

Are you completing this survey on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?

Organisation – Women's Health Goulburn North East

1. What do you think is most important when setting a Victorian emissions reduction target for 2035?

Other

If you selected "Other" in question 2, please specify

The adoption of a science-based emissions reduction target that keeps Victoria, Australia and the global community in line with staying **below 1.5C** warming – that is, net-zero emissions by 2035.

2. What emissions reduction target do you think Victoria should set for 2035? (between 50% and 100%)

We believe Victoria should set a 100% emissions reductions target for 2035. This is consistent with science-based recommendations by the [Climate Council](#) that we must "aim high and go fast" when it comes to emissions reductions, setting a target of 75% emissions reduction by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2035.

Such a target is also consistent with ethical principles and a duty of care we feel the Victorian Government should demonstrate towards achieving [maximum protection](#) for all people, non-human nature, ecosystems and civilisation, throughout space and time.

University of Melbourne modelling, commissioned by Friends of the Earth as part of its [People's Climate Strategy](#), demonstrated that an emissions reduction of 75% below 2055 levels by 2030 is not just viable, but economically advantageous, creating at least 53,900 jobs and stimulating \$51.7 billion worth of investment in the Victorian economy.

3. What three things do you think will cut Victoria's emission the most in the period 2031-35?

Banning new fossil fuel projects, phasing out existing fossil fuel energy projects and replacing them with publicly or community-owned 100% renewable energy generation projects, located across Victoria, including in regional and rural areas, by 2030

This work must include:

- investment in a just transition plan to guarantee jobs, retraining or enhanced redundancy/retirement schemes for those currently working at the forefront of fossil fuel energy generation
- investment in the development of specific pathways and retention projects to support, encourage and empower women and gender-diverse people to enter and thrive in the zero-emissions energy generation sector

- the requirement that all energy projects have a social license to operate from Traditional Custodians of the land and First Nations communities, including around land use changes, energy generation ownership models and a commitment to genuine job creation for First Nations people.

Expansion of zero emissions public, community and active transport options across Victoria, including in regional and rural areas.

We're pleased to note the Victorian Government already has a [Transport Sector Pledge](#), committing to investing in a zero emissions PT fleet by 2023 and offering a zero emissions vehicle subsidy. We see an urgent need for accessible, affordable, integrated, safe, zero emissions public transport options in regional and rural Victoria – particularly in the north of the state – and the expansion of the vehicle subsidy to enable Victorians to access it for alternative electrified mobility needs – ie. wheelchairs, scooters and bicycles – as a means of also reducing car dependency and congestion.

Victorian Government implementation of an ethical and evidence-based value for the Social Cost of Carbon, into all government policy-making, budgetary decisions, capital works projects and procurements.

A Victorian Social Cost of Carbon would enable government and the community to better understand the social impact of inaction on climate change, take responsibility for the social impact of government- and public-sector-related emissions and consider opportunities for emissions mitigation. The ACT provides an Australia-first example of [Social Cost of Carbon legislation](#), which may be instructive for the Victorian Government.

4. What benefits can you see in a low emissions economy for Victoria in 2031-35?

We believe pursuing a “low-emissions economy” offers Victoria the opportunity to radically overhaul its economic system, away from one that is motivated by economic growth and the destructive and extractive logic of capitalism, towards a wellbeing economy, characterised by care, equality, justice and collective wellbeing.

Among the benefits of shifting towards a wellbeing-centred, low-emissions economy are:

- A shift of the power dynamics implicit in conventional economic decision-making, to return agency and decision-making power to communities, particularly those under-represented in existing decision-making processes (such as women, people with disabilities, First Nations people, low-income people, young people, people of migrant and refugee background). Management of this transition cannot be left to the market or profit-motivated political interests – it must be put in the hands of community and those elected to serve the common good.
- The potential for real progress to be made on achieving intersectional equity and inclusion via the application of an intersectional gendered lens, and social cost of carbon lens, across all decision-making and project planning.

- The opportunity for communities to be supported in stewarding place-based models of economic wellbeing.
- The opportunity for care work to be revalued and better shared and collectively supported in Victoria.
- The opportunity for Victoria to lead the nation in recognising and upholding the rights of nature, as part of its climate action planning.

5. What challenges might Victoria face in reducing emissions in the period 2031-35?

Challenges might include:

- Limited (or perceived-to-be-limited) opportunities for community decision-making participation. Decision-making processes around climate action and emissions reductions come with what can appear to be baked-in presumptions/expectations of expertise and technical knowledge, which prevent community members – particularly under-served and marginalised community members – from feeling confident, willing, able or welcome to participate.
- Disproportionate economic impacts of industry decarbonisation. The adverse economic impacts of decarbonising emissions-intensive industry may fall disproportionately on more marginalised communities, further entrenching inequality.
- Political unwillingness/hesitancy. Economic and social complexities around the decarbonisation of the electricity system, and the political influence of fossil fuel power station owners and commercial interests may sway the political will of government away from the necessary ambitious and urgent emissions reductions targets that science shows are required.
- Caring for impacted workers. Government must ensure the needs of fossil fuel power station workers and communities are cared for in the decarbonising of the electricity system.
- Lack of transport options, and car-centric design/planning. Low public transport provision, car-centric town design and transport planning perpetuate emissions-intensive car dependency in Victoria, particularly among regional and rural communities, and cause increasing inequality among those who cannot afford or access an electric vehicle.
- Pandemic-related waste. The increase in waste resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact this has, and will continue to have, on the state's landfill and recycling management and their related emissions.
- Exclusion of certain sectors from emissions analyses. The healthcare, care and wellbeing sectors currently sit outside of sector-by-sector analyses of Victorian emissions, hampering opportunities to gauge how this foundational economic work might be impacted by emission reductions actions, or harnessed to reduce emissions faster.
- Public service privatisation, away from the public good. The privatisation/outsourcing of some public services – for example, energy generation, public transport, some local government services – hinders their ability to undertake long-term planning that is squarely in the public interest (rather than motivated by profit).

6. How could Victoria overcome potential challenges to reducing emissions in 2031-35?

- Citizen's assemblies to enable a diversity of community lived experience to shape emissions reductions and climate mitigation/adaptation decisions, with community member participation supported by organisations with intersectional inclusion/accessibility/advocacy experience
- Investment in community-based mutual aid projects to support localised emissions reductions efforts and enable communities to develop people-centred, place-based climate and disaster mitigation, adaptation and preparation actions
- Government investment in and support of job guarantees, retraining opportunities, enhanced redundancy/retirement packages for those workers impacted by industry decarbonisation (ie. fossil fuel power station workers)
- Declaration of a climate emergency could provide the political momentum and social license to propel the government beyond the narrow profit-driven interests of those wishing to see a slower, less ambitious emissions reduction strategy
- 15 minute cities/towns/neighbourhoods - shaping of town planning and development regulations to ensure the concept of 15-minute cities/towns/neighbourhoods are norm, as a means of improving accessibility and cutting car-related emissions.
- Strong legislation (in the vein of the single-use plastic ban due for implementation in 2023) to curb increases in waste
- Investment in community-centred recycling and reuse facilities to create decentralised and place-based employment and resource opportunities
- Inclusion of healthcare, care, wellbeing sector as an independent sector in emissions reductions targets
- Grow the cooperative and public sectors of the economy to ensure they act in the public interest

7. What can be done to make sure the benefits and costs of climate action are fairly shared?

It is critical that intersectional gendered perspectives shape every step of the decision-making and planning process, to ensure these processes take stock of the lived experience and needs of under-served communities, and avoid causing these communities further harm.

These communities and individuals must be supported and encouraged to participate in decision-making, and their voices must be valued and reflected in climate action planning. This might be achieved through the staging of place-based citizens' assemblies or congresses. We envision a role for organisations with intersectional inclusion/accessibility/advocacy experience in this process, supporting community members who need support to participate in these decision forums, and imagine the Victorian Government might facilitate this through investment in these community- and place-based organisations for just this purpose.

Climate action benefits and costs can also be fairly shared by adopting a wellbeing economy approach that centres care for people and the planet above the generation of profit.

When it comes to fairly sharing the economic impacts of climate action, we would like to see the introduction of a state government-supported job guarantee to eliminate involuntary unemployment as a result of the transition away from fossil fuel industries, as well as the introduction of a state-wide four-day working week without loss of pay. With these two measures combined, those who wanted work could enjoy full employment, while enjoying greater work-life balance and a sharing of available work and care work. This is particularly critical in light of our desire to see the Victorian economy transition to a 'care economy', in which participation in unpaid, foundational care work is promoted, culturally and economically valued and shared – all as part of moves towards gender equality and collective wellbeing.

A job guarantee, paired with four-day working week, would also reduce the domination of work over people's lives, while still allowing them to benefit from the social and identity aspects of paid employment and would see a reduction in commuting, with concomitant decrease in pollution and decrease the demand on road and public transport infrastructure.

Job guarantee – to eliminate involuntary unemployment

- Full employment and resulting reduction in the harm caused by unemployment;
- Greater work-life balance and greater sharing of available work
- Reduction in the domination of work over people's lives, while still allowing them to benefit from the social and identity aspects of paid employment
- Greater opportunity for people to participate in unpaid, foundational care work, and realise the important cultural work of sharing and revaluing care
- Reduction in commuting, with concomitant decrease in pollution, and less demand on road and public transport infrastructure
- Work time flexibility

PAIRED WITH A four-day working week

8. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Not at this stage

9. Do you consent to your comments being referenced by the Panel's published report?

Yes