

# Climate Change Act 2017: Overview

## Fact Sheet

On 23 February 2017, the Climate Change Bill 2016 was passed by the Victorian Parliament to create a new Climate Change Act, positioning Victoria as a leader in climate change action.

**The *Climate Change Act 2017* will commence operation on 1 November 2017.**

The *Climate Change Act 2017* provides Victoria with a world-leading legislative foundation to manage climate change risks, maximise the opportunities that arise from decisive action, and drive Victoria's transition to a net zero emissions, climate resilient community and economy.

The Act sets out a clear policy framework and a pathway to 2050 that is consistent with the Paris Agreement to keep global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It provides a platform for subsequent action by government, community and business and the long-term perspective and policy stability needed to drive innovation and investment.

The Act gives effect to the majority of the commitments set out in the Victorian Government Response to the 2015 Independent Review of the *Climate Change Act 2010*.

### Details of the Act:

- **Long-term target:** A long-term emissions reduction target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a duty on the Premier and the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change to ensure it is met. This is consistent with the Paris Agreement and with the steps being taken by comparable jurisdictions including ACT, SA, NSW and many other governments internationally.
- **Interim targets:** The Premier and the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change set five-yearly interim targets to ensure Victoria remains on track to meet the long-term target. These will commence from the 2021-2025 period.

- **Policy Objectives and Guiding Principles:** A new set of policy objectives and an updated set of guiding principles to help embed climate change into government decision making, and to inform action taken under the Act.
- **Climate Change Strategy:** A Victorian Climate Change Strategy will be required every five years to set out how Victoria will meet its emissions reduction targets, adapt to the impacts of climate change, and transition to a net zero emissions future.
- **Adaptation Action Plans:** System-based Adaptation Action Plans to be prepared by nominated Ministers for key systems (for example, primary production, transport, water cycle, etc.) that are either vulnerable to the inevitable impacts of climate change, or essential to ensure Victoria is better prepared.
- **Pledges:** A pledging model to reduce emissions from state and local government's own operations as well as from key emitting sectors of the economy (for example, energy, waste and land use).
- **Information and reporting:** A system of periodic reporting to provide transparency, accountability and ensure the community remains informed.  
This introduces:
  - Standalone reports on the science and data relevant to climate change in Victoria;
  - Annual greenhouse gas emissions reporting; and
  - Assessment reports at the end of each interim target period.
- **Carbon sequestration rights:** Retains the existing legislative framework for the recognition of forestry rights, soil carbon rights and carbon sequestration rights on public and private land in Victoria.
- **Environment Protection Act 1970:** To enable the Environment Protection Authority to regulate the emission or discharge of greenhouses gas substances to contribute to the long-term target and interim targets as directed by the government of the day.

### More information

The *Climate Change Act 2017* is available on the Victorian Legislation website:  
<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>