



CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT



The Climate Council exists to provide independent, authoritative climate change information to the Australian public.



Image: Chief Councillor, Prof Tim Flannery
and Climate Council CEO, Amanda McKenzie.

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01

CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT INTRODUCTION



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Climate Council is Australia's leading climate change communications organisation.

We provide authoritative, expert information to the public on climate change, the solutions, and international action, based on the most up-to-date science available.

We're made up of some of the country's leading climate scientists; energy, health, emergency services and policy experts; as well as a dedicated and highly skilled team of staff; and a huge community of volunteers and supporters who underpin our work. As an independent voice on climate change, we keep climate change at the top of the news headlines, produce hard-hitting reports, call out misinformation as we see it, and support Australia's shift to a prosperous, renewable powered economy.

The Climate Council was founded in 2013 by tens of thousands of supporters, in Australia's largest ever crowd-funding campaign, to create a new, independent and 100% community-funded organisation. Our work continues to be powered by our community, whose generous support propels our success.

OUR COMMUNITY

Our community is the powerhouse of the Climate Council.

Our engaged and passionate supporters are the heart and soul of our organisation, without whom we would cease to exist. From our roots as a crowd-funded organisation to today, the lion's share of our funding comes from our community givers. But this support extends far beyond the financial.

We often get asked, *"I'd like to do more! What can I do in my everyday life to tackle climate change, support the Climate Council and make a difference?"* We've put this guide together to answer this very question.

Whether it's sharing social media content and reports, emailing your local MP, writing a letter to the editor, volunteering, or fundraising, there are so many ways you can make a difference.

When hundreds of thousands of us come together and make a stand, it's incredible what we can do.

These actions enable us to magnify our collective impact and reach much further than we ever could otherwise. Together, we can reach into people's lounge rooms, onto sporting fields, into schools and offices, and grab the attention of Australia's major influencers. Thank you for helping shape the national conversation.

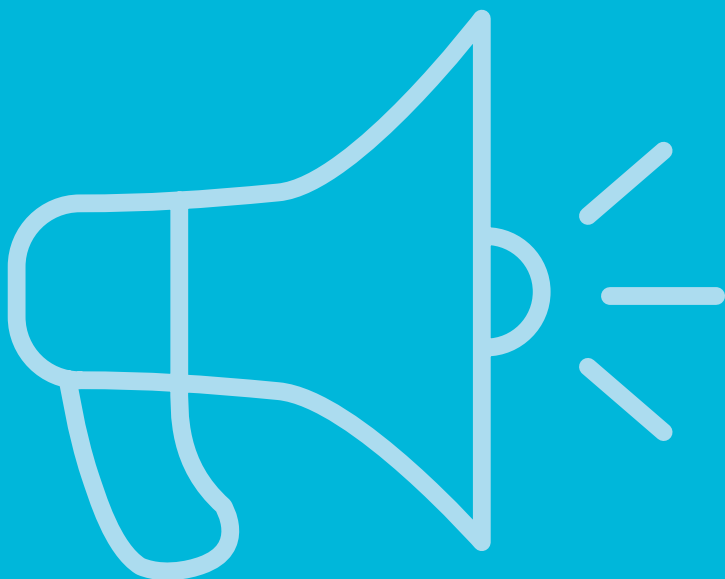


Image: Climate Council supporters learn about the impact of climate change on our precious ecosystems on Lord Howe Island.

This Climate Action Toolkit explains how you can make a difference, whatever sphere or stage of life you find yourself in, and help power climate action in Australia from the bottom up.

02

USING THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE



You're more powerful than you think. Your voice, and the opinions you share, can carry real influence.

One of the ways we can encourage real climate action at the local, state, territory and federal level is to demonstrate there is a groundswell of public appetite and vocal support for this.

We've put together a number of ways you can influence public debate and show grassroots community support for decisive action on climate change. **Will you take the Climate Action Pledge today?** It's easy - all you need to do is commit to doing at least one action from this toolkit in the next three months.

Image: Mayor Ken Keith with a display celebrating the ingenuity and can-do attitude of the Parkes community to finding solutions to big problems such as climate change.



CONTACTING YOUR MP

Contacting your Member of Parliament will help strengthen the voice for climate change action in Australia by letting them know what you care about and why you think some decisions are better than others.

Our MPs are there to listen to the views of the public, understand your perspective, and represent you in Parliament. The more people who contact their local MP on a given topic (e.g. climate change), the more likely this matter will be raised. As one of their constituents, your opinion holds a lot of weight, as based on your vote, they will win or lose elections.

This section covers two main options: writing a letter or email to your MP and calling your MP. However, if you have the time, you could also share your concerns by meeting with them in person, which has the potential to make a huge impact. One way to do this is by attending one of their public consultation sessions in your area. This is a time your local representative has set aside to listen to community concerns, and a face-to-face conversation is a great way to ask them questions and share your views.

Who do I contact?

You can search for your local member and find out how to contact them [here](#). While it is most effective to write to or call your local MP, you could also consider contacting your state's Senators or the Minister whose portfolio relates to your topic area (e.g. Environment Minister or Energy Minister).

EMAILING OR WRITING A LETTER TO YOUR MP

What do I say?

When writing an email or letter to your MP, it's best to keep it short and focus on one issue. This will maximise the impact of your message and help the message cut through. A lengthy message that covers lots of unrelated topics is more likely to be overlooked. In contrast; a concise and focused letter can be a powerful one.

Content

If you're unsure about the content of the letter, a great place to start is one of the Climate Council's reports. Our reports are packed with quick and reliable information about climate change, extreme weather impacts, climate solutions and energy policy. Including facts will strengthen your argument and help get your point across in a more convincing manner. However, it's also useful to include why you personally care about this issue – share your passion in a calm, considered and respectful way.

Let's say, for example, you want to write to your MP about your concern regarding new coal power station proposals. A good place to start is the Climate Council's 2018 Report *End of the Line: Coal in Australia*.



The 'Key Findings' provide a short, punchy summary of the report:

E.g. Key Finding 1: Burning coal is the most polluting way to generate electricity.

- › Australia's coal dominated electricity sector produced a third of Australia's greenhouse gas pollution in 2017 (excluding land use).
- › Greenhouse gas pollution levels in the electricity sector have increased by 42% since 1990, largely from the burning of fossil fuels, especially coal.

The Ask

While presenting facts and information is important, your letter is more effective if you can ask your MP to take a specific action as well.

Some actions that you might ask your MP to take:

- › Voting for or against a particular Bill.
If you think amendments are required to a given Bill, you can also ask them to raise amendments (make sure you're clear about what these are!).

- › Speaking about the issue in Parliament to raise awareness of the issue.
- › Asking a question in Parliament to gain extra information on an issue or raise its profile.
- › Raising the issue with the relevant Minister or Shadow Minister or portfolio holder. If other MPs are also raising the issue, this demonstrates that there is community concern for the issue.
- › Talking about the issue in the media to help raise its profile.

Last but not least, don't forget to write in your own words and make your concerns clear.

Now that you've found the information, you can start writing your message.

Here's a sample outline of how you might write to your MP about a proposed coal mine:

1 November 2018

Dear [Mr/Mrs/Ms First Name Last Name MP OR Senator Last Name]*,

1. Introduce yourself (and if you are a constituent, let them know!).
2. Identify the issue you are concerned about.
3. Use some information from the Climate Council's report, e.g. "If the Galilee Basin were a country on its own, it would emit more than 1.3 times Australia's current annual emissions from all sources and rank in the top 15 emitting countries in the world."
4. Explain in your own words why this issue concerns. You could:
 - › Use a personal story.
 - › Link the problem to past, current, or future impacts on the community.
 - › Voice your support for alternative options (in the case of coal, you could talk about the economic, social, and environmental benefits of renewable energy).
5. Tell your MP what you want them to do (e.g. vote for/against a proposal).

I await your response with anticipation.

Kind Regards,

Your Name

*NB If the MP or Senator is, or has been, a government Minister, they are given the title, 'The Honourable'. This means you would address them as follows: 'The Hon. Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr First Name Last Name MP' for MPs who are Ministers, or 'Senator the Hon. First Name Last Name' for Senators who are Ministers.



Image: It's important to let your Member of Parliament know about issues that are important to you - such as climate change - and how you'd like them to bring about change for their constituents.

CALLING YOUR MP

Here are four easy steps to follow when giving your MP a call.

1. Before the call:

Learn what you can about the MP and their position on climate change, energy etc. Read their parliamentary biography or personal website, see [here](#).

Review your key messages and make note of the points you want to make.

2. Making the call:

Call the MP's electorate office.

State your full name, mention that you live in their electorate and that you'd like to speak with them about climate action (or another more specific topic).

Politely answer any questions the electorate officer may ask - they provide feedback to their MP about what the local electorate thinks or wants.

3. During the call:

- › *Be Yourself*: it's important to be genuine. Don't worry about having a highly polished message - just relax and speak from the heart.
- › *Use Key Messages*: it helps to be clear and to the point - our reports are a good place to start to help you develop these.
- › *Tell your Story*: by talking about why strong action on climate change is important for you, or how extreme weather, made worse by climate change, has made an impact on your life. This strengthens and personalises your call.
- › *Be Respectful*: no matter the position of your/the MP, remember to be respectful to them and their staff.
- › *Stay on message*: it's easy to get distracted - if you go off on a tangent, find a way to come back to your key points.
- › *Be concise*: MPs' offices are often very busy, so try to make your point succinctly.

- › *Don't know the answer?* That's ok. Say you'll get back to them with the answer - contact us if you need help finding this.
- › *Ask for their support*: ask your MP if you can count on their support for strong climate action in the future. If they say they will support this, ask them to speak with their colleagues to help deliver this.

4. Following the meeting:

- › *Thank the MP*: send them an email or letter, thanking them for the conversation and reminding them of any commitment they may have made to you.
- › *Keep in touch*: if you see an interesting article, forward it to the MP to keep yourself (and climate action) in their mind.



Image: Don't underestimate the power that a phone call to your MP can make.

WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sending a letter to the editor of a newspaper is a great way to share your opinion with the community and with local decision makers — not only your local MP, but business leaders and the Australian public more broadly.

Your letter can alert people to issues or ideas they may not be aware of, and let readers know about the risks of climate change, both now and in the future, and what the solutions are.

A short message can respond to a recent article in the newspaper, or something that is currently newsworthy — and climate change is always a current news story, related to so many everyday issues and concerns.

You can read our full Letter to the Editor guide [here](#).

Image: From your local newspaper, to the nation's leading papers, there's no shortage of opportunities to write in about.



HOW DO YOU WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

1. Open with a greeting

Something as simple as 'To The Editor' will do; however, if you know the editor's name, use it — this may increase the possibility of your letter being read and published.

2. Spark the reader's attention

Your opening sentence will be vital to the success of your letter: it should immediately inform readers what you're writing about and entice them to keep reading. If you are writing a direct response to a previously published article, cite its date and title in the first sentence. If not, introduce your argument clearly, and go from there.

3. Make your case in the body of the letter

- › Give a persuasive explanation of why the issue is important.
- › Provide reputable evidence to back up claims (the Climate Council website has a wide range of resources you can use to find quick facts and data).
- › State your opinion about what should be done/possible solutions to the issue.

4. Close off

- › Sign off with your name and contact details (these won't be published, but the paper may use this for follow up or verification).

Sample Letter to the Editor (150 words):

Australia is the sunniest country in the world, and one of the windiest. We have enough renewable energy resources to power Australia 500 times over! So let's get the facts straight on renewables and power prices.

Contrary to *<insert name of article suggesting that renewables drive up electricity prices>*, renewables are the cheapest form of new power, and new renewable energy is driving down electricity prices by increasing electricity supply. By 2030, most of Australia's coal fired power stations will be over 40 years old. Once the coal fleet reaches this age, they become increasingly expensive to run, and increasingly unreliable — particularly during heatwaves.

The cost of lithium-ion batteries has fallen by 80% since 2010. Costs are expected to halve again by 2025.

Between 2006 and 2016, states with the lowest growth in wind and solar generation (Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales), experienced the largest increase in their electricity bills.

Let's keep pushing for positive change with the bountiful renewable energy and storage solutions that we have on hand.

- First Name, Suburb, State

LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing climate change and solutions messages on your social media platforms is an effective way of reaching new audiences that the Climate Council wouldn't be able to reach on our own.

This means you're helping change hearts and minds of people who might not normally be exposed to messages about climate impacts and solutions.

For example, you can share Climate Council posts from [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#), or write your own messages which would resonate with your friends and family.

Image: Examples of positive social media content that you can share with your friends and family. You can find these on the Climate Council's Instagram and Facebook pages.



USING YOUR NETWORKS

Having conversations with people who know and trust you is one of the best ways for those who may be undecided on the importance of taking further climate action.

There are many ways to approach the topic of climate change and you will no doubt find that your audience, including friends and family, respond to different aspects of the problems we face in varying ways.

Image: Use the networks that you have to create positive change for climate action.



Here are a few ways you can weave climate change into everyday conversation:

- › How extreme weather is affecting Australian wildlife (think about heat stress both on land and in the ocean).
- › How you can reduce your power bills (think solar panels, battery packs).
- › Consider the impact of more extremely hot days on everyday life (think stresses for outdoor workers, sport enthusiasts and vulnerable populations).
- › Discuss the impacts of extreme weather in regional areas (think especially of drought and farmers).
- › Think about our national icons that we want to protect (think the Great Barrier Reef at risk of bleaching and precious forest, such as the Tarkine in Tasmania, at increased risk of bushfires).

You can also use your skills, strengths and networks to lead your own workplace, or sector, to cut its greenhouse gas pollution and prepare for climate change impacts. If you are an architect, can you design greener, more energy efficient buildings? If you are a chef, can you buy more local produce? If you are an engineer, can you put your skills to use in the booming renewable energy sector? If you're a parent, can you start a program in your child's school to increase energy efficiency or fundraise for a solar panel installation? If you're a worker, can you put forward a case for your workplace to install solar panels, or buy 100% renewable energy? It doesn't matter where you work, or what you do, think about how you can apply your skills and interests to the climate challenge!

The following section (Climate Communications 101), provides a range of communication tips and examples of how to put this into good use.

03

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS 101



Communicating about climate change can seem challenging. But it doesn't need to be.

We've put together our top tips for speaking about climate change and its solutions with your friends and family, so next time you're at that family barbeque, you'll be equipped to whip out a few of these techniques.

Image: Speaking with your friends and family can seem daunting at first, but we've done the leg work to help ease those conversations.



MAKE THE PROBLEM RELEVANT, CONCRETE AND LOCAL

THE PROBLEM IS HAPPENING NOW, NOT TOMORROW.

Climate change is happening here and now, its impact felt and experienced in rising temperatures and extreme weather events — around the world and in Australia. It's easy to consider climate change as a 'future problem', not immediately concerning or relevant. However, it is important to show your audience (whether that's your friends or your local MP) that climate change is happening today and is a problem that poses a real threat to their lives and livelihoods that must be prioritised and dealt with now.

When you're talking about climate change, it's vital to clearly express and identify how we are experiencing climate change today through record-breaking summers and winters, droughts, severe heatwaves, supercharged storms, and more intense bushfire seasons. Australians are more frequently witnessing the impact of climate change through extreme weather events and making this link will help get across that this is a problem we are facing today, in our own backyards.

Putting in context how human life is placed at risk during extreme weather events highlights how important it is to act on climate change, to protect Australians today, and in future generations.



Image: Accelerating climate change exacerbates drought conditions across Australia.

PEOPLE NOT POLAR BEARS

Melting glaciers and polar bears at risk, are very far away from the daily experience of most Australians. This means you should focus on people, rather than the environment, when speaking about impacts. It is critical we emphasise climate change as an issue with immediate impacts for Australia, our families, livelihoods, and ways of life. We now have substantial data on how the climate has already changed. For instance, the number of heatwave days in Canberra has doubled. In Sydney, heatwaves are starting 19 days earlier, and in Adelaide, heatwave days are on average 4 degrees hotter than they used to be. It is well known that longer, hotter heatwaves can cause an increase in premature deaths, particularly among the most vulnerable in our communities. Extreme heat places pressure on our health system, infrastructure, ecosystems, and farmers.

LOCAL NOT GLOBAL

Research in Australia and the US shows that the larger an issue is, the less people feel a sense of responsibility for it. So it is more engaging to focus on local consequences, rather than those on a regional or global scale. Extreme weather is a useful way to talk about the concrete consequences of a changing climate, as nearly half of Australians directly identify with having experienced extreme weather.

HIGHLIGHT THAT CONCERN ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IS WIDESPREAD

For many years, public opinion research has consistently found that the vast majority of Australians think climate change is happening, and the number of people expressing concern is climbing.

Despite this, there is still a strong perception that deniers (people who believe climate change is either not happening, or humans have no role), are roughly one quarter of the population. In fact, it is *less than 10%*. Highlighting prominent skeptics gives a false impression that denial is widespread. This perception prevents community members from speaking up at a BBQ or in the schoolyard, because they believe the issue is hotly contested. Demonstrating widespread concern opens up community conversation on action.



Image: Country Fire Authority firefighters with Elvis dumping water to assist firefighters battling a blaze in Australia's southeast.



BOX 1: GETTING EXTREME WEATHER LANGUAGE RIGHT

While climate change is influencing all weather, scientists' understanding of the magnitude of the influence on different types of extreme weather can vary. This is primarily due to the complexity in understanding the

processes that cause different types of events and the availability of data. Scientists are conservative in their language, to ensure they are accurate. Here is a quick guide to ensure your language is accurate too.



Heat

Climate change is making heatwaves and extreme hot weather worse.



Bushfires

Climate change is worsening high bushfire danger weather.



Storms

Climate change is fuelling more intense and damaging storms.



Drought

Hotter, drier conditions, driven by climate change, increase the risk of drought conditions.



Sea level rise

Climate change is driving rising sea levels. Higher seas exacerbate coastal flooding.

SHOW THAT SOLUTIONS ARE DESIRABLE, POSSIBLE AND INEVITABLE

FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS AVAILABLE TODAY

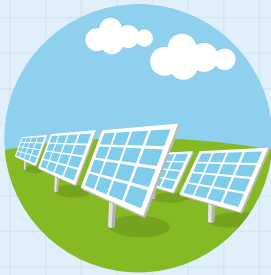
Renewable energy and battery storage technology are climate change solutions that are here and available now. Renewable energy and battery storage are clean, affordable and reliable solutions that are reducing greenhouse gas pollution as they continue to be rolled out here in Australia and around the world.

When you're talking about solutions, like renewables and storage, don't talk about them as if they're a far-off possibility. Phrases such as 'renewables are the energy of the future' actually suggest that renewable sources of power are a future solution, rather than available today.

Instead, describe renewable energy and storage examples that already exist. You can use examples like rooftop solar installations, specific solar or wind farms, and large-scale (or other term) batteries, such as the South Australian Big Battery.

It's important that renewables and storage are understood to be climate change energy solutions that are available today, right now, rather than a future concept.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RENEWABLE ENERGY?



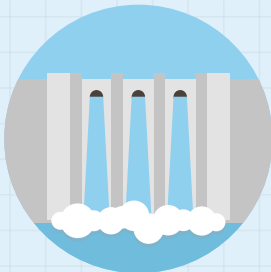
→ SOLAR

Light and heat from the sun hits solar panels and it is **turned into energy**.



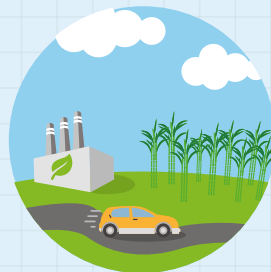
→ WIND

Wind **turns the blades of a turbine** to generate energy.



→ HYDRO

Flowing water **moves downhill through turbines** which rotate and **generate energy**.



→ BIOENERGY

Using **natural materials like sugarcane waste, landfill gas and algae to produce energy**. It can even be **used to power cars!**

Image: We have a wide range of renewable energy options that we use can use everyday.

HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS OF RENEWABLES AND STORAGE

It is human nature to be more interested or invested in something when it directly affects you, whether it's negatively or positively. Communicate to those you're speaking to the many ways that renewable energy and battery storage are benefiting people and industry in Australia.

People, businesses, and organisations are benefiting from renewable energy and battery storage today. Renewable energy is popular partly because it provides many benefits. Emphasising these benefits helps people to understand the reasons for the transition from fossil fuel generation to renewable energy. For example, benefits include local investment and jobs, cutting household and business power bills, creating new industries, modernising the power system, improving health and supporting regional communities.

In fact, recent polling* showed three quarters of Australians expect household batteries to become commonplace within ten years, and over half expect large-scale batteries to be commonplace within the same timeframe.

Explaining in simple terms, the benefits of renewable energy and battery storage, is the best way to highlight energy solutions. A phrase such as 'renewable energy and battery storage is clean, affordable and reliable', is a much more convincing argument than simply saying that renewable energy technology exists and is good for the environment.

*The Climate Council commissioned ReachTel polling in September 2017, "Energy Storage: Poll of Australians."

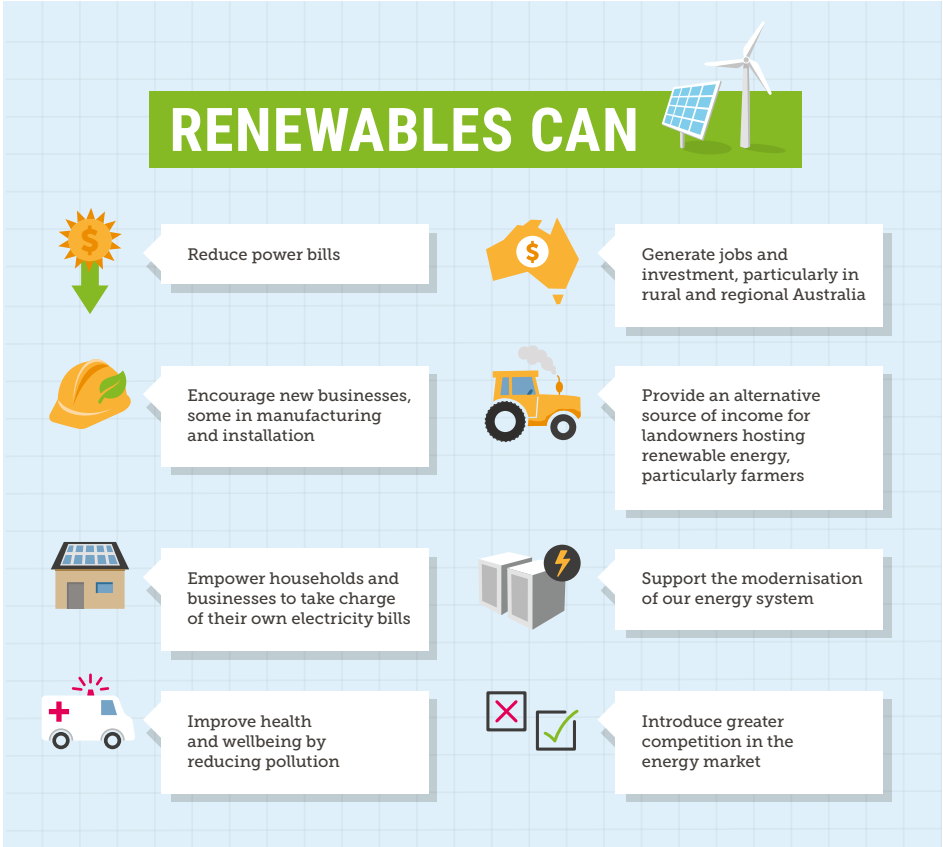


Image: There are a range of benefits that renewable energy brings, including lowering power bills, creating jobs and generating investment.

**PAINT A CLEAR
PICTURE OF THE
FUTURE**

When Australians think of sources of renewable energy they often only think of rooftop solar. Whereas renewables and storage are actually big and powerful enough to generate electricity to supply major industries and the National Electricity Market non-stop.

SHOW EXAMPLES OF THE TRANSITION ALREADY UNDERWAY

People need greater exposure to large-scale renewable energy and energy storage solutions, to understand that bigger solar and wind farms plus batteries means clean, reliable and affordable electricity, every minute of the day.

The transition to clean, affordable and reliable renewable energy and battery storage is more clearly seen when there are existing case studies of where the technology has been successfully used. Humans, by nature, fear the unknown and resist change, so to move past those concerns, it's crucial to focus on examples where something has already worked in a similar situation.

For example, California recently legislated to reach 100% renewable energy by 2045. While in business, Apple has shifted its entire global operations to 100% renewable energy — now that's innovation.

Local examples are also helpful in showing progress underway in Australia. The following statement paints a picture of the transformation underway in Broken Hill:

"The Broken Hill solar farm has 670,000 solar panels and is generating power in the desert. Just imagine! It can power tens of thousands of homes and has created about 150 jobs in the community thanks to its construction."

This example highlights the progress of South Australia:

“South Australia is a global leader in renewable energy, generating almost half of its electricity from wind and solar and on track to be even higher in a few years. South Australia is also home to the world’s most powerful battery and will soon be home to Australia’s largest solar thermal plant. South Australia’s strong leadership is creating local jobs and reducing pollution.”

Image: The Broken Hill solar plant generates enough power for tens of thousands of homes.



CONNECT THE PROBLEM WITH THE SOLUTION

As the pace of transition to renewable energy increases and complications arise, it's more important than ever to connect the problem (intensifying climate change and worsening extreme weather events) with the solutions (e.g. renewable energy and battery storage).

We need to keep reminding Australians why we're undertaking this important transition away from fossil fuels to renewables: to protect ourselves from even worse extreme weather events such as worsening heatwaves, supercharged storms, droughts and bushfires.

Image: The world's largest lithium-ion battery in South Australia.



WHAT TO AVOID

REINFORCING FALSE DEBATE

There is no debate about the basic science of climate change. In fact, more than 97% of scientists in the field agree that climate change is happening and human activities are the cause. People with vested interests in the continued use of fossil fuels are the only ones who benefit from this false idea of a debate about climate change, because it stops conversation from moving to action. In contrast, demonstrating agreement on the problem is important to shifting the conversation to solutions.

LANGUAGE OF BELIEF

You don't "believe" in gravity. It's not an article of faith, but an objective fact. Climate change is the same. Comments like "climate change is real" and "I believe in climate change" actually reinforce the ideas that:

- a) climate change is based on belief rather than scientific evidence; and
- b) there is a debate.

Instead, it's best to get on with explaining what the impacts will mean and what the solutions are.

However, when confronted with scepticism, using "risk" language can be more effective. Instead of saying, "climate change is real," it's more helpful to say, "climate change is already affecting Australians." Rather than, "I believe in climate change", it's more effective to say, "the risks of worsening extreme weather are clear."

TO NEGATE A MYTH IS TO REINFORCE IT

Repeating myths or messages you disagree with even while trying to dismiss them, actually reinforces those very same myths or messages in your audience's mind. As George Lakoff said, "Don't think of an elephant!" and what do we instantly do - think of an elephant! When you are discussing renewable energy and climate change, use the same logic.

For example, attempting to rebut the Federal Government's message that "renewables aren't reliable because sometimes the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing" by saying, "it's not true to say that renewables aren't reliable because the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, because batteries and energy storage can provide energy on demand", only reinforces the myth the Federal Government is trying to promote.

It's better to ignore negative messages and move straight to the positive: "renewables with battery storage, are reliable and can provide electricity on demand, 24/7. Australia is one of the sunniest and windiest nations in the world, so solar and wind energy just makes sense."



Image: Think about how you can advance your own message, without repeating your opposition's.

FAQS

We know that climate change can be a tricky topic to navigate. We've compiled a list of the top questions we get asked about climate change and renewable energy to help you navigate talking about climate change.

Image: Bleached staghorn coral.



1. Question: If the climate is changing, and temperatures are getting warmer, why was winter still so cold?

Winter always seems cold, but if you look at the long-term trend, Australian winters are definitely getting warmer across most of the country. Weather, seasons and climate are very different. Weather changes in the space of minutes or hours, and seasons change throughout the year. Climate is the average weather over a period of at least 30 years. Even in a changing climate, there will still be day-to-day and year-to-year variations that will always include the cold and the hot. But to get a picture of the impact of climate change on winter temperatures, look at the long-term trends, rather than single-year data. Australia's average winter temperatures have increased by around 1°C since 1910, driven by climate change as a direct result of burning fossil fuels — coal, oil and gas. More info [here](#).

2. Question: I keep seeing different numbers — how much has the temperature actually changed?

The science is very clear, but the numbers can sometimes vary, because they depend on where you're talking

about, when you're talking about, and when you're comparing it to. However, the overall trend is clear – there is a long-term upswing in global average temperatures with 17 out of the 18 hottest years on record all occurring this century. Not only that, but the world experienced its hottest five-year period from 2013 to 2017. More info [here](#).

3. Question: Don't volcanoes emit greenhouse gases?

It's true that active volcanoes emit small amounts of greenhouse gases every year, but the volume is tiny compared to human-caused emissions. All the volcanoes in the world emit less than 0.3 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide each year, whereas human emissions are over 36 gigatonnes each year. During volcanic eruptions, volcanoes emit large amounts of volcanic gases, aerosol droplets, and ash into the high atmosphere. The ash is heavy and falls out of the atmosphere rapidly and has a negligible influence on climate change. Gases like carbon dioxide stay in the atmosphere for much longer and have a warming influence. Sulphur dioxide emissions are converted to sulfate aerosols in the atmosphere, where they last for around two years at high altitudes. Sulfate aerosols cause

global cooling – and this cooling effect generally outweighs the warming from a volcanic eruption. More info [here](#).

4. Question: Can an individual extreme weather event be linked to climate change?

Yes. Today, all weather events are influenced by climate change, because they're happening in a much hotter climate that contains more moisture (about 7% more moisture than in the 1950s). Recent scientific advances also allow us to assess the impact of climate change on an individual event. For example, climate change made the 2016 bleaching event on the Great Barrier Reef 175 times more likely. A hotter climate is more energetic and fuels more intense extreme weather, such as heatwaves and storms. For instance, heatwaves in Sydney on average now start 19 days earlier, are 1.5°C hotter, and happen more frequently than they did 60 years ago.

TALKING ENERGY

1. **Myth:** What happens when the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow?

Fact: Renewable energy and storage can provide electricity 24/7.

Renewable electricity can power the economy through a mix of wind and solar energy, together with on-demand renewables (such as solar thermal, biomass and hydro power) and energy storage (such as pumped hydro or batteries). Improved energy efficiency and demand response, such as installing modern appliances and ensuring they're not running when electricity demand is high, can also help make the grid more reliable.

Myth: Coal is reliable.

Fact: Ageing coal generators are unreliable, and vulnerable in heatwaves.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) has identified ageing coal power stations as a risk to reliable electricity supply. By 2030, most of Australia's coal

fired power stations will be over 40 years old. Once the coal fleet reaches this age, they become increasingly expensive to run, and increasingly unreliable particularly during heat waves. Already, Australia's coal and gas power stations are increasingly unreliable, experiencing almost 100 breakdowns in the seven-month period to the end of June 2018.

2. **Myth:** Renewable energy is driving up electricity prices.

Fact: Renewable energy is the cheapest form of new power.

New renewable energy is driving down electricity prices by increasing electricity supply. Australia's coal power stations are reaching the end of their lives and need replacing. Renewable power from wind and solar farms is the cheapest form of new power generation and is best suited to replace these old clunkers. More than 1.8 million Australian households are reducing their electricity bills with rooftop solar.

3. Myth: Renewable energy causes power outages.

Fact: Most blackouts are caused by events affecting power lines.

99% of all interruptions to power supply, including blackouts, are caused by events affecting power lines — not a lack of generation. Common causes of blackouts include fallen tree limbs, possums, vehicle impacts, bushfires, lightning strikes and storms. And to make matters worse, climate change — driven by the burning of coal, oil and gas for electricity — is worsening many extreme weather events, such as storms, heatwaves, and bushfire weather.

4. Myth: Australia lacks leadership on renewable energy.

Fact: States and territories are leading on renewable energy in the absence of credible federal policy.

While Australia waits for a credible climate and energy policy from the Federal Government, states and territories continue to lead the charge on ramping up renewable energy and cutting greenhouse gas pollution.

04

EVERYDAY LIFESTYLE



Here at the Climate Council, we're pushing to change the national conversation about climate change solutions and to see this backed up by tangible action.

While we often focus on changing systems at a national level, there are many actions you can take to help our cause in your day-to-day life.



Image: Let's help each other build a better Australia.

JOIN THE RENEWABLE ENERGY REVOLUTION

Australia is the sunniest country in the world and one of the windiest. Australians are taking advantage of this by embracing renewable energy.

Take solar, for example: 1.8 million Australian households have already installed solar panels on their rooftops. Joining the switch to clean power is not just a great way to cut household emissions it will also help to reduce your power bills. What's more exciting is that this renewables revolution is only just beginning. Australia's potential for renewable energy generation is 500 times greater than current power generation capacity.

For more information about installing solar PV for your house, check out [*this guide from the Alternative Technology Association*](#) or [*this guide from the Clean Energy Council*](#).

Image: 1.8 million Australian households have already installed solar on their rooftops.



CHOOSE GREEN POWER

Burning fossil fuels generates the majority of Australia's electricity.

If you're not in a position to purchase solar panels, that doesn't mean that you can't take control of your energy generation.

When you buy accredited green power from your electricity provider, you are asking your provider to purchase the equivalent amount of electricity from renewable energy generators, which is added to the electricity grid on your behalf. This is another way to help support the uptake of renewable energy in Australia and bring down emissions.

To find out more about the performance of different energy retailers, the [*Green Electricity Guide*](#) has all the answers.

Image: Get onboard the renewables revolution starting with your home energy.



REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

There are lots of ways you can tackle reducing your energy consumption at home.

Here's a short list to get you start thinking about how you can make a difference, starting in your own home:

- › Take stock of the way your own activities and lifestyle contributes to greenhouse gas pollution - whether at home, work or on holiday.
- › Switch off lights and appliances when you aren't using them.
- › Shut doors and close curtains.
- › Cut back on high energy use activities like using a clothes dryer.
- › Choose more efficient appliances and lighting, and choose energy efficient options where available (e.g. when buying washing machines and dishwashers).
- › Install insulation.
- › Install thermostats.
- › When renovating or building, prioritise energy efficiency in the design.

For more information, head [here](#).



Image: There are simple things you can do to reduce the costs of heating and cooling, such as shutting your blinds or curtains.

MOVE YOUR MONEY

Do you know where your personal finances are invested?

Many banks, super funds and share portfolios invest in fossil fuel projects. By placing pressure on your bank or moving your money (also known as [divestment](#)), you're stopping financing for the fossil fuel industry and raising awareness about our need to shift to clean forms of energy.

To find out where your bank stands, click [here](#). To find out more about the future your super is funding, click [here](#).

Image: How could you make your finances more sustainable?



CONSUMPTION AND WASTE.

Changing the way you purchase and consume goods can have a dramatic impact on your carbon footprint.

Some of the ways that you can use your power as a consumer to reduce your impact on the planet include:

- › When making purchasing decisions, pick companies which are taking action on climate change and supporting solutions like renewable energy. You can find a list of companies which have committed to 100% renewable energy [here](#).
- › Reduce consumption and buy consumer goods (like clothes and appliances), which are built last to reduce the energy use and resources which goes into production.
- › Reduce food waste. Once in landfill, food waste breaks down and emits greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane.

Image: If global food waste were a country, it would be the third-biggest greenhouse gas emitter.



CHANGE THE WAY YOU TRAVEL

Transport is one of the biggest contributors to Australia's overall greenhouse gas pollution.

Transport accounts for 18% of Australia's greenhouse gas pollution. With that in mind, how do you normally get from place to place? Think about when you can ditch the car and take public transport, cycle or walk the distance instead.

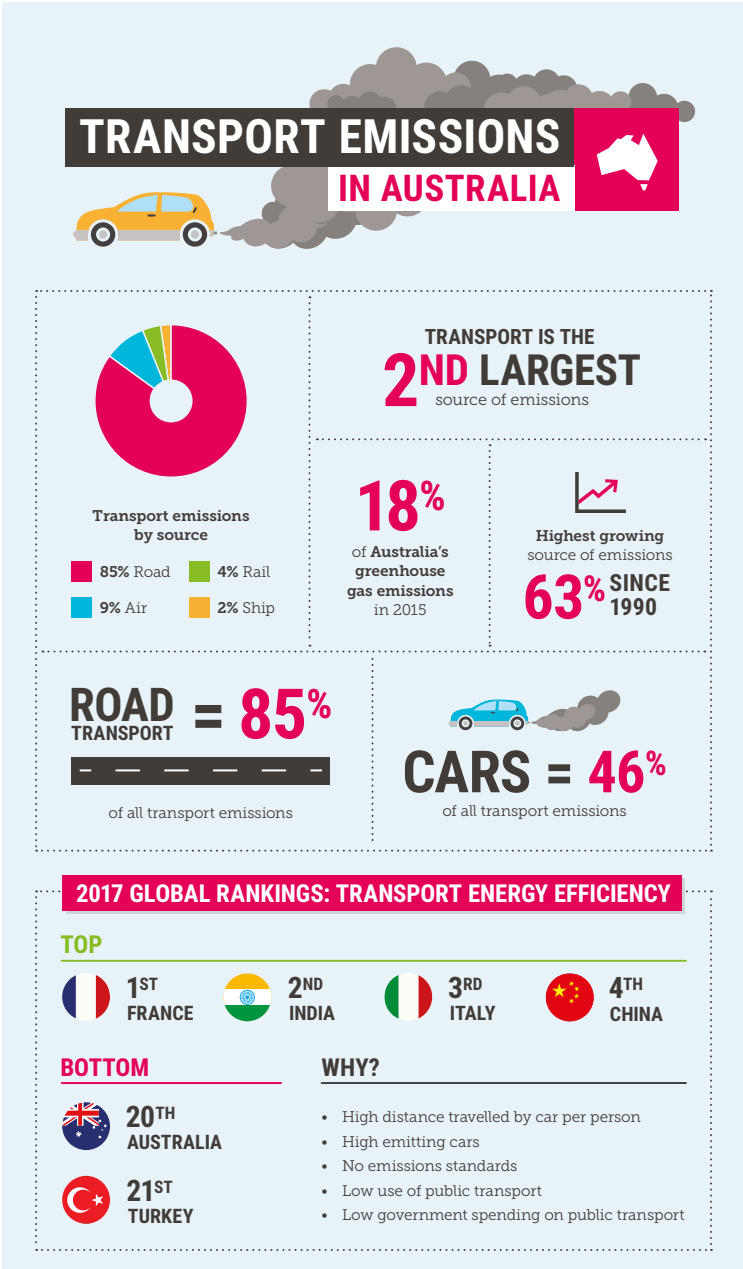
Some of the ways you can reduce your emissions from transport include:

- › Avoid unnecessary travel (e.g. using video chat software for meetings rather than interstate flights or lengthy car trips).
- › Choose cleaner alternatives (e.g. public transport, cycling and walking).
- › Schedule work to make the most of times when interstate travel is required (e.g. consolidate meetings into a few days rather than travelling back and forth).
- › When driving is unavoidable, pollution can be reduced by carpooling (sharing the trip with colleagues, neighbours or friends), or choosing a more fuel efficient car, or electric vehicle.
- › Pay to 'offset' any unavoidable car trips or plane flights with companies that support renewable energy or energy efficiency (e.g. [*Climate Chest*](#)).

- › Encourage your workplace to support sustainable transport options - both for travel to and from work and for work - such as public transport, cycling and walking rather than driving (e.g. through discounted travel cards and cycling facilities).
- › Write to your local, state and federal representatives and encourage them to support the transition to more sustainable transport options.

Image: Why not cycle to your next event?

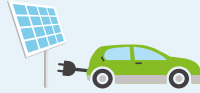




KEY SOLUTIONS



Public Transport

Mandatory Greenhouse
Gas Emissions StandardsElectric Vehicles
Powered by Renewables

EMISSIONS BY MODE OF TRANSPORT

Average emissions per kilometre:

3-21

gCO₂/kmTRAIN
per person

4-22

gCO₂/kmLIGHT RAIL
per person

12-22

gCO₂/kmBUS
per person

6

gCO₂/kmELECTRIC VEHICLES
(powered by renewable energy)
per person

184

gCO₂/kmNEW CARS
(Australia)
per person

250

gCO₂/kmAVERAGE CAR
(Australia) on the road
per person

MANDATORY GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS STANDARDS

In place: 80% of Global Car Market



US



S Korea



China



Canada



EU



Japan



India



Mexico

Non-existent:



Australia

INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

Where electric vehicles make up:

MORE THAN 1% OF CAR SALES

Norway
23.3%Netherlands
9.7%Sweden
2.4%France
1.2%UK
1.0%China
1.0%

MORE THAN 0.5% OF CAR SALES

US
0.7%Portugal
0.7%Germany
0.7%Japan
0.6%Australia
0.08%AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC
VEHICLES SALES 2015

STAY INFORMED

If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're well on the way to doing this already!

Whether you're reading our reports, sharing our information on social media, or keeping track of these issues in your everyday life, you're playing an important role in keeping the pressure up so that climate action stays on the national agenda. Staying informed means you can correct misinformation when you hear it and make sure discussions about climate change are based on the facts.

Why not ask your friends and family to [sign up to the Climate Council newsletter](#) so they can also stay up to date on the latest climate, energy and solutions news?

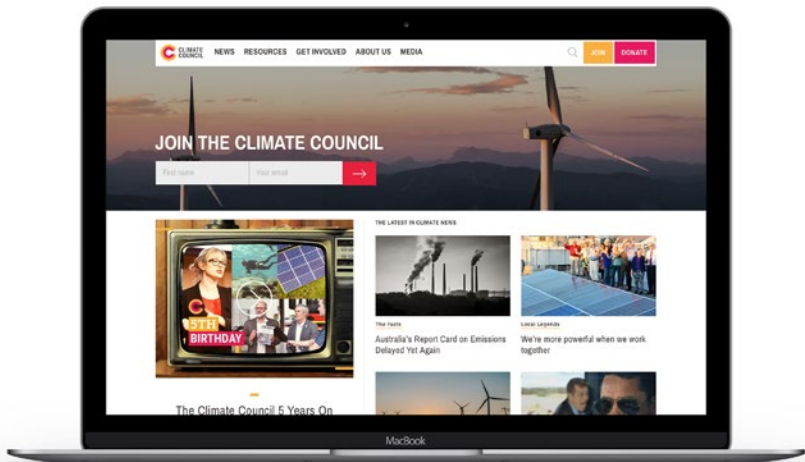


Image: Join our community so you be part of a wider movement fighting for climate action.

POWER LOCAL ACTION

Australian cities, towns, and shires are major drivers of greenhouse gas pollution, but can also be critical hubs for climate change solutions.

Did you know that by changing the way we use and produce energy, 70% of emission reductions required to meet the global climate agreement made in Paris can be achieved in cities?

To capitalise on the potential of towns and cities, we've launched the *Cities Power Partnership* (CPP) which seeks to accelerate Australia's transition to a renewable energy future through our towns and cities. The Cities Power Partnership is now the largest climate program for local governments in Australia and is powered by over 100 councils and 300 towns and cities, representing 11 million Australians across the country.

You can help us power change from the bottom up!



Image: Mayors celebrate the launch of the Cities Power Partnership.

Would you like to see things like innovative community energy projects, more solar on rooftops, and sustainable public transport in your local area?



Nominate your local council to join the Cities Power Partnership!

The councils you see leading the way on the Cities Power Partnership site all have one thing in common: they are driven to take action by people in the communities they serve. That's why we're collecting nominations from community members for their council to join the Cities Power Partnership.

[Fill out the form](#) and we will use your nomination as the reason to contact your Council and to invite them to join. The more nominations we get from locals, the easier it is for us to get councils on board.

You can nominate your community [here](#).

Tell us why you think your Council or any other would be a good fit. And if you have recommended points of contact within Councils — either staff or elected representatives — we're all ears.

05

INVESTING IN CLIMATE ACTION



REGULAR GIVING

The Climate Council is 100% independent and community-funded.

We rely on donations from individuals like you to power our critical research, campaigns and projects.

A regular contribution is one of the best ways you can push for climate change action and take on the biggest issue of our generation.

All donations are tax-deductible. To make a donation today, head to our [website](#).

Image: The Climate Council is powered by a dedicated group of passionate supporters without whom we wouldn't be able to operate.



WORKPLACE GIVING

Workplace giving is an easy and effective way for employees to make a difference by giving a regular donation through their pre-tax pay.

It also provides the opportunity for organisations to double the impact, by matching their employees' contributions.

Together, this is a powerful way to turbo-charge the work of the Climate Council.

To find out more about workplace giving and our partner organisations, head to our [website](#).

Image: Double your impact through matched workplace giving.



CHAMPIONS CLUB

Champion: A person who vigorously supports or defends a person or cause.

Our *Climate Champions program* provides community donors with the opportunity to provide a significant annual contribution of \$1,000 or more to the Climate Council.

As a result, Climate Champions will receive:

- › Access to exclusive events
- › Online or in person briefings from our Climate Councillors
- › First offer to join our adventure trips

- › First to hear about our upcoming reports
- › Hard copies of our Impact Report, so you can track how you're contributing to climate change action
- › Input into our strategic direction.

Funding from Climate Champions gives us the certainty we need to plan ahead and develop ambitious new projects, like our Cities Power Partnership. We can only be ambitious in tackling climate change, because we have champions committed to powering our impact.

For more information and to sign up, head [here](#).

BEQUESTS

Many people join the Climate Council community because we are deeply concerned about the kind of future we are leaving for our children and grandchildren to inherit.

Leaving a gift in your will to power the work of the Climate Council will help ensure it's a bright, clean, safe and sustainable Australia for generations to come.

If you are considering leaving a bequest, please get in touch with a member of our team, who can answer any questions you may have.

You can find more information about bequests [here](#).

Image: Bequests are a great way to mark your legacy and safeguard a clean, sustainable Australia for future generations.



FOLO

Imagine if every time you shopped with one of your favourite brands, money was donated to the Climate Council on your behalf. Folo is a free extension for your internet browser that enables you to generate donations for us, just by shopping online.

When making a purchase with one of Folo's hundreds of online retailers, a percentage of the sale will then be donated to the Climate Council. And the best thing about it is that it won't even cost you a cent. It's as simple as that!

All you need to do is sign up to Folo, download the extensions and shop as normal. Folo will show you, either in your search engine or direct on a partner store, how much will be donated to Climate Council when you shop.

To sign up for FOLO, head to: folo.world/climatecouncil.

Image: What if your shopping could power climate action?



FUNDRAISING EVENTS

As an independent organisation, we rely on our fantastic community of supporters (people just like you!) to help us raise funds for our work.

By running a fundraising event, you can help us raise money and awareness about climate change impacts and solutions amongst your friends, family and colleagues.

Your fundraising event can be big or small, sporty or artsy, really it's whatever takes your fancy. We've had people cycle across Australia, run through the Tasmanian wilderness, give up alcohol for a year or choose to forego wedding presents in lieu of donations. There's no limit to what you can do to support climate science.

Image: Jen Boocock (centre) raised over \$20,000 for the Climate Council by running an ultramarathon through the Tasmanian wilderness.



HOW CAN I ORGANISE AN EVENT?

1. Choose an event or challenge – get creative!

Think about the aim of the event and what you're hoping to get out of it. Is your primary goal to raise funds for the Climate Council? Do you want to hold an event to raise awareness? Are you trying to reach new networks? Think about how you can align your event with the Climate Council's values.

Once you've decided this start, getting creative! There are endless possibilities for events or challenges you can run. Consider the people you will be inviting to help decide on an appropriate event. See our [*Fundraising Toolkit*](#) for more suggestions.

2. Get in touch with us

If you've got an idea — great! We'd love to hear from you. We'll then send you more details to get the ball rolling.

3. Set a target

How much money are you hoping to raise? Think about how you can

get there. This will help you set parameters for the event and give you something to aim for. Do some back-of-the-envelope calculations to gauge a realistic target, but don't be afraid to dream big. It can also be helpful for you to make the first donation — once people see that you're committed, they're more likely to donate themselves.

4. Learn to love logistics

Dates. Time. Location. Props. Advertising. Resources. Make sure you plan out the event in detail, so everything runs smoothly. Create a project plan so you're on top of when you need to do what — lists are your friend!

5. Enlist support

Do you know a bakery who can donate bread? A neighbour who is a whiz at graphic design? A friend who can help you set up on the day? Think about how you can use your networks to help the day run more smoothly and minimise your costs.

6. Promote your event

You've organised a great event, now you've got to make sure people get involved. Share the challenge on social media, via email, and even face-to-face.

Think of sports teams, workplaces, schools and unis, church groups, community clubs, and online communities. You could ask your local café to help promote it, or do a letterbox drop around your neighbourhood. Send out regular updates on the event to keep people in the loop and help them stay engaged.

Don't be afraid to ask more than once — people often intend to donate but forget to do so straightaway. It's helpful to add a personal touch and explain why you're passionate about the issue.

7. Say thanks!

It's so often forgotten, but saying thank you ends the event on a positive note. Whether for the donors, volunteers, or suppliers, a thank you and a big smile go a long way.

8. Share your story with us

Once you've finalised your event, let us know your plan! We would love to see your photos and videos, and to hear your story. We may even be able to feature you on our website.



Image: Participate in an event such as the world's largest fun run - the City2Surf - and raise funds for the Climate Council at the same time.

06

**THANK YOU
FROM THE
CLIMATE
COUNCIL!**



The Climate Council is the number one organisation communicating on climate change nationally.

We've built a reputation as a trusted and go-to authority on climate change and solutions, helping us to change the national conversation.

Together we've kept up the media drumbeat on extreme weather, continuing to drive home the impacts of climate change on a local scale, while consistently demonstrating that renewable energy can power Australia.

We'd like to thank our amazing community of supporters who continue to power climate communications in Australia. We couldn't do this work without you. Together, we can continue to demand national action on climate change, call out misinformation as we see it, and promote a renewable powered energy mix.

Image: Climate Council supporters learn more about how they can help safeguard the future of the Great Barrier Reef.



IMAGE CREDITS

Page 27: Elvis Sascha Grant (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Page 34: Broken Hill solar plant aerial”
Jeremy Buckingham (CC BY 2.0.)

Page 38: ‘Bleached staghorn coral’
by Matt Kiefer (CC BY-SA 2.0)

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