES TO PLAY A PROACTIVE ROLE IN GLOBAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE.

*Fostering collaboration and partnerships across business, governments and the wider Victorian community to ensure high-level engagement and whole of community partnerships for action on climate change.*

- Develop appropriate governance structures.