

**Submission
No 76**

INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE (NET ZERO FUTURE) BILL 2023

Organisation: 1 Million Women

Date Received: 25 October 2023



Wednesday 25 October 2023

Attention: Portfolio Committee No. 7 - Planning and Environment

Introduction:

We are 1 Million Women - a global movement of over a million women (across our social media channels) acting on climate through the way we live. We empower women to cut carbon in their daily lives and to influence others to do the same. We have been awarded by the United Nations for the work we do.

We engage women of all ages and backgrounds and our aim is to reach more and more women who aren't engaged in daily climate action yet. Our theory of change is if women act in their everyday lives, no matter how small the action, they will feel empowered. This creates optimism which inspires more action. Over 40% of our members live in NSW, so the emissions reduction targets that the NSW government commits to have a great implication for our community. In a 2022 survey, 88% of our respondents were extremely concerned about the impacts of climate change and wanted to see strong and immediate climate action. A further 10% were concerned.

Our latest campaign 1MREADY focuses on three key things that we see as having the greatest impact over the coming years for our movement - 1) to empower women to electrify their homes and take our community on a household transformation journey to help us all move beyond coal, oil and gas, 2) to give women the confidence to engage with their local politicians on climate and topics such as electrification; and 3) to educate women to use and invest their money for the good of the environment by making choices that are good for both consumers and the climate.

Reducing our global emissions needs the biggest collaborative effort from every sector of society and so we thank the committee for giving us the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation. It is encouraging to see that the bill makes explicit reference to a clean, healthy, sustainable environment and we'd like to see NSW achieve this.

1 Million Women strongly support legislating ambitious climate targets in NSW, and welcome the NSW Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023, however would like to see the bill strengthened in the following ways:

- Global warming is accelerating and we are due to tip over the 1.5 degrees threshold as early as 2027. The proposed targets are not in line with the science-based targets. To achieve the goal of keeping warming below 1.5 degrees, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in [the latest IPCC report](#) that leaders of developed countries must commit to reaching net-zero as close as possible to 2040. In a recent report, the Climate Council laid out [an actionable plan](#) to reduce emissions by 75 percent below 2005 levels

by 2030 and reach net zero by 2035. Considering these targets, the NSW Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023 needs to set stronger targets to align. The risks that climate change poses to NSW and the planet more broadly are too high to not take action in line with the science.

- There is opportunity for more ambition as there is cross-party support in the NSW parliament for a stronger emissions reduction target. The previous NSW Government had a stronger (but not legislated) target of 70% emissions reduction on 2005 levels by 2035, while the NSW Greens support a target of net zero by 2035.
- We want to make sure the NSW Government does not underestimate the power of households' action to electrify their homes as a key contribution to emissions reduction. Financial incentives to assist households are needed to accelerate this and should be included in this Bill. This includes incentives for electrification improvements like induction cooktops, household solar and storage batteries, heat pumps, etc. To ensure an equitable transition, financial incentives from the government will support lower income households making the transition and also investment in electrification for social housing will be the most financially viable as our grid becomes more and more renewable.
- Furthermore to accelerate this transition there needs to be more public education campaigns on why and how NSW residents must electrify our homes so people of all circumstances can be confident they are making the right choices.
- The bill should aim to embed action to address climate change as a core feature of all government decision making, and include requirements that climate impacts are considered in all government policy and decisions. One potential model is Part 3 of the Victorian Climate Change Act.
- To reach a net zero future there must be no new coal or gas projects being approved in NSW. This bill must stipulate that.
- We suggest reducing the time period for the Minister to respond to a report or recommendation of the Net Zero Commission to a maximum of three months in all circumstances. This will ensure that advice of the Net Zero Commission is considered and acted on in a timely manner.
- The NSW Government needs to focus on growing the [clean economy workforce](#) by investing in the upskilling of tradespeople in electrification and the renewable energy sector to help support NSW's decarbonising goals and Net Zero future. This enhanced industry coordination and advocacy for workforce development would allow us to meet the demand for electrification in households for example and can empower students, graduates and experienced workers to find their role in NSW's clean economy workforce.



We are also pleased to see that the NSW Legislative Assembly is currently conducting an inquiry into a NSW Opposition bill to ban offshore oil and gas exploration and related onshore infrastructure. 1 Million Women have put in a submission for that inquiry and see both these inquiries working together. Government support for a ban on offshore oil and gas exploration in NSW would send a clear signal that the Government is genuinely committed to action on climate change.

Conclusion:

1 Million Women want to see the legislating of ambitious climate action at a state level and so we are thankful for the opportunity to feed into the inquiry process and the development of the NSW Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023. We'd appreciate the chance to appear in front of the committee on the points made in our submission. By strengthening this bill the NSW government has a real opportunity to be a climate leader and achieve a Net Zero Future.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Briana Kennedy
1 Million Women Head of Campaigns

Natalie Isaacs
1 Million Women Founder and CEO