

VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE ALLIANCES ADVOCACY POSITIONS 2024-25: SUMMARY

#	Issue	Outcomes Sought	Government Policy / Opportunity	Activities	Partners
1	Federal climate policy and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the national emissions reduction target to be consistent with latest science • Strengthen existing policy frameworks and support the implementation of new complementary policies to ensure interim and long-term targets can be met • Establish a vertically integrated climate policy framework that enables the three tiers of government to work in partnership around shared objectives and to develop a multi-level governance approach, working collaboratively for the same outcomes • Allocate sufficient funding for mitigation and adaptation measures at the local government level, based on shared objectives and the latest evidence base • Develop no new domestic oil, coal or gas projects and ensure a staged phase out of all fossil fuel extraction, production and export • Cease all Federal subsidies, spending and tax breaks for fossil fuel industries • Encourage a robust local offset market that prioritises drawdown of greenhouse gas emissions and maximises co-benefits for First Nations and regional communities and supports compliance schemes (without compromising carbon budgets) • Ensure all voluntary action taken to reduce emissions is additional to Australia's international obligations and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) • Provide a legislated and funded package of policy solutions that will transform Australia into a world leader in clean exports and manufacturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Energy Innovation Fund • ACCU Scheme and Safeguard Mechanism • GreenPower Review • Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Review • National Energy Performance Strategy (NEPS) • Australia's Long Term Emissions Reduction Plan • National Hydrogen Strategy • Future Fuels and Vehicles Strategy • Modern Manufacturing Strategy • AEMO Integrated System Plan • National Energy Productivity Strategy • Second National Action Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework • National Adaptation Plan • National Net Zero 2050 Plan • National Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements • Climate Change Act 2022 • National Disaster Risk Recovery Arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions • Direct engagement with the Minister for the Environment and local MPs or other relevant people/agencies • Co-design concepts for the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) implementation • Promotion of opportunities for Australia to host COP31 • Engagement with National Adaptation Policy Office • Engagement with the Net Zero Economy Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV, DEECA, SV, SEC, ALGA • Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew • Climate Emergency Australia • Better Futures Australia • ICLEI • ClimateWorks • Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding for local governments to undertake proactive asset betterment, to build back better after disaster events • Amend the Climate Change Act 2022 to include objectives, principles and processes to guide a fair, equitable and inclusive transition to net zero emissions, and adapt to the climate change impacts already locked in 			
2	National energy market reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the proposed changes to the National Electricity Objective (NEO) adequately embed environmental and social outcomes • Remove regulatory barriers and support research and development to ensure rapid integration of renewable and distributed energy resources (e.g geothermal) • Provide support for new and emerging business models and technologies, such as local electricity trading • Empower energy users to reduce consumption through greater transparency in billing • Ensure equitable tariffs for electricity use • Develop models to facilitate integrated planning between energy network planners and council land use planners • Encourage investment in energy resilience via incentives for renewable energy storage • Extend and strengthen the Renewable Energy Target and programs that enable communities to access clean power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule change proposals to Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) • Essential Services Commission (ESC) inquiries and price reviews • Australian Energy Regulator (AER) regulatory processes • Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) • GreenPower Review • AEMO Integrated System Plan • National Energy Productivity Strategy • National Energy Performance Strategy (NEPS) • National Net Zero 2050 Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions • Coordinated engagement and lobbying with other Alliances and Councils • Formal representation on Ausnet Service Customer Consultative Committee • Cross sector workshops with Victorian energy distributors (DNSPs) • Technology specific regulation (i.e geothermal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew, One Million Homes Alliance • Energy Consumers Australia • DNSPs • Total Environment Centre • Climate Emergency Australia

3	Incentives and regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory energy disclosure and efficiency standards for commercial and residential buildings at point of sale and lease • Immediate introduction of minimum energy efficiency standards in rental properties, protections for renters and compliance schemes • Mandatory fuel efficiency and emission standards for light and heavy vehicles • Financial support and other assistance for businesses to undertake emission reduction actions, particularly to enable landlords to work with tenants • Stringent emission standards on coal fired generators and prohibit use of carbon capture and storage to meet emission standards • Funded energy efficiency programs for low-income housing public/community/social housing and rental housing, where appropriate, designed and delivered in collaboration with local government • Scale-up private sector investment in renewable energy projects and initiatives that fast-track decarbonisation of the grid • Support for local government electrification initiatives • Remove regulatory and market barriers to electrification of households and businesses • Energy retailers to be required to provide additional support to customers from culturally diverse backgrounds, including energy bill information that is easier to understand, improved interpreter services and information provision in languages other than English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Energy Efficiency Target • Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program consultations • National Construction Code • National Australian Built Environment Rating System • Victorian Environment Protection Action 1970 and Regulations • State Government election and budget • Victoria's 'Big Build' social housing program • - • Product Emissions Standards Act 2017 • National Energy Performance Strategy (NEPS) • Future Fuels and Vehicles Strategy • Trajectory for Low Energy Buildings • Community Energy Upgrades Fund Program • Disaster Ready Fund • National Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements • EPA regulations removal and injection of water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions (e.g. ESC and VEU) • Participate in VEU consultation panel • EPA Brown coal-fired power stations licence reviews • Engagement with building industry • Engagement with unions • Engagement with institutional (and other) investors • Engagement with National Emergency Management Agency and National Adaptation Policy Office • Engagement with the SEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV • Alliances • Ironbark • DNSPs • VicRoads • EAHA • VCOSS / ACOSS • HAH • MBA • Plumbing union • Climate Emergency Australia • Energy Efficiency Council • Better Futures Australia • ICLEI • Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)
---	----------------------------------	--	--	--	--

4	Transmission / Distribution Network Service Providers (TNSP/DNSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local governments pay lowest costs on operation, maintenance and replacement (OMR) charges in each regulatory period • Ensure DNSPs allocate sufficient resources to upgrade networks in rural areas and regional townships to enhance resilience, ensure energy equity and enable communities to participate in and benefit from the clean energy transition. • Ensure DNSPs allocate sufficient resources to partner with councils on large scale emissions reduction programs • Ensure DNSPs enable more renewable energy (distributed energy resources) through appropriate tariff structures • Upgrades to transmission networks to support higher penetration of renewables in priority renewable energy zones (REZ) • Free public access to consumption data to enable municipal emissions reporting • Fair, transparent, inclusive, participatory processes to ensure social license and benefit sharing in transition planning for new energy generation, storage, supply and transmission infrastructures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity Distribution Price Review (EDPR) • Integrated System Plan (ISP) • Regulatory Investment Tests for Transmission and Distribution • AER Contestability reviews • AEMO Integrated System Plan • VicGrid Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) (including declaration of REZs, benefit sharing framework, access arrangements and merit criteria for proponents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions to the AER, Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC), and Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and VicGrid • Direct engagement with DNSPs and TNSPs • Ongoing consultations with DEECA • Direct engagement with VicGrid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV • Ironbark • DNSPs • Other consumer advocates
---	--	--	---	---	--

5	Victorian Government climate and energy policy and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-level governance approach to the design and delivery of climate and energy policy and programs • Appropriate allocation of roles, responsibilities and liabilities for adaptation • Financial support and other assistance for businesses to take action on climate • Financial support for councils and communities to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts • Support for local governments to make and fulfil Emissions Reductions Pledges and/or their municipal reductions targets • Support for regions and communities impacted by the transition away from coal whilst supporting expansion of green jobs, employment and training • Ensure VicEnergy Compare provide greater choice for renewable options • Ensure Victorian Government policy supports proper consideration of climate change in municipal emergency management plans and related services • Attach funding to the 2026 updates of the system-wide adaptation action plans to encourage government agencies to evaluate and prioritise assets for adaptation • Ensure the Victorian Government's \$2 billion Regional Investment Package includes sustainable and climate outcomes as a key priority, including for housing and the Council Support packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Climate Change Strategy 2020-25 • Regulatory reviews in energy sector • DEECAs' regional and sector based adaptation plans • DEECAs legal review of adaptation roles and responsibilities • Reviews of emissions reduction targets and interim targets • Updates to VicEnergy Compare website • State Emergency Management Plan • Infrastructure Victoria's 30 year strategy • Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023-2027 • National Adaptation Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions • Coordinated engagement with DEECA + consultation process • Funding applications for partnership projects with Victorian Government. Example: Large scale solar • Engagement with Solar Victoria and SEC • Engagement and funding support from Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) • Engagement with Sustainability Victoria (SV), e.g. to improve climate change risk assessment guidance • VGA representation on the Regional Climate Change Adaptation plan for Greater Melbourne Stakeholder reference group • Engagement with Inspector General for Emergency Management, VicSES and EMV about improvements to the community emergency risk assessment (CERA) tool and process and other policy changes to improve consideration of climate change in emergency management • Engagement with Regional Development Victoria on the Regional Investment Package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEECA • EMV • MAV • SV • Solar Victoria • SEC • Inspector General of Emergency Management • VicSES • Infrastructure Victoria
6	Low income and vulnerable households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure support from Solar Victoria, SEC and DEECA to assist in the delivery of council and other community solar, energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Homes package • State and Federal budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECA, SEC and Solar Vic staff and Ministers office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumers groups e.g. Renew, One Million Homes

		<p>efficiency and resilience programs for low income/vulnerable households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Victorian and Federal Government incentives and programs are targeted, available and accessible to low income and vulnerable segments • Improve the thermal comfort, energy efficiency and resilience of social housing properties and critical community facilities/assets • Provide subsidies for households who will never be able to afford additional repayment or finance for home upgrades • Ensure heatwave response policies are coordinated across jurisdictions and address low income/vulnerable sectors • Provide thermal, electrification and resilience upgrades to all social housing by 2030 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Victoria's Healthy Homes program • SEC One stop shops pilots • Household Energy Upgrades Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECCW and Ministers and Assistant Minister's office 	<p>Alliance, ACOSS, VCOSS, Climate Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Melbourne Heat Alliance and related Community Service Organisations (eg: Council of the Ageing (COTA)) • DEECA • Solar Victoria
7	Public lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An equitable co-investment model for major road lights that are cost shared with VicRoads • Fast track approval of replacement options by distributors • Fast track upgrades of major road lighting to LED and smart lighting • Savings from smart lighting trials/projects are realised and captured through changes to metering arrangements • Operation, maintenance and replacement (OMR) costs to councils are minimised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Energy Efficiency Target • Australian Lighting Code review • AEMC rule changes • AER regulatory processes • Road Management Act 2004 • VicRoads Guidelines for Street Lighting Design • Electricity Distribution Price Review (EDPR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with DEECA, VicRoads and Minister for Roads • Directly engage with DNSPs, AEMC and AER • Trial project with Ironbark and AEMO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEECA • SV • Ironbark
8	Victorian Planning System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the Planning and Environment Act and the Climate Change Act to explicitly mandate addressing climate change at all levels of the planning process, and operationalise the policy changes through new Ministerial Directions and updates to Victorian Building Regulations • Require every planning scheme amendment, at all levels of government, and at all levels of the planning framework, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Victoria • DEECA consultation on Roadmap for ESD of Buildings and Subdivisions • Review of Victorian Planning Provisions • Victoria's 'Big Build' for social housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with Ministers for Planning, Local Government and Climate Change • Engagement with DEECA • Coordinated engagement with CASBE other Alliances and Councils and Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Melbourne • CASBE • MAV • PIA • Unions

		<p>to include an assessment against relevant climate change considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce mandatory climate change related minimum standards into planning schemes • Adopt science-based targets for high level policy, and align the planning system to the most up to date climate science • Implement recommendations from the Hansen report “Climate Change and Planning in Victoria” • Approve the Elevating ESD Targets Planning Policy Amendment, fully implement the ESD Roadmap in 2024 • Ensure that State’s measures to increase housing density do not negatively impact tree canopy, biodiversity, vegetation and urban heat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Planning and Environment Act and Schedule 1 of the Climate Change Act • Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint letters to Ministers and MPs • Support MAV’s existing consultation on land use planning with Minister for Planning • Support for Sustainable Subdivisions programs and local government shared Advisors in peri-urban and regional Victoria 	
9	Rates based finance mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure special charges schemes and/or residential EUAs are streamlined to minimise administrative overheads of community programs (such as Solar Savers) • Facilitate access to EUAs for businesses and households through state-wide programs • Remove limitations within the Residential Tenancies Act that restrict application of EUAs and the ability of landlords to voluntarily share upgrade costs with tenants • Resources and assistance for councils (i.e. access to online platforms) to administer rate-based programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to the LG Act 2020 • Amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal submissions to LGV • Direct engagement with LGV legislative team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse Alliances • DTF • SV • Tenants Union
10	Emissions from waste and resource recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable councils to develop a shared long-term goal for waste, thus providing investment certainty for the waste services sector to provide appropriate processing facilities and local waste management solutions • Further funding to assist councils to enable best practice delivery of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) programs, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling Victoria • Victorian Waste to Energy Policy • Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) funding opportunities • DEECA (Regional Circular Economy Plans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emissions from waste discussion paper • SV/RMIT waste calculator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SV • Greenhouse Alliances • Recycling Victoria • DEECA regional offices • G21

		<p>particularly to enhance communications to maximise uptake and minimise contamination rates and stimulate the market for end-use opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of a state-wide approach to offsets from council managed landfills • Support circular economy opportunities, particularly reuse applications for waste materials • Fully embed consideration of climate impacts into waste and circular economy programs • Ensure landfill levy funds are transparently and equitably allocated to sustainability and climate projects across the state. 			
11	Biodiversity land and water adaptation planning and response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure State-based adaptation plans support local government's priorities for WSUD and commitments under catchment based Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMPs) • Improve adaptation information and GIS based tools, particularly catchment and inland flood modelling, urban heat and canopy cover • Ensure the planning scheme supports the expansion of blue/green infrastructure including in new property estates and on private land • Ensure stronger protection for native vegetation on private land • Ensure the State adopts ambitious urban/rural greening and canopy cover targets and that planting programs apply the 'principles for policy makers' • Ensure renewable energy developments occur in the right places and mitigate negative environmental impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for Victoria • Biodiversity 2037 • Native vegetation clearing regulation • Victoria's Future Climate Tool • Regional Adaptation Strategies • Natural Environment Adaptation Action Plan • DEECA's environmental accounts • Regional IWMPs • Nature Repair Market • Bushbank Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting information exchange between council networks • Assist (but not lead development of) formal submissions • Engagement with DEECA's Adaptation Action plan leads • Advocate / Support development of geospatial tools for mapping urban heat and canopy cover • Access relevant Greenhouse Alliance Catchment Management Authority and Water Corporation members (GMCA, and BSWCA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Planners Network (BPN) • PIA • MAV • Greenhouse Alliances • All CMAs • Water Corporations

12	Protecting Community Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure resources to build regional partnerships between health, local government and other VGA members and community sectors to achieve coordinated adaptation measures to guard against the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change Support regional programs that improve climate adapted liveability in urban areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans (and some Council Plans) Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023-2027 Health Sector Adaptation Action Plan Regional Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans National Adaptation Plan National health and climate strategy Health and Human Services Adaptation Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greening programs Victorian Climate Resilient Councils (VCRC) Supporting further research and initiatives that recognises the economic benefits of home upgrades on health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHHS Health and Wellbeing Division RMIT, Deakin Emergency Management Victoria CAHA VCOSS Centre for Just Places (Jesuit Social Services) Regional Climate and Health Communities of Practice Network
13	Zero emissions transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding to support councils and other VGA members to plan, provide and facilitate active travel infrastructure and programs Establish a comprehensive and equitable electric vehicle charging network across the state and country Remove regulatory barriers and establish robust policy frameworks to support the rapid transition to EVs and a net zero emissions transport sector Increase State and Federal investment in public transport and improve integration, particularly ensuring that regional and growth areas have access to effective public transport in a timely manner. Electrify all public transport and community transport fleets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light and heavy vehicle emissions standards National EV Strategy Electric vehicle tax Future Fuels Fund - ARENA Future Fuels and Vehicles Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct engagement with DEECA, VicRoads and Minister for Transport Direct engagement with ARENA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern Transport Coalition Electric Vehicle Council of Australia G21 Metropolitan Transport Forum MAV
14	First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure First Nations people can participate in, lead, and benefit from climate policy and initiatives on a sustained, long-term basis Dedicated household upgrades programs to fully fund home energy efficiency and climate resilience upgrades for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing in collaboration with First Nations people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Nations Clean Energy Strategy National Energy Performance Strategy Household Energy Upgrades Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint letters to Ministers and MPs Training and upskilling programs Support First Nations advocacy processes on climate issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACOSS First Nations Clean Energy Council' Fire Sticks Alliance Local Traditional Owners

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased resourcing for First Nations representative bodies to support engagement, consultation and access to expertise, data and other resources to develop and deliver climate initiatives• Support and funding to enable learning and integration of First Nations knowledge for climate mitigation and resilience, e.g. fire management, land management			
--	--	--	--	--	--

1. BACKGROUND

This document is designed to build a shared understanding and commitment amongst members of the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances (VGAs) on the scope of advocacy issues and activities to be undertaken between July 2024 and June 2025. It also defines the VGAs' external engagement agenda on policy and strategic issues and sets out aims, principles, mechanisms and authorisation processes.

The plan also defines the actions the VGAs will collectively undertake to:

- Proactively advocate to governments and other stakeholders
- Establish partnerships and engage with the community to support advocacy activities
- Promote advocacy activities through media and web channels.

The majority of Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (VGA) members are local governments and as such, the advocacy positions discussed below are largely focused on outcomes related to local government. For clarification however, VGA advocacy represents all members of Greenhouse Alliances, where relevant to these members.

2. AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

2.1 Aims

- Build VGAs' role and profile in the local government sector and beyond
- Promote and facilitate policy and other solutions that are aligned with the latest climate science and limiting global warming to 1.5°C. This includes enabling effective mitigation and adaptation action, particularly the delivery of council and other initiatives
- Work collaboratively with other council networks (e.g. MAV, Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment, and other Regional Groups of Councils), or other relevant networks, and advocacy groups to align objectives, key messaging and coordinate advocacy activities, particularly in areas where membership overlaps

2.2 Principles

VGA's will advocate collectively on issues on which there is consensus amongst VGA members, or in sub-sets of VGA members (eg: regional members, metro members) rather than on issues of individual benefit/focus. In the instance where a VGA submission or initiative adopts a position or makes a statement that does not accurately represent the views of all members, this distinction will be explicitly stated and any member may choose to opt-out of that piece of work.

2.3 Process

The following authorisation process for VGA's collective submissions is defined to reflect nimbleness and streamlined decision making:

- Authorisation is delegated to VGA Executive Officers and/or VGA Executive Chairs for all submissions that are consistent with VGAs' agreed advocacy priorities
- For formal submissions, the authorisation process involves:
 - the VGA Executive Officers draft submissions based on VGAs' agreed priorities
 - the VGA Executive Officers circulate the initial draft for input from their memberships, according to their individual advocacy processes.

- relevant input/feedback on draft submissions is then considered and incorporated creating the final draft, which are then circulated to VGA members (and at times other relevant networks) for approval. Minor comments only are expected at this time.
- It will be assumed that VGA members approve unless explicitly stated to the contrary, with response required within generally 5 working days from receipt of draft (for proactive submissions) and within 3 working days for reactive submissions to external consultation processes, or as otherwise agreed.
- If at any time this process is problematic, discussion is encouraged amongst the VGAs to find a solution.
- VGAs may individually choose to formally support submissions made by other advocacy groups (through inclusion of their logo), acknowledging in some instances it may not be practical for VGA members to contribute to the drafting of the content
- In the instance where a party decides to opt-out of a submission, they may request for their organisation's name or logo to be removed from the list of participating councils or Alliances
- All formal submissions will include the following disclaimer:

“This submission has been approved through the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances’ approval process and has not been formally adopted by individual members. The submission does not necessarily represent the views of all members.”

3. PROCESS FOR REVIEW

This document will be reviewed and reconfirmed by the VGA annually in May - June to ensure it is current for joint advocacy for the following financial year.

Each Greenhouse Alliance will be responsible for reviewing this document each year in accordance with its own advocacy policy.