

EMISSIONS REDUCTION

Commitment sought

\$50 million per year for four years to support local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and deliver community aspirations for increased climate action.

What is the issue?

The Federal Government has legislated an emissions reduction target, which will require a coordinated response from all levels of government and the private sector.

Why does it matter?

Councils can play a key role in helping the Federal Government deliver on its emissions targets.

Additional information

Local governments throughout Australia have been leading climate action for more than two decades. In 2021, a report by ICLEI indicated around three quarters of Australian councils have set or are in the process of developing community emissions reductions targets, with an understanding that anything other than a net zero target is not acceptable from a climate risk or ambition perspective.

Australia's cities and towns present some of the biggest opportunities to meet our greenhouse gas emissions targets while creating jobs and supporting local economies.

However, a recent survey by Cities Power Partnership found that the most common barrier for addressing emissions reduction for councils is a lack of funds.

An emissions reduction fund specifically for local government could assist councils to:

- Transition their fleets to electric vehicles;
- Support local economies transitioning from traditional power generation to green energy;
- Undertake carbon accounting;
- Increase tree canopy cover and biodiversity;
- Retrofit council owned building assets to increase energy efficiency and reduce emission sources;
- Deliver bulk street lighting upgrades;
- House community batteries; and
- Invest in low-emissions transport and associated infrastructure.

Investing in local clean solutions presents multiple benefits for Australian communities, including job creation, cheaper energy, better housing, and the development of growth industries. It can also increase Australian communities' resilience to the impacts of climate change and global market instability.

As the sphere of government closest to the community, local governments are critical to empowering communities and creating a sustainable, prosperous future for Australia.

