

**Submission  
No 86**

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

**Name:** Dr Jai Allison  
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To the Committee,

As a resident of regional NSW who holds a PhD in community resilience, a bachelor of Environmental Engineering with decades of experience working with various clients and partners (including Gladstone Shire Council) to plan for climate change adaptation and the transition to net zero emissions I feel well positioned to give advice on the matters addressed in the Climate Change (Net Zero Futures) Bill 2023.

My suggestions are that Part 2, Guiding principles, targets and objectives should be amended so that the emission reduction targets are aligned to; (i) scientific understanding of existing and projected impacts of climate change on NSW's social, environmental and economic systems, (ii) the costs of building NSW's resilience to climate change and (iii) the economic loss from not leading the transition to net zero.

The science is clear that climate change impacts and NSW's need to adapt indicate the real and present costs of inaction far outweigh the potential economic and social costs of rushed and poor action. In this instance, the planning window has been decades, the options are clear, continuing to stall action only delays and amplifies the costs of inaction. It is clear NSW needs political leadership.

The technologies, policies, strategies and actions needed to make this transition are well established, the biggest remaining question is which jurisdictions are going to capitalise on the advantage of leading the change. NSW could reap the multifaceted benefits of moving towards net zero, whilst building resilience and exporting the knowledge services and products gained through a well managed transition to net Zero. To do this we must be ambitious and use our means of governance to attract the investment as well as the talent needed to achieve it.

Not only do the costs of building resilience increases non-linearly, but every year of delay also sees us miss opportunities for investment, innovation and development. The many economic, social as well as environmental benefits that will be realised if NSW positions itself as a leader in *the race to net zero emissions* require ambitious targets. Hence,

- (a) the 2030 target should be set at 73% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and
- (b) the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions be brought forward to June 30th 2040.

Part 2, The guiding principles of the bill and the net zero commission should be amended so that:

(a) the principle of inter-generational equity be included. An example wording for this principle could be: "action to address climate change be required to consider the impact of significant decisions on the health, wellbeing and potential livelihoods of current and future NSW children." Equally, the bill should include a provision that any decisions that significantly impact the net zero targets (that is, decisions whose outcomes will contribute to increased greenhouse gases, or the environment's ability to draw-down greenhouse gases) should consider the health, wellbeing and potential livelihoods of current and future NSW children.

(b) the objective for adaptation to a changing climate being incorporated into all parliamentary and government decision making. Meaning the bill should be amended to include a section that outlines the interconnections between decision making under other legislation and its influence on NSW's potential to "be more resilient to a changing climate." This section must indicate how

other legislative, regulatory and operational decision making by the parliament consider whether the results of any and all decisions will (i) contribute to reducing emissions in line with the reduction targets, and (ii) whether the outcomes from a decision will increase or reduce NSW's climate change resilience. The costs and benefits of any decision's impact on NSW's ability to

(c) a principle of distinction be included to distinguish between zero sum greenhouse gas emission accounting and the additional value generated by; (i) eliminating greenhouse gas emissions rather than offsetting them, and/or (ii) locally traded offsets that provide environmental, social and economic value (such as biodiversity, environmental services, social impacts and the like).

Part 2, Guiding principle number (7), "Action to address climate change should involve appropriate consultation with affected person, communities and stakeholders." Should be amended to stipulate:

"The existential threat posed by climate change to all species in NSW, requires that all people and legal entities have a right to be informed about, consulted on and actively participate in decision making about action (and inaction) to address climate change. The commission should investigate and develop methods to empower NSW's people, communities and stakeholders to take action and inform its agenda according to the principles of participatory democracy."

If there is a need for me to provide further evidence at a hearing or in another format please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Dr Jai Allison