

# Northern Territory Climate Resilience Plan

## Purpose

Climate change is reshaping global and national economies. This creates opportunities for investment, industry development and employment in the Northern Territory, while also presenting challenges that must be managed. The Northern Territory Climate Resilience Plan sets out the Northern Territory Government's priorities and actions to promote the Territory's role in the energy transition, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and strengthen community resilience.

## Vision

Harnessing the Northern Territory's strengths to support a climate-resilient economy and lifestyle.

## Context

The Northern Territory Government is focused on rebuilding the economy and restoring the Territory lifestyle while working with the Australian Government on the national target of net zero by 2050.

The Northern Territory is uniquely placed to grow industries that can support decarbonisation locally, nationally and internationally. This means it can attract new investment and position itself as a competitive and reliable supplier of low-emissions energy and products to Australia and the region.

A strong regulatory framework is driving down emissions. GHG emissions are assessed under the Northern Territory *Environment Protection Act 2019*, and the Australian Government's Safeguard Mechanism requires large emitters to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050. In this context, the Plan provides policy certainty and supports industry to meet emissions reduction commitments.

The Northern Territory is a small contributor to Australia's GHG emissions, producing ~6% (or ~28 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent of Australia's emissions in 2024). We have a unique emissions profile that reflects our economy and natural environment, with most 2024 emissions coming from the land use sector (45%), the energy sector (44%) and the agriculture sector (10%).

The Northern Territory has and will continue to experience, the impacts of a changing climate. We need to build community and industry resilience by addressing key risks to infrastructure and essential services, undertaking long-term planning and supporting the community to prepare for and respond to climate change.

Building resilience and undertaking targeted climate adaptation are essential for growing the economy and maintaining the Territory lifestyle.

This Plan presents a practical and proportionate response to climate change that reflects the Northern Territory's circumstances.

## Strategic priorities and actions

### Priority 1 – Delivering a secure and reliable energy transition for the Territory and Australia

*Deliver secure and reliable energy for Territorians at the lowest sustainable cost while supporting Australia and the region's energy transition through low emissions gas, electricity reforms, and investing in renewable energy where it makes economic sense.*

## Actions:

- 1.1 Accelerate the production of low emissions energy, including from the Beetaloo Sub-basin, to support long-term energy security for the Territory, Australia and our region, and to deliver secure and reliable energy to Territorians at the lowest sustainable cost.

Beetaloo gas is relatively low in emissions because it contains 1 – 2% carbon dioxide, which is low compared to alternative Australian gas sources. The Safeguard Mechanism also requires Beetaloo gas to be net zero at production, which is a stricter standard compared to production in existing gas fields.

- 1.2 Modernise the Northern Territory electricity system to deliver secure and reliable electricity at lowest sustainable cost to Territorians by unlocking coordinated public and private investment in diverse and low-emissions technologies.

## Priority 2 – Supporting new and existing investment in emissions reduction

*Enable and attract investment in industry-led emissions reduction to support long-term economic growth and net zero ambitions.*

### Actions:

- 2.1 Build on the Territory's strengths to attract new industries such as critical minerals and renewables that will support emissions reductions and the energy transition.
- 2.2 Work with industry to help it access finance, grants and other opportunities to invest in low-emissions technology to reduce costs and improve productivity.
- 2.3 Promote investment in priority sectors, such as agriculture and mining, to lower the emissions intensity of production, including for research and development.

- 2.4 Work with industry to identify and address workforce development needs for Territorians to engage in emerging clean energy, emissions abatement and carbon farming industries.

## Priority 3 – Promoting emissions abatement and offset opportunities

*Develop and support emissions abatement and offset activities as investable industries that create economic opportunity while reducing emissions.*

### Actions:

- 3.1 Develop a comprehensive regulatory framework to enable and attract investment in onshore carbon capture and storage (CCS) industries.
- 3.2 Invest in assessing onshore geological formations for the storage of carbon dioxide and energy resources.
- 3.3 Support the development of a Low Emissions Hub to provide emissions abatement solutions for Australia and the region and to attract low-emissions industry.
- 3.4 Work with industry and land managers to unlock investment in emissions abatement and offset activities, including to promote carbon credits generated in the Territory.

The Northern Territory has the geological potential to play a major role in global efforts to decarbonise through capturing and storing carbon deep underground.

- 3.5 Reduce invasive weeds and support other land and fire management activities that avoid emissions from higher-intensity wildfires.
- 3.6 Advocate for new or modified Australian Carbon Credit Unit scheme methodologies that reflect the Territory's environment and practices.

## Priority 4 – Managing climate risks to Territory infrastructure and services

*Build the resilience of the Northern Territory's infrastructure and essential services to climate impacts through improved climate-appropriate planning, design and investment.*

### Actions:

- 4.1 Strengthen critical infrastructure such as roads and rail connections, and transportation systems, to better withstand short and long-term climate change impacts.
- 4.2 Identify and prioritise adaptation of social and essential services delivery to address climate-related health, social and lifestyle impacts on Territorians
- 4.3 Ensure developers consider climate risks to infrastructure and operations in proposals assessed under the *Environment Protection Act*.
- 4.4 Ensure urban and regional growth and renewal facilitates climate resilience and lowers emissions, for example through flood and fire-safe planning, infill development and smart design.

## Priority 5 – Building capacity for climate resilience across the Territory

The Northern Territory Government's \$100 million Flood Recovery Fund recognises the need to build back better, to restore essential infrastructure and strengthen communities against future flooding events.

*Strengthening the Northern Territory's capacity to identify, assess and respond to climate-related risks and opportunities through improved knowledge, and decision making.*

### Actions:

- 5.1 Undertake climate risk assessments to inform and prioritise adaptation planning.
- 5.2 Develop and publish information and guidance to assist communities and businesses to better identify and address climate change opportunities and risks.
- 5.3 Build longer-term thinking around climate opportunities and risk management into government decision-making.
- 5.4 Build resilience in the natural environment by managing threats such as fire and invasive species, and by accounting for climate impacts in managing key assets such as water and fisheries.
- 5.5 Enhance climate-related preparedness, response and recovery capacity across the Territory.

## Reporting progress

The Government will report publicly on the Plan's implementation, and the Plan will be reviewed in three years.

Over this period, Northern Territory GHG emissions are expected to trend upwards before declining as the Australian Government's Safeguard Mechanism, and other reduction and abatement initiatives, take effect. The Government will track the emissions intensity of the Northern Territory economy, and annual Northern Territory GHG emissions will be published by the Australian Government.