



Yarra Climate Action Now  
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To the Victorian Government,

Yarra Climate Action Now (YCAN) is a non-partisan community group based in the City of Yarra which campaigns for strong action to address climate change and ensure a safe future for all. This group recognises that the planet is in a state of **climate emergency**, and that Australia must make substantial and urgent cuts to carbon emissions in order to support meaningful worldwide action to avert an economic, environmental and humanitarian crisis.

People on the ground are increasingly frustrated with inadequate climate action, particularly after the Federal election result. However, **the community has responded not with despondency but with greater engagement**, seeking to take matters into their own hands. We represent over 1000 local people, have new members joining at increasing rates and are seeing very strong turnouts at local events (such as the City of Yarra's Climate Emergency Forum and Proudly Plastic Free campaign launch). City of Yarra residents are extremely concerned about the consequences of climate change and expect their leaders to take strong action.

We support the Andrews government's action to date on climate change (including investment in renewable generation and the Solar Homes package), but the stakes are only getting higher and we urge the government to act consistently with their commitment and **establish science-based targets that are consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C**. This is what is needed to avoid what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change say will be "catastrophic" impacts, and to ensure a safe climate for our children and the generations to come.

In the absence of genuine action from the Federal government, Victoria must show leadership. This is a critical juncture at which the Andrews government can show this leadership and **set interim Emissions Reduction Targets that get Victoria to zero emissions as soon as possible**. We are already seeing intensifying heatwaves, droughts, bushfires, extreme weather events, and rising sea levels, and the government has a responsibility to act to protect the community.

We argue that the Combet independent expert report is not strong enough. The report recommended cuts of 32-39% below 2005 levels by 2025 and 45-60% by 2030, but even the high end of these targets wouldn't limit warming to 1.5°C and

thus falls well short of what is needed. Instead we support analysis by Environment Victoria which shows that **appropriate emissions targets are 45-50% below 2005 levels by 2025, and 65-80% by 2030.**

This is ambitious but achievable, and the Victorian government has a wide range of policy levers available. Ensuring we are a 'first-mover' in climate solutions will bring significant investment and jobs to the state. We must:

- Continue the rapid rollout of renewable energy;
- Phase-out coal-burning power stations as soon as possible (we have the dirtiest electricity in Australia, and this leaves us exposed);
- Provide support to electrify heating (both residential and industrial) and vehicles;
- Invest to ensure greater use of public and active transport options; and
- Protect our remaining forests and invest in substantial reforestation.

We believe it is crucial to aim for 1.5°C and not 2°C, and that Victoria should be contributing its fair share to limiting global temperature rise. The community is taking accountability for their own emissions in various ways, and lots of Councils (including ours) are taking the lead on initiatives such as sourcing renewable energy and tackling waste generation. But we represent a local community with a mixed demographic, including students, elderly and public housing residents. Many of these people are vulnerable to rising costs, the urban heat island effect and are not able to access opportunities such as installing solar panels because they are in apartments or overshadowed. Climate change cannot be effectively tackled by communities alone. **The state government needs to take a greater share of responsibility, and must act given the scale and urgency of the issue.**

We urge the Andrews Labor government to take on this responsibility and set interim emissions reduction targets (and then take commensurate action) to lead the way to a safe climate future.

Your sincerely,

Kerry Echberg  
Convenor – Yarra Climate Action Now