



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 317

WRITTEN QUESTION

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

Climate Resilience Plan

1. The Northern Territory Climate Resilience Plan (The Plan) is a three-page document setting out five strategic priorities and twenty-two actions. Its first action, Action 1.1, is to “Accelerate the production of low emissions energy, including from the Beetaloo Subbasin, to support long-term energy security for the Territory, Australia and our region”.

a. On what basis is accelerating gas production from the Beetaloo Sub-basin the first action of a climate resilience plan?

The Beetaloo Sub-basin is the first action as this recognises the current role of gas in energy security during the transition to net zero by 2050. The Plan also supports the expansion of renewable energy and the use of carbon capture and storage to enable long-term decarbonisation.

b. The Plan records that “Beetaloo gas is relatively low in emissions because it contains 1-2% carbon dioxide, which is low compared to alternative Australian gas sources”. Does that comparison relate to scope 1 emissions, or to life cycle emissions, and in which document is the underlying analysis recorded?

The statement “The Beetaloo is relatively low in emissions...” relates to the low concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) that naturally occurs in the composition of gas from the Beetaloo Sub-basin, compared to other Australian basins both on and offshore. The CO₂ concentrations have been reported from gas exploration and pilot production activities.

The Statement also relates to the requirement of the Safeguard Mechanism for Beetaloo producers to have net zero scope 1 emissions at point of production under its specific rules for unconventional shale gas extraction facilities. This is a stricter

requirement compared to other gas producers' obligations under the Safeguard Mechanism.

- c. **On what date was the Plan approved, on what date was it published, and by whom was it approved? The published document carries no date, version number or approval record.**

The Northern Territory Government's (NTG) Plan was announced and published on 15 June 2026.

- 2. **The Plan records that the Government is “working with the Australian Government on the national target of net zero by 2050”, and that “the Australian Government’s Safeguard Mechanism requires large emitters to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050”.**

- a. **Does the Northern Territory Government hold a net zero target of its own, as distinct from the national target and the Safeguard Mechanism; if so, in which instrument is it recorded?**

The NTG does not have a separate, disparate target of its own, it is working with the Australian Government towards the national target of net zero emissions by 2050.

- b. **The Regulatory Statement on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions records that “The Northern Territory Government has committed to a target of net zero emissions by 2050”. Is that a Territory commitment, and if so why is it not stated in the Climate Resilience Plan?**

The commitment to a target of net zero emissions by 2050 relates to the NTG working with the Australian Government towards the national target of net zero emissions by 2050 as stated in the Plan.

- c. **What responsibility does the Department hold for reducing emissions across the Territory as a whole, as distinct from regulating emissions from individual facilities?**

The NTG is working with the Australian Government towards the national target of net zero emissions by 2050. The Plan includes a Priority to support investment in emissions reductions, and actions to support this and to reduce the emissions intensity of producing goods and services are shared across multiple agencies. The Plan provides policy certainty and highlights industry-led emissions reduction commitments.

The Department of Lands, Planning and Environment may consider greenhouse gas emissions from individual projects and facilities under legislation such as the *Environment Protection Act 2019*.

Emissions reduction is delivered through a combination of Territory and Australian Government agencies, programs, policy settings and legislation, rather than by any single agency.

3. Under the heading “Reporting progress”, the Plan records that “Over this period, Northern Territory GHG emissions are expected to trend upwards before declining as the Australian Government’s Safeguard Mechanism, and other reduction and abatement initiatives, take effect”.

- a. Over what period are Territory emissions expected to trend upwards, by what amount, and on what modelling is that expectation based?

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

- b. In what year are Territory emissions expected to begin declining?

Refer to 3a.

- c. Will the modelling underlying that expectation be published or tabled?

The Australian Government publishes national emissions projections that show emissions are expected to decline over time as emissions reduction policies and technologies take effect and are available at: [Australia’s emissions projections 2025 - DCCEEW](#)

- d. The Plan records that the Government “will track the emissions intensity of the Northern Territory economy”. Is emissions intensity, rather than total annual emissions, the measure against which the Plan’s progress will be assessed?

The NTG will continue to monitor emissions intensity across the Territory economy, while the Australian Government publishes annual emissions data for the Territory. The latest emissions intensity data is available at: [State and territory greenhouse gas inventories: emissions metrics 2024 - DCCEEW](#).

- e. **The Plan records that it “will be reviewed in three years”. From what date does that period run, and in what form will the Government “report publicly on the Plan’s implementation”?**

The Plan will be implemented from 2026 to 2029. Progress on implementation will be reported publicly and the Plan will be reviewed following this initial three-year implementation period.

4. **Action 2.3 of the Plan is to “Promote investment in priority sectors, such as agriculture and mining, to lower the emissions intensity of production, including for research and development”.**

- a. **What investment has been made or is proposed under Action 2.3, in which sectors, and at what value?**

The NTG is focused on rebuilding the economy and is encouraging investment, such as from the private sector, to lower the emissions intensity of production in industries such as agriculture or mining. Departments with responsibilities to support business and industry growth have a role in delivering this action under the Plan.

Industry-led investment may support research, development and adoption of technologies, infrastructure and practices that reduce emissions intensity across priority sectors including energy, defence, mining, agriculture and tourism, while supporting productivity, competitiveness and long-term economic growth.

- b. **How is the lowering of emissions intensity under this action measured, and where is it reported?**

The Australian Government publishes annual data on greenhouse gas emissions and emissions intensity by state and territory:

- The latest emissions intensity data is available at: [State and territory greenhouse gas inventories: emissions metrics 2023 - DCCEEW](#); and
- Sector-level emissions data can be accessed through the Australian National Greenhouse Accounts website at: [state-territory-inventories-2024-sectoral-breakdown-data-tables](#).

- c. **The Plan records that most 2024 Territory emissions came from “the land use sector (45%), the energy sector (44%) and the agriculture sector (10%)”. Given the contribution of land clearing to the land use figure, how does increased investment in agriculture reduce total Territory emissions rather than emissions per unit of production?**

Action 2.3 of the Plan relates to promoting industry-led investment to lower the emissions intensity of production.

Investment in the agricultural sector to lower the emissions intensity (emissions per unit of agricultural output) may include opportunities such as carbon sequestration, improved land management practices and productivity and associated research and development.

The land use sector referred to here is the greenhouse gas inventory 'land use, land use change and forestry' sector that tracks emissions released and removed from the atmosphere due to these factors. Significant emissions in this sector in the Territory are derived from uncontrolled savanna burning.

5. What consultation was undertaken in developing the Plan with the communities most affected by climate impacts, including communities affected by recent flooding?

The Plan is a statement of Government's direction that has been informed by existing policy positions and priorities outlined in the Government's pre-election agenda and known stakeholder positions. The Plan provides flexibility for future engagement in its implementation.

6. Does the Climate Resilience Plan address extreme heat?

a. If it does not, why was extreme heat not included, and was its inclusion considered during development of the Plan?

The Plan is a high-level plan prioritising action in a broad range of emissions reduction and adaptation areas. Extreme heat is a hazard that is considered under Priority 4 - Managing climate risks to NT infrastructure and services and Priority 5 - Building capacity for climate resilience across the Territory.

b. What assessment has the Government made of heat-related illness and mortality in the Territory, and in which document is it recorded?

This question should be redirected to the Minister for Health.

c. How many heat-related presentations and admissions were recorded in Northern Territory hospitals in each of the three years to 2025-26? If those are not compiled, in which system are they recorded?

This question should be re-directed to the Minister for Health.

d. Will the Plan be amended to address extreme heat and, if so, by what date?

Not applicable, refer to answer 6a.