



National Parks Association of the ACT Inc.

conservation education protection

To the National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy Taskforce

NPA ACT National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy Survey Response

The National Parks Association of the ACT (NPA ACT) welcomes the opportunity to participate in the above survey.

The NPA ACT is a community-based conservation organisation with more than 60 years of experience in helping to protect our natural environment: through an active outings and work party program; participation in ParkCare activities; an extensive publication program; public meetings and conferences; engagement with government policies and programs and the support of scientific research.

The NPA ACT recognises that climate change is potentially the biggest long term threat facing biodiversity. Many of Australia's ecosystems are already under significant pressure from pest species, isolation and visitor demands and the impacts of climate change add significantly to these pressures.

Responses to climate change need to be adaptive in identifying actions to mitigate these impacts and to build resilience in the ecosystems and must be based on the most current scientific research.

The NPA ACT believes that well managed conservation reserves offer significant protection for ecosystems in a changing climate environment. However, this protection must be complemented by a focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation across all sectors of the community.

Background

The National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy Taskforce (the Taskforce) of the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is preparing a new National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to replace the one issued in 2015. The first stage of this process is to seek responses via a short on-line survey from the community on the roles and responsibilities for the community and governments in developing climate resilience and adaptation. To assist this process, accompanying the survey is a document entitled "Roles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation in Australia" (the Roles and Responsibility Paper).

The National Parks Association of the ACT (NPA ACT) has prepared the following comments in respect to question 7 of the on-line survey. There are only two other substantive questions in the on-line survey and these are required to be answered within the survey itself.

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Question 7 asks “Considering the roles and responsibilities factsheet, how do you think the Commonwealth Government could improve delivery of its roles and responsibilities for climate adaptation and resilience in Australia?”

NPA ACT Response

The NPA ACT notes that the Taskforce summarises the role of the Commonwealth is to:

- “provide national science and information
- manage Commonwealth assets and programs
- provide leadership on national adaptation reform
- maintain a strong, flexible economy and a well-targeted social safety net.”

And that the new strategy will “consider these roles and responsibilities as its starting point”.

The NPA ACT acknowledges that the Commonwealth Government must provide key leadership in progressing Australia’s response to the international climate change emergency. This role must include the coordination of both mitigation and adaptation strategies including the setting of clear targets for reducing the nation’s carbon emissions and the development of comprehensive actions for national climate adaptation.

The NPA ACT particularly notes the key role the Commonwealth has in working with other tiers of government and the community in ensuring that Australia’s unique ecosystems are able to adapt to climate impacts.

The NPA ACT therefore welcomes the following two statements from Roles and Responsibility Paper:

“Addressing risks, and managing and adapting to climate change impacts, will be a long-term obligation for all tiers of government. Working collaboratively and, from time to time, evaluating adaptation tasks across governments, will assist to most efficiently and effectively deal with climate change risks” (page 4); and

“As climate change will impact on virtually every sector of the economy and society, the Commonwealth will need to take a leadership role in positioning Australia to adapt to climate change impacts that may affect national prosperity or security” (page 4).

The NPA ACT strongly agrees with the need for all tiers of government to work together on this climate emergency. The NPA ACT particularly regrets that past ideological positions from all sides of politics have held back the Commonwealth from adopting a whole-hearted approach for a nationally co-ordinated response to climate change. The NPA ACT calls upon the Commonwealth to convene a national cabinet style approach to Australia’s climate adaptation and mitigation activities.

In addition, to take leadership on this issue the Federal Government needs to clearly and convincingly express its belief in the reality of "climate change" and the urgency and importance of addressing it now.

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The Commonwealth has a key role in providing a national framework for incentivizing all sectors of the Australian community in reducing carbon emissions and adapting for climate changes. In respect to the natural environment, the Commonwealth's actions should include:

- ensuring that ALL ecosystems are comprehensively protected through inclusion in reserves where conservation is the primary management objective;
- providing a comprehensive suite of scientific research on the best ways of ensuring Australia's ecosystems can adapt to changing climate;
- providing research and resources for reducing the pressures already stressing Australia's ecosystems;
- supporting the elimination of land clearing across Australia;
- supporting, through research and resources, connectivity between Australia's conservation reserves;
- ensuring that all Commonwealth policies are developed to have a minimal carbon impact.

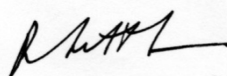
The NPA ACT looks forward to continuing participation in the development of the National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy.

Should you require any further information on our comments or our organisation, please do not hesitate to contact the NPA ACT office, attention of Mr Rod Griffiths, convener, NPA ACT Environment Sub-committee.

Yours sincerely



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