

9 September 2024

Australian communities are leading the way in renewable energy

Minister Bowen, it's time to set ambitious climate targets that Australians can be proud of

Achieving net zero emissions by 2035 is a target that Australians could take pride in, and a goal that will help secure a safe climate and prosperous future for all.

That's the key message delivered today in a letter to Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, from members of the Better Futures Australia alliance, which represents over **seven million** Australians.

Australian families are world leaders in adopting solar, with Australian innovation driving the development of cutting-edge solar and battery technologies globally.

Now, it's time for Australia to lead with decisive action on climate.

The Better Futures Australia alliance is calling on the Australian Government to set a new national climate target: net zero emissions by 2035 and increase Australia's 2030 national climate target (known as a Nationally Determined Contribution or NDC) from 43 per cent to 75 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. The government has until February 2025 to submit its revised national climate commitments to the UN.

The letter, sent to Minister Bowen today (Monday 9 September), will remain open for people to endorse [here](#).

"Australians want the government to take decisive action on climate change. By endorsing this letter, everyone has a greater voice in shaping what will be debated at COP29 in Azerbaijan," says Lisa Cliff, Director of the Better Futures Australia program, an alliance of non-partisan climate leaders from all sectors and walks of life.

"It's not too late for Minister Bowen to show greater ambition by aligning Australia with the Paris Climate Agreement's target of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, and showing confidence that Australia will deliver on its COP28 promises to phase out fossil fuels and triple renewable energy capacity."

Among the voices of signatories to date:

"Australia has a critical need to pivot from petrostate to an electrostate," says **Tim Buckley, Climate Energy Finance**

"Australia should be leading the world in building clean energy and upgrading polluting industries to build the brightest, safest future for the next generation. Our kids are counting on us," says **Nic Seton, Parents for Climate**

We urgently need Climate Emergency policy frameworks that will deliver the solutions. All life depends on it," says **Deborah Hart, CLIMARTE**

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“As humans we have never before been more disconnected from nature. It is our goal to remind the business world that we are nature,” says **Jenny Ringland, G+S Communications**

The call for Minister Bowen to step up is backed by Paris Climate Agreement Architect, Laurence Tubiana, and a wide range of community organisations across Australia. This effort is part of the global ‘Mission 2025’ campaign, which reminds world leaders that: “holding the line on 1.5°C is not an aspirational target – it is a scientific imperative.”

This week, Canberra is hosting Australia’s largest multi-sectoral gathering on climate, the [Better Futures Forum](#) (10-11 September). Delegates will demonstrate how communities, trade unions, local councils, businesses, and nonprofits are acting faster and with greater climate ambition than the federal government.

The third Better Futures Forum at Canberra’s National Film and Sound Archive brings together 260+ public and private sector leaders from every corner of society. From First Nations-led organisations to finance and faith communities, cities and states, businesses large and small, agriculture, resources and energy sectors, health and social services, unions, think tanks, charities, and higher education.

It will showcase significant strides in community-based climate solutions and share insights on scalable solutions in the global race to net zero. New reports on community energy, export energy, local government and more will be released over the two days.

Lisa Cliff said this year’s Better Futures Forum follows the release of the world’s largest-ever standalone public opinion survey on climate change, by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the University of Oxford.

“The Australian government can’t ignore the fact that 80 per cent of people globally want their governments to take stronger climate action, with 72 per cent supporting a rapid move away from fossil fuels,” she said, citing the [People’s Climate Vote 2024](#).

The landmark survey, announced in June, also shows women from the world’s five big emitters, including Australia, are ‘more in favour of strengthening their country’s commitments by 10 to 17 percentage points’.

Commenting on the findings, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said: “The survey results – unprecedented in their coverage – reveal a level of consensus that is truly astonishing. We urge leaders and policymakers to take note, especially as countries develop their next round of climate action pledges – or ‘nationally determined contributions’ (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.”

Better Futures Forum is Australia’s largest multi-sectoral conference on climate. Full list of speakers at https://www.betterfutures.org.au/full_lineup_2024, and program at https://www.betterfutures.org.au/full_program_2024.

All sessions are open to media. For more information and media accreditation contact: Shelley Thomas, shelley@scienceinpublic.com.au / 0416 377 444 or Niall Byrne, niall@scienceinpublic.com.au / 0417 131 977

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