



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 255

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, Hon Joshua Burgoyne MLA:

Net Zero Commitment and Emissions Trajectory

1. **The Government's regulatory statement says the Territory remains committed to net zero emissions by 2050. What are the Territory's most recent emissions projections to:**
 - a. 2030;
 - b. 2040;
 - c. 2050; and
 - d. are those projections consistent with achieving net zero by 2050?

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) is focused on growing the Territory economy and restoring the Territory lifestyle, while working with the Australian Government towards the national target of net zero emissions by 2050.

The Australian Government publishes national emissions projections that show emissions are expected to decline over time as emissions reduction policies and technologies take effect.

In the Territory, emissions are expected to increase over the next three years, reflecting economic growth and major project activity, before beginning to decline as the Safeguard Mechanism, emissions reduction technologies, industry decarbonisation initiatives and other abatement measures take effect.

2. **Can the Minister table the modelling or pathway documentation that shows how net zero by 2050 is achieved under the Government's current energy policy?**
 - a. If no such modelling exists, on what basis does the Government retain the 2050 commitment?

A strong regulatory framework is supporting emissions reductions across the Territory and the transition to net zero by 2050. For proposals that have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment and require assessment of the atmospheric processes factor, greenhouse gas emissions are assessed under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (the EP Act), while the Australian Government's Safeguard Mechanism requires large emitters to progressively reduce emissions and requires new gas facilities in the Beetaloo Sub-basin to have net zero scope 1 emissions from entry. The NT Climate Resilience Plan provides policy certainty and supports industry decarbonisation.

While emissions are expected to increase in the short term, they are expected to decline overtime as the Safeguard Mechanism, emissions reduction technologies, industry decarbonisation initiatives and other abatement measures take effect.

The NTG will continue to monitor emissions intensity across the Territory economy, while the Australian Government publishes annual emissions data for the Territory.

3. Since coming to government:

a. how many projects have had greenhouse gas emissions conditions imposed;

One - [Mathison Land Clearing Proposal | Department of Lands, Planning and Environment](#)

b. how many have been required to offset emissions; and

Nil

c. what total volume of emissions do those conditions cover?

Not applicable

Environmental approvals are published at: [Environmental approvals](#).

d. The Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan submitted with environment management plan TAM2-3, revision 4.1 of 23 October 2024, provides that where emissions are below the Safeguard Mechanism trigger, minimum offset levels increase year on year by 3.7 per cent from a baseline financial year of 2023, reaching 11.1 per cent of total emissions offset in "Financial year 2025" and 26.2 per cent in "Financial Year 2029". Is a schedule of that kind sufficient to satisfy the Department's requirements for a Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan, and is there a minimum offset proportion the Department will accept?

The Annual Environment Performance Reports for how Tamboran reports against its Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan is at: [Annual Environmental Performance Report](#).

- 4. What are the Territory's current per capita greenhouse gas emissions, and how do they compare with the national average and with other jurisdictions internationally?**

Based on the latest data published in the Australian Government's National Greenhouse Accounts, the NT's greenhouse gas emissions were 106.12 tonnes CO₂-e per capita in 2023-24. Refer:

[State and territory greenhouse gas inventories: emissions metrics 2023 - DCCEEW](#)

- 5. Does the Department factor the downstream emissions of exported gas into its assessment of new gas projects?**

As per the [Environmental Factor Guidance: Atmospheric Processes](#), information on scope 3 emissions may be requested by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) on a case-by-case basis.

- a. If not, why not?**

See above

- b. The Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan submitted with environment management plan TAM2-3, revision 4.1 of 23 October 2024, estimates that project's scope 3 emissions for financial years 2025 to 2029 at 2,877,874 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent, of which it states 98 per cent is the combustion of gas for electricity by the Power and Water Corporation. Is any part of a project's scope 3 emissions required to be offset under an approved Greenhouse Gas Abatement Plan?**

The National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme does not require reporting of scope 3 emissions or require those emissions to be offset.

- c. For each environment management plan for onshore gas activity approved since 1 September 2024, what were the estimated scope 1 and scope 3 emissions, and what volume of each was required to be offset?**

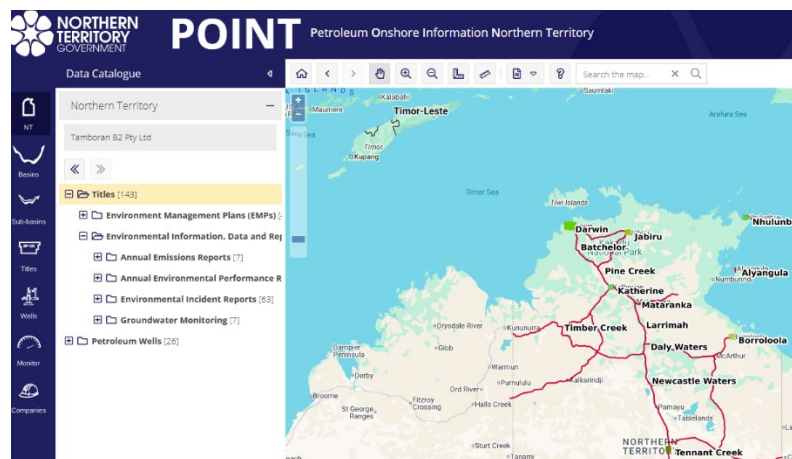
The Environment Management Plan contains information on the estimated greenhouse gas emissions and how they are managed or will be offset are at: [Environment management plan decisions](#).

The Code of Practice: Environment requires interest holders to maintain a greenhouse gas emissions source register including annual estimations and cumulative totals. The Code of Practice is published online at: [Code of Practice: Environment](#)

Annual Emissions Reports on actual greenhouse gas emissions are published at: [POINT](#):

- the screenshot below is included, noting it may otherwise be difficult to find these reports; and
- see also link to an example: [TB2-98-117-76-Annual-GHG-Emissions-Report-2023](#).

Annual Environmental Performance Reports submitted by interest holders provide a record of when these emissions were reported to the regulator is available online at: [Annual environment performance report](#).



6. When a mining proposal is referred to the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority, what consideration is given to the greenhouse gas emissions of the proposed operation?

When a mining proposal is referred to NT EPA under the environmental impact assessment pathway, NT EPA will consider potential significant environmental impacts of the mining proposal, including greenhouse gas emissions (drawing on the Environmental Factor Guidance: Atmospheric Processes).

a. In which document is that consideration recorded, and is it published?

Assessment decisions and findings are published at: [Environmental impact assessments register | NTEPA](#)

- b. **For how many mining proposals assessed since 1 September 2024 were greenhouse gas emissions conditions recommended, and for how many were they imposed?**

None.

- c. **If the grant of a mining licence is not a matter for you, which Minister is responsible for deciding whether emissions conditions attach to it?**

The Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment (or delegate) is responsible for granting Environmental Mining Licences under the EP Act.

7. How many hectares of native vegetation were cleared in the Territory in 2025-26?

In 2025-26, there was 1458.8 hectares of native vegetation approved for clearing on unzoned land under the *Planning Act 1999*. This is the area of land permitted to be cleared, not what has been physically cleared. Refer [Unzoned land clearing applications and approvals | NT.GOV.AU](https://www.nt.gov.au/land-and-environment/land-clearing/unzoned-land-clearing-applications-and-approvals/).

Advice on the extent of native vegetation approved to be cleared under the *Pastoral Land Act 1992* will need to be requested from the Hon Gerard Maley MLA, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Refer [Pastoral land clearing applications and permits | NT.GOV.AU](https://www.nt.gov.au/land-and-environment/land-clearing/pastoral-land-clearing-applications-and-permits/)

- a. **What funding is allocated to collect and publish land clearing data?**

For 2026-27, \$429,000 has been allocated to the Vegetation Assessment Unit, which covers salaries and operational costs. The Unit is responsible for the processing and assessment of land clearing applications, preparing reports for the relevant consent authority and managing and publishing data on the Department's websites.

- b. **Budget Paper No. 3 for 2026-27 sets a target that at least 80 per cent of applications for the clearing of native vegetation on unzoned land are assessed within 84 days. How many such applications were received in 2025-26, how many were approved, and what total area did the approvals cover?**

In 2025-26, nine applications were received requesting consent to clear native vegetation under the *Planning Act 1999*. A total of 11 applications were approved, which includes applications received in the previous financial year, which had not yet been determined. The total area of native vegetation approved for

clearing in the 2025-26 financial year amounted to 1458.8 hectares. Refer [Unzoned land clearing applications and approvals | NT.GOV.AU](https://www.nt.gov.au/property/land-clearing/information-and-factsheets/land-use-mapping-and-permitted-land-clearing)

c. How many applications were refused, and on what grounds?

No development applications were refused in 2025-26 in relation to the clearing of native vegetation under the *Planning Act 1999*.

d. Is there any published measure of the area of native vegetation cleared, as distinct from the timeliness of assessing applications to clear it? If not, has one been considered?

Yes, the extent of native vegetation cleared is published online at: <https://nt.gov.au/property/land-clearing/information-and-factsheets/land-use-mapping-and-permitted-land-clearing>.

The data on this webpage incorporates the extent of native vegetation approved for clearing under both the *Planning Act 1999* and the *Pastoral Land Act 1992*.

8. Does the Department consider the effect on future generations of emissions released now in its decision-making and approvals processes?

The EP Act requires proposals with the potential for significant environmental impacts to be planned, assessed and carried out having regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development, the environmental decision-making hierarchy, ecosystem-based management, and the impacts of a changing climate.

The principles of ecologically sustainable development include the principle of intergenerational and intragenerational equity. This principle states that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of present and future generations.

The NT EPA and the Minister consider requirements of the EP Act in their respective decision-making about environmental impact assessment and environmental approvals.

a. Where is the evidence of that consideration recorded?

The environmental impact assessment register includes proponent information, notices of decisions, statements of reasons, directions for additional information, terms of reference, assessment reports and draft environmental approvals etc. that may include evidence of the consideration. The register is publicly

available at: [at: Environmental impact assessments register | NTEPA](#)

The Minister's considerations of the principles and emissions are published online at: [Environmental approvals](#).

9. In the absence of interim targets, what accountability mechanisms exist between elections to keep the Territory's emissions trajectory aligned with Australia's national commitments?

Accountability is maintained through several mechanisms including Australia's legislated climate commitments under the *Climate Change Act 2022*, the Safeguard Mechanism, reporting requirements under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Framework, climate-related financial disclosure requirements, legislated environmental assessment and approval requirements under the EP Act and the Government's commitment to publicly report against the NT Climate Resilience Plan.

10. What specific actions is the Government currently taking toward the 2050 net zero commitment, and where are those actions published?

The NT Climate Resilience Plan outlines the Government's key priorities and actions for responding to climate change, while reflecting the Territory's unique, environmental, social and economic circumstances. Progress on implementation will be reported publicly and the Plan will be reviewed after three years. The Plan is published online at: [Climate change in the Northern Territory](#).