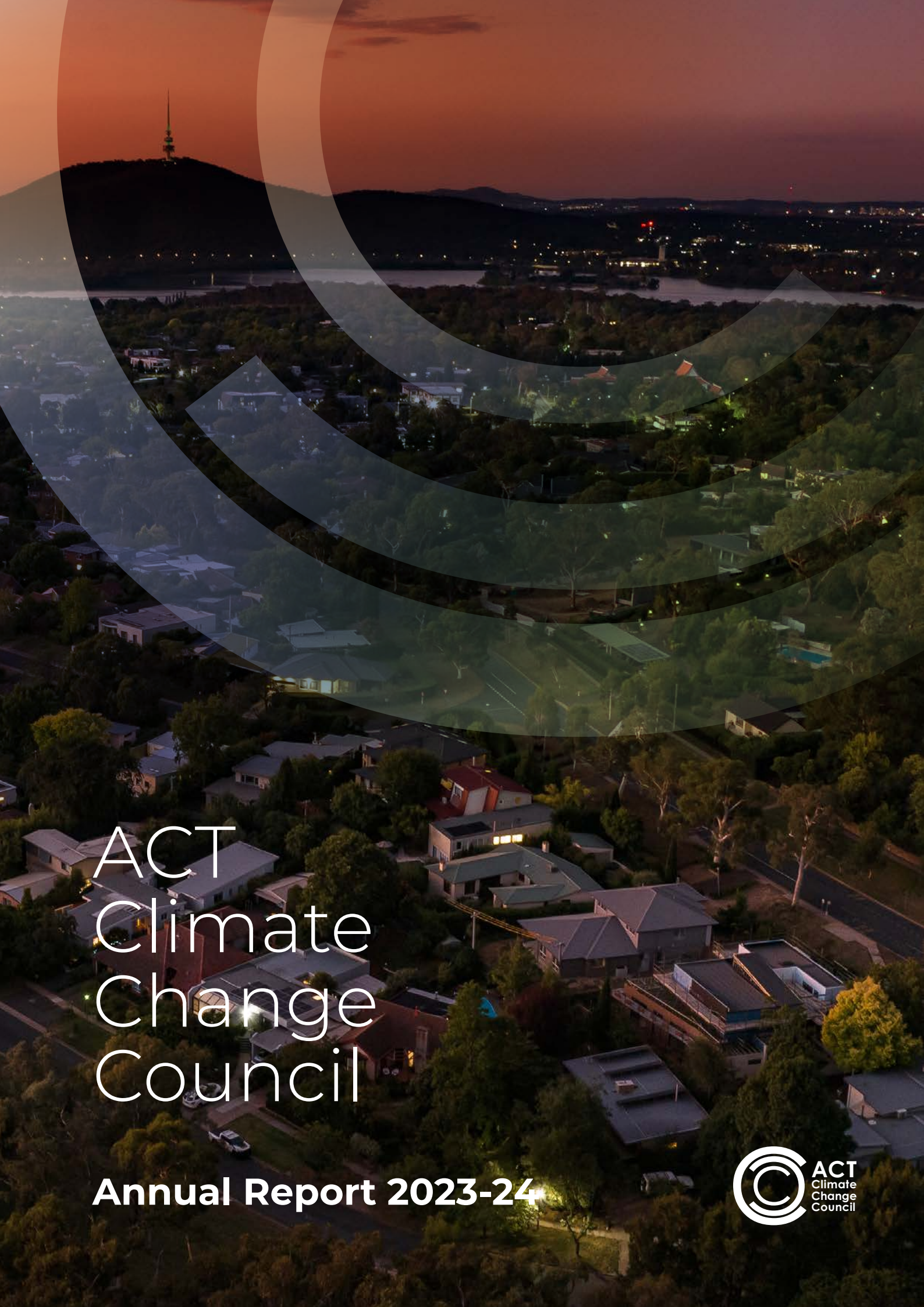


An aerial night photograph of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is the background. In the foreground, there's a dense residential area with many houses and trees. In the middle ground, a large, semi-transparent, stylized letter 'C' is overlaid, composed of several concentric, slightly offset circular bands. In the background, a body of water (Lake Burley Griffin) is visible, followed by more distant hills and city lights under a dark, twilight sky. A tall telecommunication tower is visible on a hill in the far distance.

ACT Climate Change Council

Annual Report 2023-24





Contents

Letter of Transmittal	4
Introductory note from the 2023-24 Chair	5
Introduction	6
Statutory obligations.	7
Administration.	7
Membership	8
Activities and changes	13
Meetings	14
Advice and recommendations.	18
Engagement	20
Contact the Council	22
Connect with the Council online	22
Appendix A: Meeting Attendance	23
Appendix B: Expenditure	23



Acknowledgment to Country

Yuma
Dhawura Nguna Dhawura Ngunnawal
Yanggu ngalawiri dhunimanyin
Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari
Nginggada Dindi yindumaralidjinyin
Dhawura Ngunnawal yindumaralidjinyin

Hello,
This is Ngunnawal Country
Today we are meeting on Ngunnawal country
We always respect Elders, male and female
We always respect Ngunnawal Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Produced by the ACT Climate Change Council and the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2024

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from: Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923
Website: www.climatechoices.act.gov.au

Accessibility

The ACT Climate Change Council and ACT Government are committed to making their information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible. If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, please phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at climatechangecouncil@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 13 14 50.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment, and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for Access Canberra on 13 22 81. For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for Access Canberra on 13 22 81. For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>

Letter of Transmittal

Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA
Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction
ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister Rattenbury,

It is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Report (Report) of the ACT Climate Change Council for the financial year ending 30 June 2024.

The Council was established under Section 16 of the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* (the Act) to advise you, as Minister, on matters relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and addressing and adapting to climate change.

This Report has been prepared pursuant to Section 19 of the Act and outlines the Council's activities during the 2023-24 financial year, the advice given, and the recommendations made to you as Minister. Subsection 19(3) of the Act provides that within 21 days after receiving this report, it must be presented to the Legislative Assembly; if this date falls within the Caretaker period, Section 19(4b) allows for the report to be tabled on the second day after the ACT Election.

The Council is committed to providing rigorous expert advice on tackling climate change to the elected government of the ACT, through yourself as Minister and through the Climate Action Cabinet Subcommittee. The Council has had an active and productive year providing advice and submissions and engaging directly with various stakeholders. We aim to increase engagement with the Canberra community over the forthcoming year through the implementation of our Community Engagement Strategy to further reflect the views of community and business in our advice.

In presenting this Report, I thank my Council colleagues for their continued energy, professionalism, and dedication. I also thank you for your high level of interest, engagement and knowledge in relation to the Council's remit, and additionally the Secretariat provided by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, and the Directorate itself, for its support and dedication.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Mark Howden
Chair, ACT Climate Change Council
September 2024

Introductory note from the 2023-24 Chair

At a global level, the past 12 months have been worrying. Every month from June 2023 to the present, each month has either been the hottest on record or equal hottest. The global-average temperature has been 1.64°C above pre-industrial levels. The year-to date temperature is 0.23°C above that of 2023 – which was the previously warmest year on record. It is very likely that 2024 will break this record – and by a long way.

The tolling bell signalling disasters has been working overtime. We have also experienced serial disasters associated with climate extreme events. The Brazil and Kenya floods, the Canadian forest fires and the associated smoke and the European summer heatwaves were all major events but there were many, many more. Right now, we have Super Typhoon Yagi ripping into south-east Asia.

Unfortunately, global greenhouse gas emissions keep increasing and the economic and political forces behind this continue largely unabated. As documented exhaustively by the recent IPCC Assessments, this commits us to further, large and overall damaging climate changes which add to the difficulties of equitable sustainable development. Consequently, increasing climate impacts also commits us to increased innovation and implementation of more effective climate adaptation strategies. However, Australia is behind the eight-ball on this and there is a lot to do to catch up to the accelerating climate change.

Similarly, the trajectory of greenhouse gas emissions that is consistent with keeping global temperatures between 1.5°C and 2°C above pre-industrial is for immediate, large and consistent reductions. This is not happening at a global level. We are failing at a most basic duty – to hand to our grandchildren a planet in better shape than when we inherited it. This is happening even though more and more economic analyses show that inaction on climate change is far, far more expensive than action.

Here in the ACT and in Australia there are some signs of hope. The ACT still leads the way with proactive policies that have slashed our Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions and keep us on a pathway to net-zero by 2045. Policies that are integrating climate change responses with other policy issues such as reducing inequities. But there is more to be done and the ACT Climate Change Council looks forward to a renewed, updated, more comprehensive and ambitious ACT Climate Change Strategy next year that deals comprehensively with climate emission-reduction and climate adaptation. This would align with the recent Climate Change Authority report that shows in detail how a low-emissions economy could be achieved in the lead up to their anticipated advice that the revised national emission-reduction target should be 75% reduction by 2035.

Across all of these issues and more, the ACT Climate Change Council will build its engagement with ACT businesses and the community on implementing more effective climate responses. The Council will continue to provide evidence-based advice to the Minister on climate adaptation and emission-reduction activities in the ACT so as to maintain our well-being, way of life, economy and our natural and built environments.

Professor Mark Howden
Chair, ACT Climate Change Council

Introduction

The ACT Climate Change Council (the Council) advises the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction (the Minister) on matters relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and in adapting to climate change. The Council was established by the ACT Government in 2011 under the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* (the Act).

The Council plays a pivotal role in informing climate change policies in the ACT. It liaises with business and community and scans the horizon for the challenges and opportunities associated with creating a prosperous, climate-ready, net-zero emissions Territory. It seeks to provide leadership and informed advice by listening to community views and attitudes, understanding international best practice on climate change, and raising awareness of climate change risks and the community benefits of effective climate action.

ACT residents are welcome to raise an issue with the Council or alert them to recent climate change news or research.

Statutory obligations

The Council is established under Part 4 of the Act, which also sets out the functions of the Council and outlines how they are to be exercised.

The main function of the Council is to advise the Minister on matters relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing and adapting to climate change. In exercising its functions, the Council must try to consult with representatives from business and the community, including environmental and conservation entities, on matters relating to climate change. The Council must also make efforts to provide information to private entities to encourage action to address, or adapt to, climate change.

In exercising a function under the Act, the Minister must consider any relevant advice given by the Council. Section 19 of the Act requires the Council to provide an Annual Report about the Council's activities during the financial year, including any advice or recommendations made to the Minister. The Council must give the report to the Minister within three months after the end of the financial year. The Act can be found at: <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2010-41>

Administration

Remuneration

Remuneration for the Council is set by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal and reviewed annually. Members were remunerated according to the relevant Remuneration Tribunal Determination. This was initially Determination 13 of 2022, which provided a per diem rate of \$590 for the Chair and \$505 for members. Commencing 1 November 2023, members were remunerated in accordance with Determination 18 of 2023, which provided a per diem rate of \$615 for the Chair and \$525 for members.

The attendance of members at Council meetings during the reporting period is provided at Appendix A and a summary of expenditure is provided at Appendix B.

Gender report

The gender balance of the Council is taken into consideration when members are appointed. Over the 2023–24 reporting period, membership included four male and four female members.

Freedom of information

No freedom of information (FOI) applications specifically relating to the Council were received during 2023–24.

Accountability and secretariat

The Climate Change Policy Branch within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) provides Secretariat support to the Council. Further information on the work of the Council is available at <https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/climate-change/act-climate-change-council>.

Membership

Members are appointed under the Act, which prescribes that the Council must comprise at least five, but not more than ten members appointed by the Minister. The Minister must, to the greatest extent practical, ensure the Council includes people with a broad range of skills and knowledge relating to mitigating or adapting to climate change.

In March 2024, the [Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction \(Membership\) Amendment Bill 2024](#) was endorsed and enacted by the Legislative Assembly. This Bill provided amendments to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that the Council includes at least two Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander members. Consultation and recruitment of two Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people will be undertaken throughout 2024-25.

During the 2023-24 financial year, the Council consisted of members with a diverse range of skills and experience in areas such as climate change science, energy efficiency, the built environment, community, health, business, transport, and economics.



Professor Mark Howden

● CHAIR 1 July 2021- 30 June 2025

Professor Mark Howden was appointed to the Council as a member to represent climate change science and appointed as Chair in 2021.

Professor Mark Howden is Director of the Australian National University (ANU) Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions. He is also Chair of the National Climate Risk Assessment Expert Advisory Committee and a Vice Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II. He was on the US Federal Advisory Committee for the 3rd National Climate Assessment and contributes to several major national and international science and policy advisory bodies. Professor Howden has worked on climate variability, climate change, innovation, and adaptation issues for over 35 years in partnership with many industry, community and policy groups via both research and science-policy roles. Issues he has addressed include agriculture and food security, the natural resource base, ecosystems and biodiversity, energy, water, and urban systems. Professor Howden has over 430 publications. He helped develop both the national and international greenhouse gas inventories that are a fundamental part of the Paris Agreement and has assessed sustainable ways to reduce emissions. He has been a major contributor to the IPCC since 1991, with roles in the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and now Seventh Assessment Reports, sharing the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with other IPCC participants and Al Gore.



Dr Paul Bannister

Dr Paul Bannister was appointed to the Council for his expertise in energy efficiency and the built environment.

Dr Bannister has expertise in the field of commercial and institutional building energy efficiency. He had a central role in the development of major energy efficiency innovations such as the NABERS Energy and water ratings and the redevelopment of Section J (Energy Efficiency) of the Australian Building Code (2019 Edition). One of Dr Bannister's particular specialities is the optimisation of building controls, which he has been able to use to create significant improvements in building performance on a wide range of sites. Dr Bannister is a well-known speaker on energy efficiency issues both nationally and internationally, having presented at numerous conferences within Australia and overseas. He has published well over 80 papers on energy efficiency related issues. Dr Bannister has strong networks in the building and property industry, from government through to builders and from industry associations through to individual property managers.



Associate Professor Cris Brack

Associate Professor Cris Brack was appointed to the Council for his expertise in environmental management.

Associate Professor Cris Brack (Honorary) has close to 30 years of experience in natural resource measurement and management at the Australian National University (ANU) Fenner School of Environment and Society. This experience includes researching, teaching and developing best practices in urban forestry, publishing 12 peer reviewed articles on urban forests and green spaces, and another 70 papers on carbon sequestration, natural resource assessment and management.

Associate Professor Brack won an Australian Museum Eureka Award for Environmental Science for his work on the National Carbon Accounting System (NCAS), which was developed to support national policy development on climate change mitigation. He has extensive skills and experience working with ANU and the ACT Government on the planning and management of Canberra's urban forest, including street trees and the National Arboretum. His recent research has focused on sustaining a vibrant and healthy urban forest in the presence of increasingly harsh climate scenarios.



Ms Sophia Hamblin Wang

Ms Sophia Hamblin Wang was appointed to the Council for her expertise in business.

Ms Hamblin Wang is currently the Chief Operations Officer of Mineral Carbonation International, a company that develops sustainable materials that incorporate CO2 emissions into building products and was recently awarded first place for Resource Innovator of the Year at the New Materials Summit in Berlin. Ms Hamblin Wang is also a co-founder of 'Kingfisher Co-Housing Canberra', which aims to build resident-led micro-co-housing communities in Canberra. She has previously been a delegate at many national and international conferences on climate change, entrepreneurship and business including the World Economic Forum in Davos, 2020 and the UN Youth Climate Change Summit in New York, 2019.



Ms Mia Swainson

Ms Mia Swainson was appointed to the Council for her experience as President of the Canberra Environment Centre, Chair of Zero Waste Revolution, and leader of an environmentally and socially responsible consultancy business.

Ms Mia Swainson has an environmental engineering qualification and experience in social analysis, environmental management and business in government and non-government organisations. Ms Swainson has experience providing consulting services on environmental and climate-related matters. Ms Swainson is also the President of the Canberra Environment Centre (since 2018) and has significant experience engaging with a large variety of ACT stakeholders across the public, private and community sectors. This has included contribution to the development of community environment education programs in the ACT. Ms Swainson is also the Chair of Zero Waste Revolution looking at innovative ways for the ACT to reach zero waste.



Dr Arnagretta Hunter

Dr Arnagretta Hunter was appointed to the Council for her expertise in health and climate change research.

Dr Arnagretta Hunter has been a consultant physician and cardiologist since 2008. Dr Hunter is an academic and advocate working across clinical medicine, health research and advocacy in public policy to address complex challenges particularly relating to climate change. She has skills across medicine, political science and communications. Dr Hunter has made many public presentations and has published articles and academic papers on climate and health issues since 2008.

Dr Hunter is dedicated to understanding the health impacts of climate change, the advantages of working with communities on complex problems and the co-benefits of social change. Dr Hunter won the Sydney Sax medal (AHHA) as chair of Bushfire Impact Working Group in 2020 and is a Churchill Fellow. Dr Hunter has worked with a range of community and professional organisations including the Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA), the RACP where she is (acting) chair of Policy and Advocacy Committee. She has provided advice for the National Health and Climate Strategy and to federal government agencies.



Associate Professor Aparna Lal

Associate Professor Aparna Lal was appointed to the Council for her expertise in environmental impacts and health outcomes for communities.

Dr Aparna Lal has a multidisciplinary science background, with two postgraduate degrees in Wildlife Science and Ecology, a PhD in Public Health and qualifications in Environmental Law and Zoology. A large part of Dr Lal's current work focuses on populations that are disproportionately vulnerable to a variety of health impacts associated with environmental variability, including climate change. In Australia, these include Indigenous and rural communities, children, and the urban poor. Dr Lal also brings expertise in high level statistical modelling and best-practice open science to her work that considers how a focus on human well-being can improve outcomes of ecological restoration.



Dr Thomas Longden

Dr Thomas Longden was appointed to the Council for his expertise in environmental economics.

Dr Longden holds a PhD in environmental economics and has expertise in energy, transport and health. His research focuses on applied economics, which has included energy economics, health economics and environmental health. His publications have focused on the deployment of electric vehicles, the cost and emission intensity of hydrogen, temperature-related mortality, and energy insecurity. This work has also included assessments of the relationship between health, housing, energy and extreme temperatures. A recent example was published in Nature Energy. Dr Longden also contributed to two chapters of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change.

Observers (Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee members)



Ms Roslyn Brown

Ms Roslyn Brown is a Ngunnawal woman. Among numerous cultural advisory roles, Ms Brown is co-founder and serves as Co-Chairperson of the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, founder and co-chair of the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm. Ms Brown has a strong Cultural commitment to reconciliation and improving the status and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT region and advocates for the awareness and continuance of Aboriginal cultural practice and protocols. Through her various roles she has advocated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on issues such as housing, justice, caring, disability, and health and successfully lobbied to establish holistic health care, training opportunities and support structures for Indigenous people in the ACT. Ms Brown is employed as Elder in Residence at the University of Canberra, a member of the CIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory committee and was an inaugural elected member of the ACT Indigenous Elected Body (ACTIEB). As a representative and advocate for many in the community, she has demonstrated her commitment to the Ngunnawal Land, Culture, and the spirit of the People.



Mr Stephen Mudford

Stephen Mudford is a current member of the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee (DNCCC) with strong interests in climate change and fire management on Ngunnawal Country. Stephen has been actively engaged with the ACT Climate Change Council as an observer and has attended numerous environment and cultural summits on behalf of the DNCCC including the Biri Bulmba Budang National Custodians of Country Summit in 2023 and the AIATSIS Summit in in 2024. He has previously spent more than thirty years with ActewAGL and its predecessors as a Linesman, Leading Hand, Foreman, and Manager looking after the Canberra community's electricity supply. This role allowed him to be on Country and to look after Country through asset management of power poles and vegetation particularly in our more sensitive areas such as National Parks and Reserves systems. He is very passionate about caring for Country and being a voice for the Ngunnawal People as part of the committees across the ACT.

Activities and changes

Over the 2023-24 reporting period, the Council held seven formal meetings (six Council meetings and one Council planning meeting). Two Observers from the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee (DNCCC) were invited to attend Council meetings.

The Council provided advice to the Minister, EPSDD, and the Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet. The Council prepared advice on the following items, with more information provided throughout this Report:

- ACT's emission-reduction targets including Scope 3 emissions
- Cultural burning in the ACT
- Electrification and associated equity issues
- Behavioural insights related to climate change action ('How to build a Net Zero Society')
- Internal greenhouse gas emissions pricing
- Adaptation and mitigation strategies for the ACT including for high density residential buildings and risks and opportunities with lithium batteries
- Future challenges and opportunities in the ACT related to climate change
- First nations engagement and representation on the Council



Meetings

The Council formally met seven times in the 2023-24 reporting period in addition to progressing work through informal and out-of-session Council meetings and continued consultation with representatives from business and the community on climate change matters.

Tuesday 15 August 2023

This was the first meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

The Council discussed the ACT's emissions reduction targets, including the growing need to consider Scope 3 emissions in the territory's targets. Council members spoke in support of a robust and standardised reporting mechanism for scope 3 emissions. Discussions included the importance of identifying the largest sources of Scope 3 emissions and working towards reducing them.

The Council reflected on their meeting with Minister Rattenbury to discuss cultural burning in the ACT. Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed the potential for cultural burning in healing the community of its trauma from recent bushfires.

The Council discussed their recent presentation on electrification and equity and noted the importance of bringing the community along on ACT's pathway towards electrification.

The Directorate presented their work on the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP) and the substantive work required to transition the territory away from fossil fuels while maintaining a fair and equitable energy system. The Council and the Directorate discussed the importance of assisting vulnerable and low-income communities through this transition. This included an understanding of both physical and mental health impacts of this transition for the vulnerable community. The directorate noted that consultation on the IEP position paper was underway and welcomed Council feedback on this paper.

Tuesday 17 October 2023

This was the second meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

The Council discussed their social media plan, including the importance of aligning it with the Community engagement strategy. Discussions included the importance of understanding the principles behind the Council approach to their social media presence, such as the target audience, level of engagement and nature of posts.

The Council reflected on the importance of undertaking a gap analysis to understand how the ACT is performing in terms of climate change. The analysis will also determine potential climate change opportunities and steps the ACT can take to reduce its overall carbon footprint.

Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed the Council's community engagement forum that took place on 24 October 2023. This included the importance of working with Community organisations to educate the community on climate action and in turn, empower them to take action.

The Minister and the Council also discussed the importance of cultural change in not only spreading the culture of our Traditional Custodians but also positively impacting climate change. The Council explained the difference between the emissions emitted when burning in the cool season as compared to in the dry season.

Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed upcoming presentations from the Council to ACT Government on the ACT's emissions reduction targets. This included the need to consider the current emissions reduction targets in the context of the evolving science.

Tuesday 5 December 2023

This was the third meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

The Council discussed with the Minister the recent Council presentation on the review of emission reduction targets at the Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet (CASC) meeting and requested input and feedback from the Minister. The Council also discussed the presentation of two CASC papers by the Council in February and April 2024 on behavioural insights and equity respectively.

The first 6-monthly report of the Council's community engagement strategy was presented and led to discussions on how to engage those not currently engaged on the topic of climate change. The Council further discussed with the Minister how best to incorporate community views in the Council's advice.

Council member Ms Mia Swainson presented her paper 'How to build a Net Zero Society'. The Council agreed the paper will be a discussion topic to present at the CASC meeting in February 2024 and it would be a useful tool for public servants.

The Council assisted with input into the overview of work currently being conducted by the Adaptation and Resilience Policy team. This included the importance of incorporating biodiversity, the challenges associated with energy efficient building design and society's reliance on temperature control.

The Council also discussed Government business regarding the following work being conducted by the directorate:

- the integrated energy plan- community consultation update
- an ACT internal value of carbon
- the 'living well with a changing climate' ACT longitudinal survey on climate change resilience.

Wednesday 7 February 2024

This was the fourth meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 and reflected on what an updated strategy would need to consider. This included the importance of developing policies and programs on climate adaptation, climate and health and complex risks.

The Minister and the Council also discussed ACT specific internal pricing of GHG emissions. The Council explained the difference between the Social Cost of Carbon and the Target Consistent Approach and reflected on the importance of incorporating a carbon value into Government decision making.

The Council discussed their upcoming presentation to Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet in April 2024 and agreed that the presentation should be informed by recent global climate predictions and weather events.

The Council also discussed their March planning session and what it needs to focus on.

The Directorate and Council discussed the ACT Governments Sustainable Household Scheme and Home Energy Support program and the Council's role in promoting these. The Council also noted its role in advising the Minister on the use of offsets in meeting the Territory's emission reduction targets.

Friday 15 March 2024, Council Workplan Strategy Session

This was the first additional formal meeting of the Council in the 2023-24 financial year. The meeting consisted of a planning session to help develop clear goals for the Council's future workplans. The session provided a clear understanding of the Council's priorities and noted that further discussions would be required to finalise the Council's overarching guiding compass and determine a set of principles that will guide decision-making.

Workplan priorities included: preparing for a post-2025 climate change strategy; health; leadership and opportunities; engagement and consultation; carbon offsets; and circular economy.

Tuesday 2 April 2024

This was the fifth meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed the ACT's Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 and reflected on what an updated strategy would need to consider. This included the importance of developing policies and programs on climate adaptation, climate and health and complex risks. Minister Rattenbury and the Council also discussed the importance of engaging with the ACT community in the development of an updated Strategy.

The Minister and the Council discussed the Council's presentation on the Future Challenges and Opportunities of Climate Change in the ACT. This presentation was intended for the April Climate Action Sub-Committee (CASC) meeting that was cancelled. The presentation emphasised the need for a stronger focus on climate adaptation, health and wellbeing, electrification and transport, social cohesion and a just transition, and opportunities for business development and investment in green tech and emerging industries.

The Minister updated the Council on the recent amendments to the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (2010) and noted that the Bill to include at least two Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members on the Council had passed through the Legislative Assembly. The Minister advised that recruitment for these two positions would commence in the next term of Government with work on community consultation already underway.

Tuesday 13 June 2024

This was the sixth, and final, meeting for the 2023-24 financial year.

Minister Rattenbury and the Council discussed the ACT's emissions reductions targets, the *ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25* and future membership requirements of the Council. Discussion featured the importance of increased focus on climate adaptation and on the stakeholder engagement the Council has undertaken to understand future climate ambition.

The Council and Minister Rattenbury discussed the future skill set of the Council, noting that four members' terms will end in mid-2025, and noted the Council needs the right mix of people to cover the skills required in the legislation. The Council were updated on the work EPSDD is undertaking to begin consultation on the recruitment of two Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait members.

The Council met with the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, Dr Sophie Lewis, and discussed the State of the Environment report and the Government response. The Council also met with members of the ACT Multi Hazard Advisory Council to identify opportunities for collaboration.





Advice and recommendations

Over 2023–24, the Council provided climate change advice to the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction as well as the Directorate and broader ACT Government. This included:

- Reviewing and updating advice on the latest science of climate change and the ACT’s emissions reduction targets.
- Implementing an engagement strategy to ensure the views of the Canberra community and business are reflected in the advice the Council provides to the Minister.
- Providing input and advice on negative emission technologies and offsets, lithium battery risks and opportunities, future challenges and opportunities for the ACT, cultural burning practices and in relation to the appointment of First Nations members to the Council.

The Council prepared formal advice, including to the Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet, related to:

- electrification and equity
- ACT emissions reduction targets
- a behavioural insights approach to net zero
- future challenges and opportunities of climate change.

The Council’s formal advice can be viewed on their website: <https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/climate-change/act-climate-change-council>.

Presentation on electrification and equity

Dr Longden prepared a presentation to Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet in July 2023 containing reflections of his time working on the evaluation of the Sustainability Victoria Healthy Homes project. The presentation discussed the following themes:

- Moving from supporting deployment to targeted support by changing recruitment.
- Assisting with practical issues related to the transition away from gas, including conducting carbon monoxide testing and replacing old gas heaters.
- Barriers to overcoming initial capital cost outlays for electrification options, including EVs and electrical appliances.
- Social impact investing and other co-funding.
- Applying a holistic view to household electrification that considers mechanical, health and safety, building shell and energy efficiency aspects.

ACT Emissions Reductions Target Review

In September 2023, the Council presented a review of the ACT’s emissions reduction targets to the Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet. The review emphasised that the setting of targets should be updated in line with global developments and that key indicators of climate change have worsened since the ACT made the initial commitment to net-zero by 2045 (for example, CO2 and other GHG emissions have continued to increase). The Council reiterated that the ultimate goal is to keep global warming to well-below 2°C and as close as possible to 1.5°C to avoid dangerous human-induced climate change, meaning targets should be consistently reviewed and updated to reflect this goal. The Council recommended that a revised position for the ACT of net-zero by 2040 would be more consistent with the concept of a ‘fair share’ of emissions and suggested that the ACT should consider committing to a trajectory where Scope 3 emissions are declining over time.

Behavioural insights: how to build a net-zero society – options for the ACT

The Council prepared a paper highlighting options for action relevant to the ACT based on the UK Behavioural Insights Team paper: *How to build a Net Zero society: Using behavioural insights to decarbonize home energy, transport, food and material consumption* (the BIT paper). The paper highlighted that delivery of net zero emissions by 2045 in the Australian Capital Territory will depend on substantial social and behavioural change. The BIT paper models three types of behavioural intervention: downstream, midstream and upstream. The Council identified that much of the ACT’s policy interventions to date focus on either downstream (for example, the Sustainable Household Scheme), or upstream (for example, the Regulation to prevent new gas network connections). There is an opportunity for greater focus in the mid-stream as a value-for-money approach to driving whole of society change.



Future challenges and opportunities of climate change in the ACT

This presentation highlighted the climate challenges the ACT is projected to face in the future. It stressed the need for a post-2025 Climate Change Strategy that comprehensively considers both adaptation and emission-reduction strategies in the development of government policies and programs. The Council identified that strong focuses should be:

- considering vulnerable people and communities, and overall equity
- health and wellbeing
- behavioural change
- electrification, transport, and built environment
- EV ready buildings and fire safety
- business and investment opportunities.

Engagement

Council members organised and participated in a range of engagements during the year, including forums, briefings, and presentations.

Community Engagement Strategy

The Council's Community Engagement Strategy sets out a structured approach to engaging the Canberra community so that their views are reflected in the advice the Council provides to the Minister. The Strategy commenced on 1 July 2023. A summary is available at <https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/climate-change/act-climate-change-council#Council-publications>

The Community Engagement Strategy includes three objectives:



- In 2023-24, The Climate Futures Engagement Program included meetings with environmental NGOs, community sector organisations, young people, Canberra Business Chamber, and Traditional Custodians.
- The Climate Adaptation Workshop Series is not scheduled to commence until the second half of 2024.
- Broad Community Engagement was achieved through the Council's first online forum, held on 24 October 2023, engaging 60 participants.

Online community forum

This open forum was an opportunity for ACT residents to learn about Canberra's climate leadership, ask questions of the Council and share views about the direction of the ACT's climate action. It was opened by Shane Rattenbury, ACT Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction and hosted by Professor Barbara Norman, past inaugural Chair of the Council. 60 people attended the event.

The forum was part of the Council's engagement strategy to ensure the advice that the Council provides reflects the views of the community and business. It also aimed to strengthen the community conversation on climate action, including ways of working together across the ACT in responding to climate change.

Contact the Council

Connect with the Council online

The community and stakeholders are invited to contact the Council via the Climate Change Council Secretariat.

Email: ClimateChangeCouncilSecretariat@act.gov.au

Telephone: 13 22 81 (Access Canberra)

Post: GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

The Council maintains a presence on Twitter and LinkedIn and invites the community to connect with them through social media.

X (Twitter): [@act_ccc](#)

LinkedIn: [ACT Climate Change Council](#)

Website: <https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/climate-change/act-climate-change-council>



Appendix A: Meeting Attendance

The Council formally met seven times in the 2023-24 reporting period at six formal meetings and one planning session.

- Tuesday 15 August 2023
- Tuesday 17 October 2023
- Tuesday 5 December 2023
- Wednesday 7 February 2024
- Friday 15 March 2024
- Tuesday 2 April 2024
- Tuesday 11 June 2024

Number Of Council Meetings Attended By Council Members:

Member	Number of meetings held during member's tenure	Number of meetings attended
Professor Mark Howden (Chair)	7	7
Dr Thomas Longden	7	6
Dr Paul Bannister	7	6
Associate Professor Cris Brack	7	7
Ms Sophia Hamblin Wang	7	4
Ms Mia Swainson	7	6
Associate Professor Aparna Lal	7	7
Dr Arnagretta Hunter	7	7

Appendix B: Expenditure

Climate Change Council	Totals 2023-24
Remuneration	32,236
Meeting Costs (Supplies & Services)	1,577
Total (excluding GST)	33,813

The totals listed here relate to meetings and activities remunerated in the 2023-24 financial year. Remuneration for Council members is determined by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal.

