

# Review of Tasmania's Climate Change Act

## Public Consultation on the proposed amendments to the Act – Stage 3

### Submission by Anthony Forman

Although not an expert on climate change, I am a retired CSIRO senior principal research scientist and long-standing consultant to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. I understand the science behind climate change projections and the threat that climate change represents to the wellbeing of humanity.

I wish to firstly congratulate the Tasmanian Government on the progress made to date through the initiatives of the Climate Change Action Plan. Climate change is a global phenomenon and is already having an effect, with average temperatures increased about 1°C, on higher temperature extremes and erratic weather events. Some would argue that each country should strive to meet obligations for climate change mitigation to an extent in proportion to their share of the global human population. This is unrealistic. Many developing countries foresee the need for increasing energy use and have neither the technology nor the financial means to invest in renewable energy or other means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Australia and other OECD countries must accept that they have the means to reduce greenhouse gas emission and indeed have also been historically jointly responsible for the greater part of climate change emissions. Regions within countries have natural resources that enable them to better contribute to the global effort and Tasmania, with our current renewable energy resources and potential for increasing them, must recognise an obligation to utilise our advantages to the good of humanity.

**Recommendation 1** identifies the need under the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels. There was in fact an aspirational target of a 1.5°C limit. I believe the evidence is abundant in climate change effects that the world is already experiencing, that there are very good reasons for trying to meet this lower target, with benefits detailed in the IPCC Special Report on *Global Warming of 1.5°C*. I suggest that this should be identified in the preamble to the Proposed amendment. If this is highlighted, then I believe that the **Proposed amendment**, as drafted, is appropriate.

**Recommendation 2** is directed toward rationalising the text of the Act to improve clarity. I agree with the recommendation and believe that the **Proposed amendment** is appropriate.

**Recommendation 3** is directed to requiring State agencies and Departments to consider the impact of climate change in relation to relevant decisions made. This is commendable. However, to give it full effect, I suggest that the **Proposed amendment**, not yet drafted should be worded such that 'Tasmanian Government agencies **are required to** consider the target....' , rather than the stated proposal of 'should consider...'.

**Recommendation 4**, proposing amendment of the Act to include a set of principles, is appropriate. I support the **proposed amendment**.

**Recommendation 5** is proposing, *inter alia*, to disregard the recommendation of the independent review for the climate change action plan to be a statutory requirement. I believe that making it a statutory requirement strengthens commitment to the process. The fact that changes to action planning cannot realistically be linked to four-year parliamentary terms is not critical. Accepting that long timeframes are required for results to be realised does not obviate the benefits of making the plan a statutory requirement. I suggest that the ***proposed amendment*** be changed to accept the recommendations of the independent review.

Anthony Forman