

## CONVERSATION GUIDE:



# TIME TO ACT

How to have conversations that cut through on the urgent need for *climate action*.

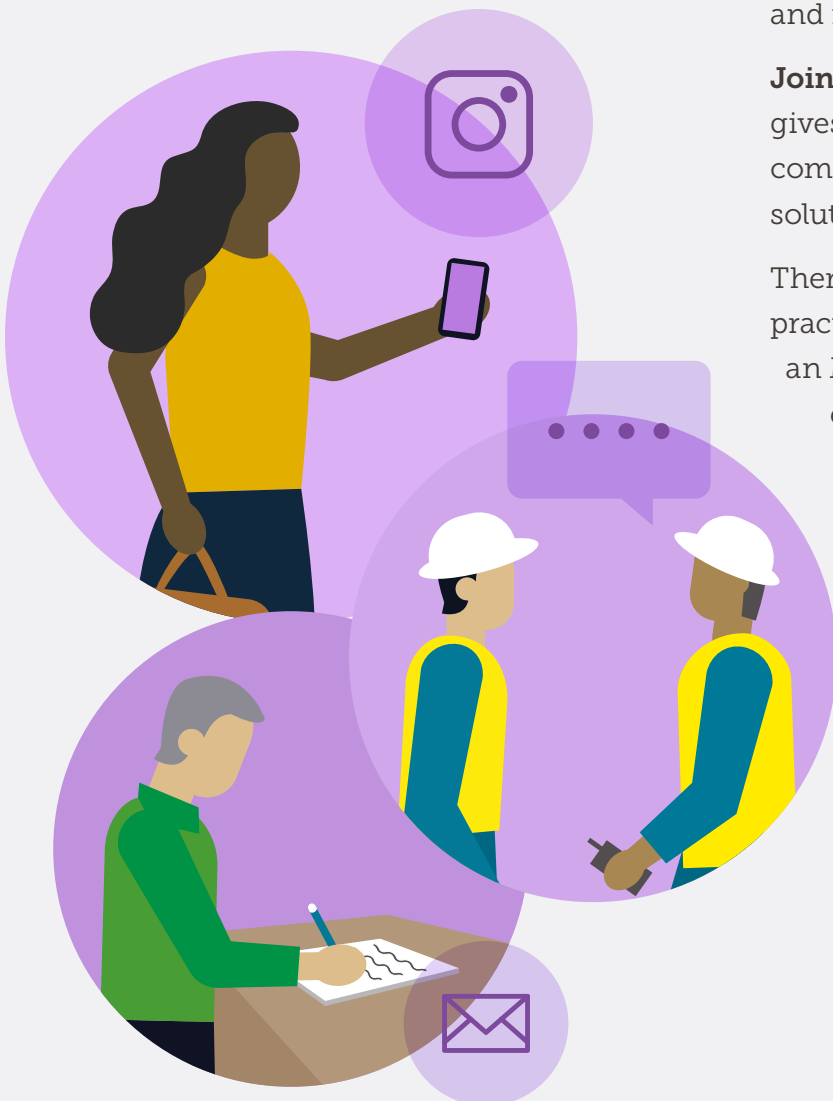
The Climate Council's report, *'Aim Hard, Go Fast: Why emissions need to plummet this decade'*<sup>1</sup> concludes that climate change is accelerating faster than previously thought.

It explains why Australia needs to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030, and race to net zero emissions<sup>2</sup> by 2035.

**Join the conversation!** This practical guide gives you the tools and tips you need to communicate the latest climate science and solutions in a way that engages more people.

There's many ways to put these tips into practice – such as when you're contacting an MP, talking with friends and family, or engaging in discussion on social media.

Together, we can help push all decision makers to step up their action, and excite more Australians about the opportunities and benefits this will bring us.



DOWNLOAD A COPY  
OF THE REPORT



## 5 TOP TIPS:

# COMMUNICATING URGENCY & SOLUTIONS

## 1 DEGREES OF DANGER

**Already, at 1.1°C of global temperature rise, Australians' lives and livelihoods are being harmed.** As outlined in the Climate Council's report, many lines of evidence strongly suggest that the global average temperature rise will breach 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; most likely in the 2030s.

**Any increase in global temperatures is doing us damage,** regardless of the amount.

### DON'T:

Focus on specific facts or figures. Such numbers often mean little to those who are less engaged on this issue.



### DO:

Keep things simple. Explain that all global warming does us harm by using phrases like:



- **'Every fraction of a degree matters'** to keep the focus on **how increasing global temperatures are making things worse.**
- **'There is no "safe" level of global warming'**, to highlight how climate change is a clear and present danger, and we are already experiencing major losses.

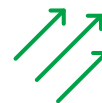
## 2 FOCUS ON WHAT WE CAN CHANGE

Past inaction is frustrating, and it means that we now have much more work to do to limit global temperature rise, in a much shorter timeframe. **But lingering on this risks distracting from what we need to do now, and the opportunities that we stand to miss out on.**

Instead, **look forward. Talk about the solutions required this decade by Australia,** such as phasing out all existing fossil fuels and replacing them with other energy sources built around renewable electricity.

### TIP:

Steer the discussion towards what can be done, and excite people about the opportunities and benefits that come from acting on climate change.



### Example:

**“Climate change is accelerating faster than previously thought, and we need to respond in kind. Luckily, there's never been a better time to do so: it's never been cheaper or easier for Australia to invest in clean energy and industries. This will make our country more prosperous, and resilient.”**

**For more information:** Read the Climate Council's [Clean Jobs Plan](#) for examples of how we can create jobs while cutting emissions at the same time.



There is no time to waste: **every tenth of a degree of global warming is dangerous.** Already, we're experiencing more powerful storms, deadly marine and land heatwaves, and a new age of megafires. Further delay in cutting emissions and reaching net zero would mean an even steeper reduction is needed, and increases the risk of catastrophic warming.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the science, **all climate action should focus on cuts that can be made in the 2020s.**

TIP:

Talk about the growing momentum around international climate action, as this increases a sense of urgency for our issue among less concerned audiences.



Example:

.....  
“ Many of Australia’s strategic allies and major trading partners (including the US, EU, UK, Canada, China and Japan) have strengthened their climate commitments for this decade, or intend to do so. **The faster we cut emissions this decade, the better the outcomes, which will be measured in lives and livelihoods saved, and ecosystems protected.**”

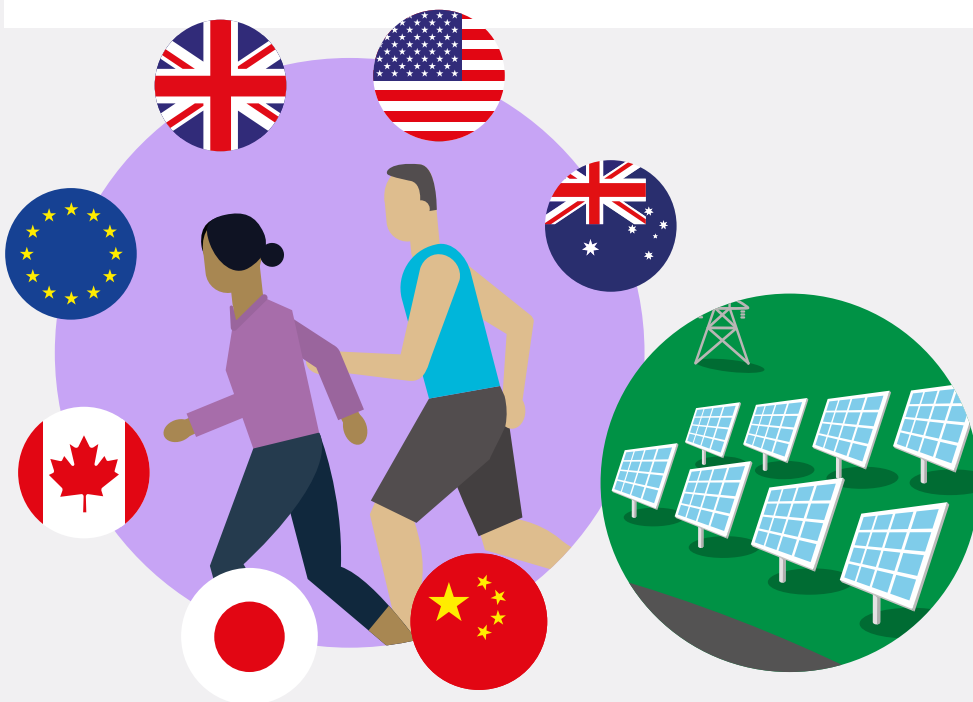
TIP:

Position getting to net zero as a race, where Australia is falling behind. Emphasise the fact that the faster we get to net zero emissions, the more climate harm we avoid – and the more economic benefits we enjoy.



Example:

.....  
“ Australia has unrivalled potential for renewable energy, new clean industries, and clean jobs. But while other countries are racing ahead we’re standing still, despite our natural advantages, and are being left behind in the clean economy race.”



## 4 CONNECT THE SCALE AND URGENCY OF THIS WORSENING SITUATION TO THE REQUIRED RESPONSE

**Science tells us that we need to act faster and more decisively in cutting greenhouse gas emissions this decade.**

Climate change is accelerating, and our response must match the scale and speed of this worsening situation.

### TIP:

Make the point that the scale and speed of action matters. Simply acting is not enough: we need to do more, and *faster*.



### Example:

“Global warming is already severely damaging the Great Barrier Reef. To give our Reef its best chance of survival, the lion’s share of emissions reductions must occur this decade by phasing out coal and other fossil fuels in preference of renewable energy.”

## 5 HIGHLIGHT THE PROGRESS THAT’S ALREADY UNDERWAY

Action is contagious. Talk about solutions that are already underway, and provide positive examples of what communities, businesses and state and local governments have already achieved.

### TIP:

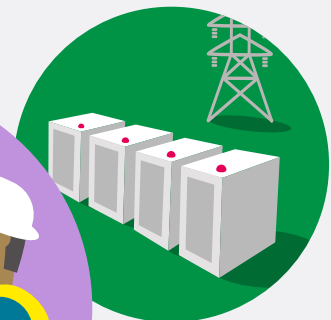
**It doesn’t matter how big or how small the example is.** Showing people that something can be done gives them the confidence that we can do more, particularly those who are less concerned about climate change.



### Example:

“Many governments and businesses are leading the way and showing that clean energy and industries provide clear economic benefits. By investing in wind and solar technologies, South Australia has become a global leader in renewable energy. The state already generates over half of its electricity from renewable sources and is aiming to reach 100% by 2030.”

**For more information:** Refer to the Climate Council’s annual [States Renewable Energy Race report](#) for information about how States and Territories are taking action to reduce emissions.



# ENGAGING IN CONVERSATION ONLINE

Most Australians regularly access the news through digital platforms like Facebook and Google, with about half (49%) doing so *at least daily*.<sup>3</sup> When it comes to conversing online, here are a few things to keep in mind:

**1 If you're sharing content, such as a video or image, include a short paragraph to summarise what it's about, and why it matters.** Think about the perspective of the person reading: what's most important for them to know? How would you like them to feel, or respond?

**2 Format your message.** People are busy and bombarded by lots of different content online, whether that's ads in their Facebook feed, or emails in their inbox. Make it easy for people to read what you're sharing by using dot points (or emojis!) where possible, with line breaks.

**3 Be clear and direct.** If you want your friends to take an action, such as emailing their MP, or reading an article, remember to include a link to the action/article and specify what you'd like them to do. Remember to explain why it's worth doing and how it will make a difference.

## TIP:

It's a good idea to include a visual element to draw the eye and illustrate your point.



In addition to [this report](#), which covers the detail on the latest science, **here are a range of shareable digital resources you can use:**



– **Video:** 'Change the story' on [Facebook](#) / [IGTV](#)



– **Social media graphics** on [Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#)



– **Article** by Climate Councillor, Prof. Lesley Hughes: [What keeps climate scientists like me awake at night - and why the next 10 years are so critical.](#)

## TIP:

If you're posting about the report on Instagram, add the [link](#) to your bio so your friends and followers can open it straight in their browser (it won't work in the caption)!



Remember to **tag the Climate Council** or link back to our website! Catch us at:



1 For more information, read the Climate Council's report, ['Aim Hard, Go Fast: Why emissions need to plummet this decade'](#).

2 'Net zero emissions' refers to achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere. For a more detailed explanation on what net zero means and why we need to get there, refer to the Climate Council's explainer, [What does net zero emissions mean?](#)

3 [Frequency of reading news on technology platforms](#), The Essential Report, March 21.