



29 May 2024

## Submission on the Targets, Pathways and Progress issues paper

The Clean Energy Council kindly requests that the Climate Change Authority accept this late submission to its consultation on Australia's 2035 emissions reduction target and pathways.

The Clean Energy Council is the peak body for the renewable energy sector in Australia. We represent and work with around 1,000 businesses operating in Australia across solar, wind and hydro power, energy storage and renewable hydrogen. Our mission is to accelerate Australia's clean energy transition.

Ambitious global mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions is firmly in Australia's national interest, noting the large and growing economic, social and environmental costs of rising temperatures, as well as the transformative economic opportunities associated with net zero industries.

As such, it is critical that Australia's 2035 target is consistent with our international commitments under the Paris Agreement to '*pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels*', and to reflect our '*highest possible ambition*'. Living up to these commitments, and signalling them as soon as possible, will not only ensure that Australia's mitigation targets are considered to be a credible and fair contribution to the global effort, but will help to stimulate greater ambition from other parties.

As part of the Climate Change Authority's evaluation of what is both ambitious and achievable, we are writing to you to particularly highlight that the Clean Energy Council considers it achievable for Australia to decarbonise its electricity sector by 2035, with strong government leadership and enabling measures.

As demonstrated by the [Australian Energy Market Operator's Integrated System Plan](#) and [CSIRO's latest GenCost study](#), renewable electricity generation paired with a range of energy storage solutions and transmission already provides the lowest cost technology mix for replacing retiring coal fired power capacity. We also consider it likely that a range of available and emerging energy storage technologies can and will increasingly outcompete gas-fired power generation such that the two major sources of fossil-fuel based generation in our electricity system today can be phased out by the mid-2030s, with renewable fuels stepping into the breach for back-up power generation where required. Within the context of an ambitious policy environment, the full decarbonisation of the electricity sector is therefore a realistic target for 2035. This outcome will be a foundation for Australia's wider economic transformation and an important milestone along the pathway to realising our vision as a renewable energy superpower.

To elaborate on these themes, we would like to share with you a copy of [our April 2024 submission to the Electricity and Energy Sector Decarbonisation Plan](#) consultation process, and an earlier set of policy recommendations on accelerating Australia's clean energy transformation – the [Power Playbook](#) (October 2023) – which set out our assessment of

the key opportunities, challenges, and policy and investment actions required to achieve our clean energy aspirations.

The energy industry is working intensively with Federal, state and territory governments, and Australia's key energy market institutions and agencies – who are all committed to net zero emissions goals by 2050 and strongly supporting renewable energy deployment – to address barriers to investment and deployment. We are confident that – despite the inevitable challenges in pursuing such a large transformation – the broad-based stakeholder support and growing strategic focus on enabling measures, can position the renewable energy sector to accelerate and complete the electricity sector transformation in the decade ahead.

The electricity sector has the technology and the expertise to lead Australia's decarbonisation efforts, and we look forward to the Climate Change Authority reflecting that ambition in its final advice to Government.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Freeman', written in a cursive style.

Anna Freeman  
Policy Director – Decarbonisation