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## **Australia can capitalise on state and territory net zero momentum to keep the global 1.5 degree goal in play: report**

State and territory government net zero targets and policies since the start of 2020 demonstrate Australia is capable of meeting global expectations for climate action, according to a new report by ClimateWorks Australia released today.

But the *State and territory climate action: Leading policies and programs* report also shows Australia's governments have developed different levels of expertise, and must now learn from each other – and work together – to deliver the coordinated action needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

'Current state and territory 2030 emissions reduction commitments give the country an estimated de-facto target of 37-42 per cent below 2005 levels,' says Rupert Posner, ClimateWorks Systems Lead. 'While this is short of what is needed for the world to limit warming to 1.5 degrees, it is higher than Australia's current commitment of 26-28 per cent.'

The *State and territory climate action* report focuses on what subnational governments are doing and can do to drive emissions reductions across the economy. It assesses their policies and programs against net zero pathways and benchmarks that represent the scale of action needed.

'Our *Decarbonisation Futures* benchmarks were released in April 2020 and show rapid decarbonisation is possible for Australia,' said Mr Posner. 'This is if Australia rolls out mature technologies and other solutions, invests in R&D and ensures long-lived assets are built with a net zero emissions future in mind.'

To meet the Paris goals, ClimateWorks benchmarks see Australia reduce total emissions by 48-74 per cent below 2005 levels; renewables generating 70-79 per cent of the country's electricity; and electric vehicles reaching 50-76 per cent of new car sales.

'Since our benchmarks were released each state or territory in Australia has set a target and introduced an implementation strategy aligned to at least one of these benchmarks,' says Mr Posner.

'They've built important momentum, and their current 2030 targets will get us about halfway there. The country now has the chance to capitalise on this.'

Today's report reveals that since the beginning of 2020, states and territories have allocated billions of dollars of funding to emissions reduction measures, and have made significant and inventive regulatory and legislative changes. This has happened across all sectors of the economy and across the political spectrum.

In presenting key state and territory policies and actions across electricity, transport, building, industry, and agriculture and land sectors, the report notes the two most populous states have targeted 50 per cent of new car sales to be electric by 2030 – which translates to an estimated 30 per

cent of new car sales Australia-wide. As of July 2021, renewable electricity projects in the pipeline equate to more than 10,000 MW of new generation and 1,400 MW of new storage.

‘The policies and programs detailed in the report demonstrate accelerated momentum in state and territory climate policy,’ he said. ‘They also show how much more can and needs to be achieved in Australia. The window for keeping global temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees Celsius is narrowing, but the goal is still achievable if ambitious benchmarks of progress are met this decade.

‘The good news is that most emissions reduction technologies continue to outperform expectations, and the costs are dropping and will continue to drop as their uptake increases. Governments can help put Australia in the fast lane in the race to zero emissions, through mainstreaming low-carbon solutions.’

The report highlights the role state and territory governments have in driving change in the private sector, and other policy areas, such as finance, that have not yet been addressed at scale.

‘In these areas, states and territories could benefit from collaborative work, both with each other and by learning from leading governments around the world. In the absence of strong national-level policy, there is an opportunity for states and territories to work together to create ambitious and consistent national approaches to key policy areas.’

The *State and territory climate action: Leading policies and programs* report will be officially launched today at 4pm AEDT. It comes as the world focuses on the impact of climate change at the COP26 conference in Glasgow from 31 October.

Register for the event here: <https://www.climateworksaustralia.org/resource/state-and-corporate-climate-action-closing-in-on-1-5/>

Access the report: <https://www.climateworksaustralia.org/resource/state-and-territory-climate-action-leading-policies-and-programs-in-australia/>

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