

Queensland Climate Transition Bill 2023

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Mackay Conservation Group

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Committee Secretary
State Development and Regional Industries Committee
Parliament House
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To whom it may concern,

I am writing this submission on behalf of the Mackay Conservation Group in support of the Climate Transition Bill 2023. I am authorised by Mackay Conservation Group Inc. (MCG) to make this submission on behalf of the group.

MCG is the lead community-based environmental organisation in the Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday Region. MCG has been actively involved in on-ground environmental work and advocacy for environmental protection in the region since 1984. We provide support to community members who are affected by actions that cause environmental harm. We also conduct environmental education activities and support a number of other groups working in the field of environmental protection and monitoring in the region. We have long advocated for a transition plan away from fossil fuels that is economically and socially just.

The Climate Transition Bill will support Queensland to meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement to keep global heating to 2°C, preferably 1.5°C, above pre-industrial levels, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Bill will also establish a new statutory authority to develop and implement a strategic climate transition plan that manages compensation, training and job opportunities for workers and local communities affected by the transition away from fossil fuels.

The Climate Transition Bill is a much-needed step towards ensuring that Queensland is doing its part to address the global climate crisis. MCG supports bringing emissions reductions targets in line with current science and Australia's obligations under the Paris Agreement, as well as ensuring that local communities are supported.

Evidence of the impacts of climate gas emissions

Fossil Fuel projects cause major physical changes that would affect important aspects of the environment that are significant to the whole country, including Queensland. These changes could cause harm to people, animals, plants and the overall natural world. Scientists, most notably those contributing to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, agree that harm from climate change is happening and will continue to happen because of the pollution caused by burning fossil fuels.

This is evidenced by many documents including the following IPCC reports:

- the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group I contribution for its Sixth Assessment Report Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis
- Working Group II report, Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability
- Working Group III report, Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change

Those reports make it clear that human activities have caused the air, oceans, and land to warm significantly. The more carbon dioxide (CO₂) we release into the atmosphere, the warmer the Earth becomes, and this relationship is pretty straightforward. To stop the planet from heating up even more, we need to stabilise our CO₂ emissions and reach a point where we're not adding any more CO₂ to the atmosphere.

Action that must be taken to reduce emissions:

To slow down global warming caused by humans, we need to greatly reduce the release of CO₂ and other gases that trap heat in the coming years. If we don't make our current efforts stronger, these harmful gas emissions will keep increasing, and by 2100, the Earth could be around 3.2°C warmer on average. A big part of the problem comes from the way we produce energy. To limit this warming, we need to make huge cuts in using coal, oil, and gas, and leave these fossil fuels untouched in the ground.

Climate change caused by humans will lead to more extreme weather events. In Australia, this means more fires, extreme heat, unusual ocean temperatures and acidity, heavy rain and floods and droughts. The more the Earth warms up, the more often and intense these events will be. For every increase of 0.5°C in the Earth's temperature, we will clearly see that heatwaves, heavy rains, and droughts affecting farming and natural environments become worse and happen more often.

The most recent report from the IPCC covers everything we know about climate change, how it affects us, and how we can adapt and reduce it. To slow climate change caused by humans, we need to quickly and significantly cut our emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases. We have to stabilise our CO₂ emissions to stop the Earth from becoming even warmer. In Australia, climate change caused by humans has led to, and will continue to lead to, unavoidable increases in various extreme weather events.

The Mackay Conservation Group strongly supports the Climate Transition Bill. We must take bold action now to address the climate crisis and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Imogen Lindenberg

Climate Campaigner

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