South Australian Government Climate Change Actions 2020-2025

Progress Report

This progress report highlights a range of achievements in climate action over the last five years, that have been guided by 70 actions outlined in the South Australian Government Climate Change Actions and South Australia Responding to Climate Change documents.

At 30 June 2025, 15 actions had been completed and 55 actions were in progress.

The South Australian Government's next phase of climate action builds upon the existing actions and introduces new measures.

These are outlined in South Australia's Net Zero Strategy 2024-30, the South Australian Government Resilience and Adaptation and Actions and the Climate Ready Government initiative.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Government of South Australia

Renewable energy

Highlights

- **Just over 50 per cent** of homes in South Australia have solar PV systems installed.
- South Australia has the **highest** uptake of home batteries in Australia, supported by the Home Battery Scheme, which delivered **22,000** batteries to homes across South Australia.

Achievements

- The *Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023* provides a 'one window to government' licensing and regulatory system for large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy projects in South Australia.
- More than 6,000 SA Housing Trust homes are connected to South Australia's Virtual Power Plant, providing reliable, affordable renewable energy to residents.
- The Energy Masters project demonstrated how smart appliances and demand flexibility can reduce households' emissions and save on bills.
- Community batteries in Magill and Edwardstown under the government's emPowering SA program provide 600 low-income and vulnerable households with low cost electricity.

- The South Australian Government supported households and businesses to save energy and costs through the Retail Energy Productivity Scheme. Approximately 7.8 million gigajoules of energy savings were made over the past three years.
- The 200-kilometre South Australian stage of Project EnergyConnect was completed from Robertstown to the New South Wales border. The 900-kilometre-long interconnector will increase renewable electricity security and supply between South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.
- The Central Powerhouse in Umuwa, a solar generation and battery system, was completed, improving renewable electricity supply in South Australia's remote communities.

Economy

Highlights

- **More than 82%** of waste generated in South Australia is recovered for further use, and **93%** of this material is processed in the state (2022-23).
- More than **650** South Australian businesses have been supported to adopt circular, net zero and sustainable practices under the Green Industries SA Business Sustainability Program.

Achievements

- The South Australian Government supported seven Cooperative Research Centres working towards decarbonisation outcomes, including the Heavy Industry Low-carbon Transition Cooperative Research Centre and Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre.
- South Australia is phasing out single-use plastics in a multi-stage process and has implemented bans on single-use plastic cutlery and food and beverage containers, expanded polystyrene cups, bowls and plates, and other plastic waste items.
- The Industry Climate Change Conference in 2023 and 2025 brought together hundreds of industry, business and community delegates to discuss how to achieve a net zero and climate resilient future.

- The Green Economy Catalyst Program brought global thought leaders to Adelaide to engage with industry sectors, government and the community to support the state's transition to a circular and green economy.
- Mineral discovery that will support a low emissions economy was facilitated by the Accelerated Discovery Initiative, the Gawler Challenge and Thinking Critical South Australia global competitions, the South Australian Discovery Mapping project, and the Critical Minerals South Australia project.
- The Moomba Carbon Capture and Storage project, the nation's first large-scale onshore carbon capture and storage facility, began operating in October 2024.

Agriculture, Landscapes and Habitats

Highlights

- **243** carbon offset projects are registered through the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme across South Australia (at March 2025), an increase of almost 200 projects over the past four years.

- **700** homes are receiving safe and secure water supply from the Kangaroo Island desalination plant.

Achievements

- A new Biodiversity Act was enacted to help conserve, protect and restore biodiversity in a changing climate.

- Carbon farming opportunities were advanced through the development of a Carbon Farming Roadmap and the delivery of Growing Carbon Farming Demonstration Pilot.

- South Australian Landscape Boards delivered the Commonwealth Government's Carbon Farming Outreach Program.

- The government supported initiatives such as the Farm Business Resilience Program and Carbon Footprint and Feasibility workshops to help primary producers prepare for climate change.

- The Blue Carbon Futures Grants Program, the Climate Ready Coasts program and the promotion of new marine aquaculture opportunities, including farming seaweed, helped support carbon sequestration and adaptation in marine environments.

- A Water Security Statement was developed to set priorities to support South Australia's future water security, including more climate-resilient water sources.

- A new State Landscape Strategy and the establishment of the South Australian Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub help guide climate-resilient approaches to landscape management.

- A Dynamic Fire and Biodiversity model was developed to identify where prescribed burns can maintain optimal habitat as the climate changes.

- South Australia's long-term wood supply was advanced through the Trees on Farms initiative, which supported climate-conscious farm-scale tree plantations, and the South Australian Wood Fibre and Timber Industry Master Plan, which includes a focus on a Clean Green Circular Economy.

Transport

Highlights

- **536** electric vehicle (EV) charging stations are now operating at over 140 sites across the state-wide Electric Vehicle Charging Network, delivered in partnership with the RAA.
- Following the conversion of **50** railcars, Adelaide Metro's non-electrified rail lines are now serviced entirely by hybrid-diesel railcars, reducing fuel consumption by between **700,000 and 1 million** litres of diesel each year.

Achievements

- Electric vehicle uptake was promoted with the repeal of the electric vehicle levy, a 3-year motor registration fee exemption for new electric vehicles (2022-2025) and the Electric Vehicle Smart Charging Trials.
- Twenty six hybrid buses and one full electric bus have been delivered and 60 buses are on order to be delivered in late 2025 and early 2026.
- Public transport usage was encouraged with improvements to accessibility, such as 'Tap and Pay' ticketing, upgraded stations, more secure bicycle parking, improved active travel connections and an online public transport savings estimator tool.

- A new 30-year Transport Strategy was developed, outlining actions to transition the transport system towards net zero and prepare for climate-related risks and disruptions.
- Planning for the future under a changing climate, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport delivered a Freight and Supply Chain Strategy, an Active Travel Design Guide and are developing a Public Transport Strategy.
- The State Bicycle Fund is supporting 27 projects across 20 councils, including nine regional councils, to encourage cycling transport, and reduce emissions.

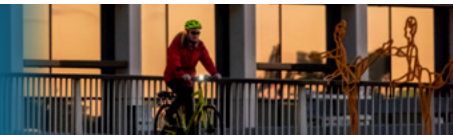# Built and urban environments

Highlights

- Green Adelaide supported **290** initiatives to green streets, improve urban ecosystems, manage coasts and encourage biodiversity and water-sensitive urban design.
- New Planning rules designed to protect River Murray regions from future flood events and assist with a strong recovery and rebuild came into effect in 2024.

Achievements

- Two major hazard mapping projects were initiated to better reflect flooding and bushfire hazards in South Australia's planning and design code.
- New tree protection planning regulations seek to preserve and enhance South Australia's tree canopy and help reduce the urban heat island effect.
- A Metropolitan Adelaide Urban Greening Strategy and a South Australian Critical Infrastructure Strategy were developed and will help support climate adaptation measures.

- Green Adelaide's Cooler Greener Wilder Grants Program has supported metropolitan councils to deliver greener, more water sensitive and biodiverse urban design projects.
- Renewal SA maintained 6 Star Green Star Community Ratings for its sustainable urban development projects at Lot Fourteen, Tonsley Innovation District and Bowden Precinct.
- The Office of Design and Architecture SA (ODASA) developed a Best Practice Guide and initiated the Local Design Review Scheme to aid proponents and local councils on sustainable design for proposed developments.

Communities

Highlights

- **38** local councils across South Australia – 22 regional and 16 metropolitan - built capacity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the Net Zero Accelerator Program.
- **45** community resilience projects were funded under the Disaster Risk Reduction Grants program.

Achievements

- State government continued to partner with local councils and other regional organisations in Regional Climate Partnerships supporting projects that help communities build climate resilience, such as urban greening, coast management, sustainable housing and council climate risk management.

- 154 businesses improved their understanding of energy efficiency opportunities and sustainability through the Small Business Sustainability Support Program led by the Office for Small and Family Business.

- The South Australian Climate Projections Viewer was launched in November 2023 to help guide risk assessment and planning.

- Communications and warnings of climate change risks continued to expand, including uplifts to the Alert SA warning app, release of the Basic Fire Behaviour education video and support for the 30Ways30Days AUS program.

- Thermal data was captured to enhance tree canopy and heat mapping programs across metropolitan Adelaide.

Government leadership

Highlights

- Key climate change and environmental legislation was updated to strengthen the government's planning and regulatory response to climate change.
- **231** plug-in EVs were added to the South Australian Government fleet.

Achievements

- Climate Ready Government outlines how government agencies will manage climate change risk and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their operations.

- The *Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007* was updated to enshrine emissions reduction targets in law and to strengthen requirements around planning, risk assessment and action on climate change.

- The *Environment Protection Act 1993* was amended to clarify the Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) regulatory authority for climate change mitigation and adaptation and the EPA is undertaking preliminary work to inform the drafting of a climate change Environment Protection Policy which will be used to provide clarity and certainty on its regulation of greenhouse gas emissions and climate adaptation requirements.

- The government launched the Sustainability Bond Framework, outlining how government mobilises funds raised to address social, environment and human capital outcomes, including climate change.

- A Sustainable Procurement Policy was developed to identify sustainability and climate change risks and opportunities in transport and infrastructure procurement and contracts.