

**Submission  
No 80**

## **INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE (NET ZERO FUTURE) BILL 2023**

**Organisation:** Boundless Earth

**Date Received:** 25 October 2023

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## Submission to the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Bill 2023

### About Boundless Earth

Boundless Earth's mission is to ensure Australia is on track to become a renewable energy superpower by 2030. Our purpose is to accelerate climate solutions at the scale and speed required for Australia to have a globally significant impact on averting the climate crisis. We deploy philanthropy, investment and direct advocacy. Boundless Earth is a non profit organisation backed by Mike Cannon Brookes as part of his \$1.5B climate pledge committed in 2021.

Boundless Earth welcomes the legislation of climate targets in NSW and the opportunity to provide a submission about how the Climate Change (Net Zero Futures) Bill 2023 ('the Bill') could be further strengthened to ensure NSW accelerates action on climate change.

### Key points

Legislating climate targets is an important and welcome step for NSW. However, the Bill needs strengthening to ensure NSW's climate ambition progresses. We also believe that current targets and programs should not be weakened or delayed while the infrastructure of the Bill (including the Net Zero Commission) is established.

### Strengthening the Bill

We recommend the Bill should be strengthened in the ways described below.

**Recommendation 1:** Legislate the existing 2035 NSW climate target of 70% emissions reduction. This target has cross party support in the NSW Parliament and not legislating it would be a backwards step in terms of the NSW Government's climate change ambition and commitment to action.

**Recommendation 2:** Add a mechanism to independently review and ratchet emissions reduction targets and carbon budgets. These tasks should be done by the Commission as soon as it is established and then updated periodically. For example, the Victorian [Climate Change Act 2017](#) requires the Government to review and ratchet emission reduction targets for each five year period, and a similar approach could be taken in NSW and expanded to the carbon budgeting process.

**Recommendation 3:** The Bill should also embed the requirement for climate action and emissions reduction in other relevant NSW legislation and regulations. Climate change should be a core consideration of all government decision making. One potential model is Part 3 of the Victorian Climate Change Act, which embeds climate considerations into seven other acts.

**Recommendation 4:** The functions of the Net Zero Commission should be amended to explicitly require the Commission to:

- Develop and set sectoral emissions reduction targets and carbon budgets (based on the best available climate science), with annual emissions reduction goals; monitor progress towards those targets; and provide advice on the gap between how government programs and activities are (or are not) delivering the requisite emissions reduction. Should the emissions reduction be insufficient to meet the legislated targets, the Commission should report on the gap and provide advice on what needs to be done to meet this gap. For example expanding existing programs and adding new programs in sectors that have little programmatic or policy support to encourage climate action.
- Receive reports from NSW government departments on how regulation, policies and programs within portfolios align with their respective sectoral emission reduction targets, with the Commission required to advise the government on where the gaps are.

- Provide advice on all new emissions intensive developments (such as fossil fuel projects) and emission reducing development (such as renewables, industrial and transport decarbonisation projects).

## Don't wait to act

**Recommendation 5:** The establishment of the Commission should not delay the NSW Government taking immediate and ambitious climate action. This should include (and go beyond what was pledged by NSW Labor in the lead up to the NSW election):

- A. Extending, expanding and accelerating existing NSW Government Programs such as Renewable Energy Zones, the Developing Renewable and Low Carbon Manufacturing Industries in NSW Program, various industrial decarbonisation programs, the electric bus strategy, solar schools and more.
- B. Establishing new programs and policies particularly in relation to:
  - a. Household electrification. Given we are in a cost of living crisis and that supporting households to go solar and electrify is one of the best ways for them to reduce their bills, without impacting on quality of life, a substantial government program supporting household electrification would have high impact. See Boundless' proposed Electrification for All policy proposal [here](#).
  - b. Methane emissions reduction. Rapid methane emissions reductions this decade are crucial to avoid climate tipping points, and methane must therefore be treated separately to CO2 in the sectoral emissions reductions targets.
  - c. Accelerating decarbonisation of the electricity sector and the phase out of coal power. As the first and largest sector to decarbonise, we suggest the NSW Government focus on the reliable build out of large scale renewable energy, transmission as well as consumer energy resources and demand response. A [Joint Statement](#) from the Smart Energy Council, Climate Energy Finance, Clean Energy Investor Group and Nexa Advisory provides ideas for how the NSW Government can do this (and avoid extending the closure date of the Eraring Coal Fired Power Station). The Queensland Government recently tabled its [Climate Transition Bill 2023](#) which would mandate an end to coal power and an 80% renewable energy target by 2035.
  - d. Supporting electric vehicle uptake and charger roll out..

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission. For further information please contact Nicky Ison, Head of Direct Advocacy, at

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