

# Victoria's Climate Action Act 2017 – Fact Sheet

## Climate change in Victoria

Victoria's climate is changing, and these changes are having impacts on Victorian communities, our economy and natural environment. Without action now, climate change will lead to:

- Increased number of extreme weather events
- Longer fire seasons
- Increased sea level rises
- More animal and plant extinctions
- Declines in cool season rainfall
- Increased numbers of hot days.

Driven by the *Climate Action Act 2017*, Victoria is taking action to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by reducing emissions and building resilience to the climate impacts we cannot avoid.

## What is Victoria's Climate Action Act 2017?

The *Climate Action Act 2017* (the Act) provides Victoria with a world-leading legislative foundation to manage climate change risks, maximise the opportunities that arise from decisive action, and drive Victoria's transition to a net zero emissions, climate-resilient community and economy by 2045. The Act ensures that Victoria continues to lead in global efforts to avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change.

## What powers does the Act have?

The Act establishes a range of reporting requirements, duties, and guiding principle and objectives for Victorian Government decision-making on climate action. The Act does not focus on individuals or company actions.

## What's in the Act?

**Targets:** The Act sets a long-term emissions reduction target of net zero emissions by 2045, and requires the Government also set five-yearly interim targets. As part of these requirements the Government has already set and legislated the following targets:

- 28 – 33 per cent by 2025
- 45 – 50 per cent by 2030
- 75 – 80 per cent by 2035.

The 2040 target will be determined in 2028.

**Strategies and Plans:** A range of five-yearly strategies and plans to provide the direction and action needed to achieve the State's interim and long-term emissions reduction and climate resilience goals. The Act requires the Government publish:

- A **Climate Change Strategy** explaining how Victoria will meet its emissions targets, adapt to climate change, and transition to a net zero emissions future – the next is due in 2025.
- **Emissions Reduction Pledges** prepared by Ministers across a range of Victorian economic sectors. These pledges outline the Victorian Government's emissions reduction actions to support achieving interim and long-term emissions reduction targets.
- **Adaptation Action Plans** prepared by Ministers for certain systems and sectors across the Victorian economy and community to ensure these areas adequately prepare for the impacts of unavoidable climate change.

**Policy objectives and guiding principles:** Guiding principles that the Minister must have regard to in climate change decision-making, such as the principles of equity and engagement.

**Independent Expert Advice:** Independent expert advice must be sought by the Minister before determining interim emission reduction targets.

**Consultation:** Public consultation requirements for the Climate Change Strategy and Adaptation Action Plans. This includes requirements for the Government to publish drafts of both reports on the Internet, allowing at least 28 days for any person to provide a written submission for consideration by the Minister for Climate Action.

**Government Decision-making requirements:** To embed and integrate climate change considerations into relevant Victorian Government decision-making processes.

**Information and reporting:** A system of periodic reporting to provide transparency, accountability and ensure the community remains informed. The Act requires the Government publish:

- **Climate Science Reports** analysing and explaining Victoria-specific climate change science and data;
- **Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reports** setting out an overview of Victoria's emissions sources and collation best practicably available information; and
- **End of Interim Target Assessment Reports** assessing the Government's efforts to achieve interim targets and cumulative progress towards the long-term net zero emissions.