

RENEWABLES (/CATEGORY/RENEWABLES)

# States, cities and communities kicking renewable energy goals



BY CLIMATE COUNCIL (/CONTRIBUTORS/CLIMATE-COUNCIL)  
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Federal inaction on climate change getting you down? Next time you've got the climate blues, **just think about Australia's renewable energy champions** – the governments and local leaders at state, city and community level who are stepping up to take action!

## Federal Government

Since 2014, **uncertainty has dogged Australia's national renewable energy policy** – brought about by the Federal Government reviewing and reducing the Renewable Energy Target, repealing the Carbon Pricing Mechanism, supporting a Senate Inquiry into wind energy and appointing a Wind Farm Commissioner.

These actions have **undoubtedly hampered confidence**

([http://www.ey.com/%20Publication/vwLUAssets/RECAI-45-September-15-](http://www.ey.com/%20Publication/vwLUAssets/RECAI-45-September-15-%20LR/$FILE/RECAI_45_Sept_15_LR.pdf)

[%20LR/\\$FILE/RECAI\\_45\\_Sept\\_15\\_LR.pdf](http://www.ey.com/%20Publication/vwLUAssets/RECAI-45-September-15-%20LR/$FILE/RECAI_45_Sept_15_LR.pdf)) **in Australia as a place to invest in renewable energy.**

Investment in large-scale renewable energy remains at levels well below the annual investment in the sector between 2010 and 2013 (<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/confidence-in-renewable-energy-sector-evaporated-after-abbott-cut-bloomberg-20160114-gm5qbo.html>). Employment in the renewable energy sector declined by 27% between 2012 and 2015, with 5,000 jobs lost (<https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/policy-advocacy/reports/clean-energy-australia-report.html>).

## States and territories

Facing the prospect of falling investment and jobs, **a number of state and territory governments** (<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/renewablesrace>) **have taken matters into their own hands** and stepped up support for renewable energy.



*Royalla Solar Farm, ACT*

In the past year, **the number of states and territories with renewable electricity targets has increased from two to four**, and almost all states and territories have increased their policy and program support!

While Australia's national Renewable Energy Target aims to achieve at least 20% of Australia's electricity by 2020, **four states and territories are aiming much higher, and taking action to get there.**

**The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has the highest target (100% by 2020)**, followed by South Australia (50% by 2025), Queensland (50% by 2030 and one million solar rooftops) and Victoria (25% by 2020 and 40% by 2025).



*Canunda Wind Farm, SA*

Pint-sized powerhouse **the ACT almost single-handedly boosted Australia's wind industry in 2015**, with all three wind power projects under construction at the end of the year winners under the ACT's reverse auction process (<https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/policy-advocacy/reports/clean-energy-australia-report.html>).

The Victorian Government (<http://www.energyandresources.vic.gov.au/energy/sustainable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-roadmap/renewable-energy-purchasing>) too has followed suit, recently signing contracts with two wind farms – Kiata and Mount Gellibrand – in order to bring forward their construction, and associated investment and jobs.

## **Cities, communities, and towns**

Action on renewable energy doesn't stop with the states. **Many of Australia's major cities, local councils and communities are now leading their respective states on renewable energy.** Legends!

Targets include:

- Sydney (<http://reneweconomy.com.au/2016/city-sydney-targets-50-renewables-2030-net-zero-emissions-2050>) - 50% renewable electricity by 2030, net zero emissions by 2050
- Melbourne (<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/eco-city/Pages/zero-net-emissions-strategy.aspx>) - zero net emissions by 2020

- Adelaide ([http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Science/Science\\_research/climate-change/climate-change-initiatives-in-south-australia/sa-climate-change-strategy/carbon-neutral-adelaide](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Science/Science_research/climate-change/climate-change-initiatives-in-south-australia/sa-climate-change-strategy/carbon-neutral-adelaide)) - aims to be the world's first carbon neutral city



*Adelaide's Solar Trees*

These cities are implementing a range of exciting measures to achieve their targets. For example, **the City of Melbourne** (<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/business/sustainable-business/Pages/melbourne-renewable-energy-project.aspx>) **is leading a collaboration of large energy users in the city** (organisations like the Melbourne Zoo, Australia Post, universities, and nearby councils) in purchasing 110 GWh of large scale renewable electricity. The Melbourne Renewable Energy Project (<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/business/sustainable-business/Pages/melbourne-renewable-energy-project.aspx>) **is designed to help the city reach 25% of its electricity coming from renewables by 2018.**

**Communities and local councils across Australia are also playing their part**, actively transitioning away from fossil fuelled electricity to renewable energy power. A recent survey (<http://bze.org.au/blog/councils-and-communities-fill-void-zero-emissions-targets-160701>) by Beyond Zero Emissions (<http://bze.org.au>) found almost one in five councils have set zero emission or 100% renewable energy targets. **Noosa, Uralla, Yackandandah and Newstead are just some of the many communities now working towards 100% renewable energy.**



Hepburn Community Wind Farm

**Read more in our latest report: Game On: The Australian Renewable Energy Race Heats Up**  
 (<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/renewablesrace>).

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