



# Extreme weather is hurting Australia, and our communities are paying the price.

## STATEMENT FROM AUSTRALIAN MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS

**Heavy rain, flooding, strong winds and storm surges are damaging communities, endangering residents, and costing millions of dollars in clean-up costs.**

In some regions schools and businesses have been forced to close, the lights have gone out, roads cut off, access to fresh water and food limited and thousands of homes destroyed. Many can no longer afford insurance and will be left with little.

Many communities also experienced the Black Summer bushfire season of 2019–20. The impacts of climate change and extreme weather are all around us.

The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change makes it abundantly clear that climate change is intensifying extreme weather events including rainfall and flooding events like this one, and their frequency is increasing.

We are exhausted by the immediate costs and challenges, and we are worried about what's to come.

The cost of extreme weather disasters in Australia has more than doubled since the 1970s. If we don't take urgent action, floods could cost us \$40 billion per year by 2060.<sup>1</sup>

We are among the sunniest and windiest countries on earth. We have the natural resources to become a world leader in renewable energies like solar and wind, and can create hundreds of thousands of jobs along the way.

Local governments are working together with their communities to take action against climate change and build resilience. But we need more support.

**We call on the federal government to:**

- Lead the country in delivering on an ambitious emissions reduction target this decade, in partnership with state and local governments, to respond to accelerating climate change at the scale and pace required.
- Increase funding sources to councils for responding to climate impacts, and cutting greenhouse gas emissions, including providing a minimum of \$200 million a year in the form of a disaster mitigation fund and an additional \$200 million over four years for a local government climate response partnership.<sup>2</sup>
- Invest in preparing before climate disasters strike and take responsibility for coordination of climate impact responses to ensure consistency and clearly delineated responsibilities between different levels of government.
- Ensure all disaster response funding extends to all damaged assets and incorporates the principle of "betterment" to allow cities and communities to be rebuilt in a way that takes into account the inevitable future changes in climate and makes them more resilient.
- Establish a national body, or expand the remit of an existing one, to support research on adaptation and act as a centralised hub for up-to-date climate change information.

## MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS SIGNED ON TO THE STATEMENT

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**Cr Darria Turley AM, President**  
Local Government NSW

**Dominic King, Mayor**  
Bellingen Shire Council

**Michael Lyon, Mayor**  
Byron Shire Council

**Mark Greenhill OAM, Mayor**  
Blue Mountains City Council

**Alison Worthington, Councillor**  
Eurobodalla Shire Council

**Amanda Kotlash, Councillor**  
Hawkesbury City Council

**Neil Reilly, Mayor**  
Kiama Municipal Council

**Elly Bird, Councillor**  
Lismore City Council

**Claire Pontin, Mayor**  
Midcoast Council

**Nuatali Nelmes, Lord Mayor**  
City of Newcastle

**Chris Homer, Mayor**  
Shellharbour City Council

**Amanda Findley, Mayor**  
Shoalhaven City Council

**Clover Moore, Lord Mayor**  
City of Sydney

**Jerome Laxale, Councillor**  
City of Ryde

**Penelope Pederson, Councillor**  
City of Ryde

**Chris Cherry, Mayor**  
Tweed Shire Council

**Gordon Bradbery AM, Lord Mayor**  
Wollongong City Council

### QUEENSLAND

**Darren Power, Mayor**  
Logan City Council

**Brian Stockwell, Councillor**  
Noosa Shire Council

### TASMANIA

**Anna Reynolds, Lord Mayor**  
City of Hobart

### VICTORIA

**Sally Capp, Lord Mayor**  
City of Melbourne

**Mark Riley, Mayor**  
Moreland City Council

**Peter Maynard, Mayor**  
Wyndham City Council

**Sophie Wade, Mayor**  
Yarra City Council

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Sandy Verschoor, Lord Mayor**  
City of Adelaide

**Karen Redman, Mayor**  
Town of Gawler

**Ann Ferguson, Mayor**  
Mount Barker District Council

**Michael Coxon, Mayor**  
City of West Torrens

**Michael Hewitson AM, Mayor**  
City of Unley

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT NETWORKS

Better Futures Australia

Cities Power Partnership

Global Covenant of Mayors  
for Climate and Energy

ICLEI Oceania

<sup>1</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2021) Special report: Update to the economic costs of natural disasters in Australia. Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience & Safer Communities. Accessed at [http://australianbusinessroundtable.com.au/assets/documents/Special%20report%3A%20Update%20to%20the%20economic%20costs%20of%20natural%20disasters%20in%20Australia/Special%20report%20\\_Update%20to%20the%20economic%20costs%20of%20natural%20disasters%20in%20Australia.pdf](http://australianbusinessroundtable.com.au/assets/documents/Special%20report%3A%20Update%20to%20the%20economic%20costs%20of%20natural%20disasters%20in%20Australia/Special%20report%20_Update%20to%20the%20economic%20costs%20of%20natural%20disasters%20in%20Australia.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Australian Local Government Association. 2021. <https://alga.com.au/councils-between-a-rock-and-hard-place-on-climate-costs/>

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