

Resolution of Council

16 August 2021

Item 3.1

Code Red for Humanity

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report

On 9 August 2021, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report on the most up-to-date understanding of the climate system and climate change across the world.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, described the report as a “code red for humanity”.

The report states that:

- Human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe.
- Global surface temperature will continue to increase until at least the mid-century under all emissions scenarios considered. Global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless deep reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades.
- To limit global temperature increases we must limit emissions, reaching at least net zero CO₂ emissions, along with strong reductions in other greenhouse gas emissions.

City of Sydney Action on Climate Change

Taking effective action on climate change has been a key priority for my entire term as Lord Mayor. After extensive citywide consultation the City made the commitment in 2008 to reduce emissions by 70 per cent by 2030. We did the master plans, set the targets and took action, and we have met this ambitious organisational target by reducing greenhouse gas emissions nine years early in 2021, securing Sydney's future as one of the world's top green, liveable and creative cities. The City of Sydney became carbon neutral in 2007 and we were the first major city in Australia to declare a climate emergency in 2019.

We have brought forward our target for City-wide net zero greenhouse gas emissions to 2035 (from 2040), which we believe can be achieved through the further expansion of renewable energy, working with our partners to increase the efficiency of our buildings, better managing our waste, supporting active transport choices and switching to electric vehicles.

The City's Environmental Strategy 2021-2025 responds to the climate emergency by working in partnership with residents, businesses, and other levels of government to build a resilient, inclusive, and regenerative city.

Renewable Electricity

The most significant action we've taken to reduce emissions is to switch to 100 per cent renewable electricity. This was part of a \$60 million, 10-year agreement with Flow Power to purchase renewable electricity for all of the City's large sites.

Electricity is the largest contributor to Australia's emissions. The Federal Government's Renewable Energy Target (RET) was met in 2019 and a further target has not been set, resulting in a lack of certainty for the market.

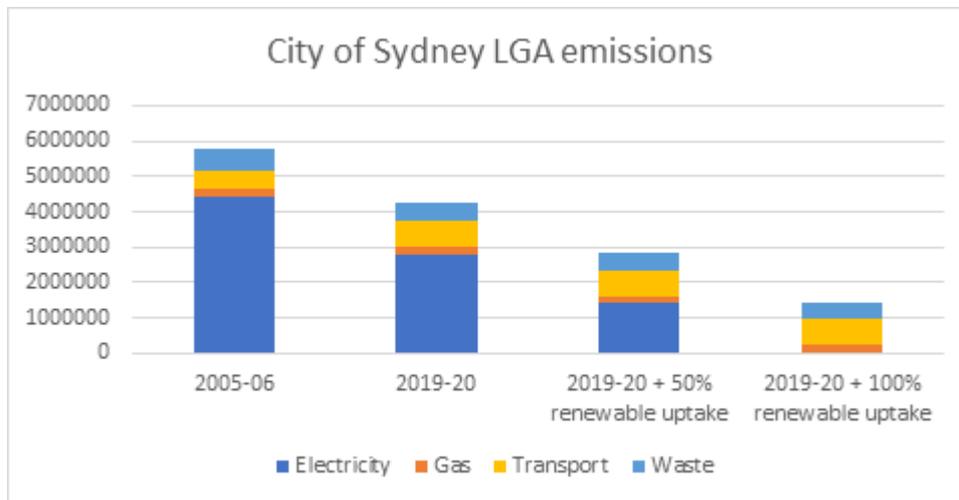
The most significant action our residents and businesses can take to tackle accelerating global warming is to purchase renewable energy.

Residents and businesses can buy 100 per cent accredited GreenPower through most retailers. The latest reporting shows that GreenPower customers have purchased over 19 million MWh of electricity from renewable sources, which equates to over 16 million tonnes of emissions reduction. However, customer numbers are low across NSW households and businesses. Reasons for this include; lack of awareness, lack of trust, price premium (or perceptions of) and lack of active promotion by retailers.

Many Local Governments are keen to promote GreenPower, however there is no data available to track customer numbers by Local Government Area, which is why the City is collaborating with Resilient Sydney to advocate for retailers to provide location data (Local Government Area level) for customers.

Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) will also be key to the offsite procurement of renewables; the City is working with NABERS on the new NABERS Energy rating and renewables indicator (percentage) which will acknowledge PPAs, as well as GreenPower when launched in 2022. For larger customers (commercial, strata buildings etc, Power Purchase Agreements will continue to provide a more cost-effective option for renewable electricity purchasing).

Emissions from the local area have decreased 26 per cent since 2006. Further significant reductions could be made if residents and businesses switch to renewable electricity. A 100 per cent uptake of renewable electricity (on 2019/20 consumption) would see overall emissions decrease by 66 per cent; while a 50 per cent uptake would see emissions decrease by 33 per cent. Emissions reductions from other sectors: transport, gas and waste are also essential to reach the City's target of net zero emissions by 2035.



Emissions Reduction Through Planning Controls

When the City of Sydney adopted its Climate Emergency Response Plan in 2020 it identified further opportunities to drive environmental performance through planning. A significant result of this work was the Net Zero Buildings pathway that was adopted by Council in May 2021. The work to continue to look at the ways we can improve the environmental performance of our built environment should continue.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor

Moved by the Chair (the Lord Mayor), seconded by Councillor Miller –

It is resolved that:

- (A) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to:
 - (i) the Premier requesting that the NSW Government provide GreenPower data at a Local Government Area level so it can be embedded into the Resilient Sydney platform to enable all Councils to start promoting and tracking uptake;
 - (ii) the Premier requesting that the NSW Government bring its net zero emissions target forward to 2035, in response to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and to align with the City of Sydney's net zero emissions target; and
 - (iii) the Prime Minister requesting that the Federal Government commit to a net zero emissions target no later than 2050 and update the national renewable energy target to provide certainty and investment;

- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) prepare a report on the resourcing required to deliver an enhanced program of activities to increase the take-up of GreenPower / renewable electricity by residents and businesses in the City of Sydney, to be provided through a CEO Update; and
 - (ii) establish an indicative program for a Climate Emergency Planning and Resilience Working Group, building on the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) working group process including Councillors and key staff, to explore ways to accelerate climate action in our community and identify obstacles requiring advocacy to the NSW and Federal Governments; and
- (C) Council sign the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, calling on the Federal and NSW Governments to:
- (i) end expansion of fossil fuel production in line with the best available science as outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Environment Programme;
 - (ii) phase out existing production of fossil fuels in a manner that is fair and equitable, taking into account the respective dependency of countries on fossil fuels, and their capacity to transition; and
 - (iii) invest in a transformational plan to ensure 100 per cent access to renewable energy globally, support fossil fuel-dependent economies to diversify away from fossil fuels, and enable people and communities across the globe to flourish through a global just transition.

Carried unanimously.

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