

# South Australia's Sustainable Development Commitments

*The South Australian Government is committed to growing its economy and investing in initiatives that will build resilience against the negative impacts of climate change, and advance socio-economic outcomes in the community. In light of the global accords to pursue sustainable development, the State can proudly demonstrate its own sustainable credentials, and some examples of the State's achievements are highlighted here.*

**Top 10 most liveable city in the world**



*The economist Intelligence Unit's Livability Index 2019.*

**South Australia has a population of 1.67 million (7% of Australia's). It is one of the least densely populated states in the world. The landscape includes desert, mountain ranges and a coastline stretching more than 3,700 kilometres.**

Growth sectors for the South Australian economy include major export industries such as energy and mining, education, health, defence, space, agri-business and hi-tech creative industries. The South Australian economy has fully diversified from an historical reliance on manufacturing and primary industry. The Government has set an ongoing average annual economic growth target rate of 3%, which includes support to move the State's key commodities of agriculture and minerals up the value chain.

Climate change will mean South Australia will become hotter and drier. It will be subject to more extreme weather and associated disaster risk, as well as rising sea levels.

South Australia has been investing in structural adjustment initiatives towards a climate smart economy for some years. Actions are underway to further safeguard the community, the natural environment and economy from the negative impacts of climate change, and South Australia's growth agenda seeks to harness economic opportunities in low emissions industries.



# South Australia is aiming for net zero emissions by 2050



## Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.

The [Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007](#) made South Australia the first Australian state to legislate targets to reduce greenhouse emissions. The principal target being to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the State by at least 60% to an amount that is equal to or less than 40% of 1990 levels by 31 December 2050.

The State [reports progress](#) against the legislated targets biennially.

In 2020, the State Government enhanced its emissions reduction commitment and set an interim goal to achieve in excess of a 50% reduction on 2005 emission levels by 2030.



**Net emissions in South Australia declined by 33% between 2005 and 2018-19.**

# Clear policies to address climate change

The South Australian Government is undertaking a socially responsible transition to a low emissions economy and supporting adaptation to a changing climate. It has set five policy [Directions for a Climate Smart South Australia](#):

1. unlock innovation and economic opportunity
2. reduce net emissions
3. build resilience and adapt
4. provide accessible information
5. government leading by example

The State's [Climate Change Action Plan](#) sets out actions to support delivery of the Government's policy directions under seven focus areas with 68 government led actions.



**South Australia is the driest state in the driest inhabited continent on earth.**

*Its climate has afforded South Australia one of the world's highest levels of renewable energy.*



## Renewable Energy.

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

South Australia is at the global forefront of clean energy generation, successfully transitioning its reliance on fossil fuels to reliable renewable energy. The last coal-fired energy station in South Australia was shut down in 2016.

In less than 15 years, South Australia's electricity mix has shifted from below 1% renewables to 57% of energy generated by wind and solar, supported by innovative battery storage technologies and gas. South Australia is one of the few jurisdictions in the world which has been able to meet all energy demands for periods within the day using renewable energy.



# South Australia has a goal of achieving 100% net renewables by 2030.

## South Australia boasts:

- one in three homes with rooftop solar;
- three industrial scale solar farms
- large scale wind farms that generate 36% of South Australia's energy needs;
- four grid scale batteries, headlined by the world-renowned Hornsdale Power Reserve;
- the highest uptake of residential batteries in Australia.



**Innovation districts, such as Lot Fourteen and Tonsley Innovation District are growing the high-tech, clean-tech and renewable energy businesses of the future.**



## Transport.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

The Government of South Australia is investing to deliver an [Electric Vehicle Action Plan](#), with the aim of making electric vehicles the default choice by 2035.

The Government is leading by example by transitioning its fleet vehicles to plug-in electric models. The State's Electric Vehicle Action Plan includes initiatives to support:

- a statewide public electric vehicle charging network and hydrogen refuelling hubs for heavy vehicles; and
- a staged transition of the public transport fleet to align with the State's net zero emissions target.



## Circular Economy.

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

South Australia has a long history of leadership in driving sustainable reuse of waste through policy and legislation spanning more than 30 years. For example, in 1997, the State was the first to introduce the container deposit scheme to promote litter reduction and resource recovery, which is only now being adopted nationally.

South Australia is recognised as world leading in waste management, and the State consistently holds the highest reported diversion from landfill within Australia. The State has recently passed legislation which phases-out certain single-use plastic products.

South Australia's waste management achievements were recognised in the UN-HABITAT publication 'Solid Waste in the World's Cities', which featured the waste and recycling systems of more than 20 cities worldwide, and noted:

*"South Australia has demonstrated a high level of political commitment and willingness to 'stick its neck out' and implement some policies and legislation upon which other administrations take a more conservative position. The Zero Waste Act and Plastic Bag Ban are two excellent samples of South Australia's government showing leadership by putting in place arrangements to support a major drive towards the 3R's (reduce, reuse, recycle)."*

Through Green Industries SA, the State Government leads the development of the circular economy through diverse collaborations which improve productivity, resilience, resource efficiency and the environment. Funding for programs comes from the solid waste levy, collected under the Fees and Levies regulations of the Environment Protection Act 1993.





## Disaster Resilience.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

South Australia faces some particular challenges. It is one of the least densely populated states in the world, and the landscape includes desert that is some of the most arid parts of the Australian continent.

South Australia has less sudden impact disasters compared to the rest of Australia, but it has the highest number of heat related deaths per capita.

Australia has a National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, which is designed to enhance its capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters. South Australia's [Disaster Resilience Strategy](#) invests in effective disaster resilience measures targeted at a local level to provide a foundation for government, businesses, and community to work together to survive, adapt and grow, no matter what happens.

The summer of 2019-20 brought bushfires that burned across Australia. The fires in South Australia burnt 278,603 hectares of land, and resulted in more than 1180 homes and buildings being destroyed or damaged. Sadly, three people died. The Government supported fire-affected communities recover and rebuild through a range of initiatives and an interim report tells the story of recovery efforts to date [South Australia 2019-20 Bushfire Recovery Report](#).

In response to the bushfire events the Government has significantly increased funding to create a safer and more bushfire resilient community, including provisions for new volunteer resources, better protection for critical assets, enhanced communications and technology, improved communications before and after bushfires and other governance and capability improvements.

The State continues to implement reform under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016, to assist mitigate the risks of climate change, particularly bushfire and drought, in the planning, development and use of land throughout urban and regional areas.



**South Australia's Climate Change Action Plan provides for 68 government led actions to help build a climate smart economy**

## Natural Environment and Agriculture

Approximately one fifth of land in South Australia is held as [Crown Land](#) and managed for the benefit of the community.

South Australia has a comprehensive and well managed system of [parks and reserves](#) protected under legislation, and there are a range of [management programs](#) underway in South Australia to conserve and restore ecosystems both on and off reserves.

The State has a thriving agri-business sector and the State's primary producers continue to adapt to a changing climate. The Government's [Growth State](#) strategy supports initiatives under the [Jobs and Economic Growth Fund](#) for the State's primary producers to adopt new technologies and techniques in order to promote more efficient, climate resilient and sustainable farming techniques, as well as the expansion and scale-up of carbon farming and manufacturing opportunities. Reforms to the [Pastoral Lands Legislation](#) are currently underway to support carbon farming and sequestration.



## Life below water.

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



## Life on Land.

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



## Zero Hunger.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.



The [State's Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025](#) includes a range of actions to build the climate resilience of landscapes, habitats and natural resources in the State to secure climate resilient water supplies and support expansion of carbon farming, including projects to protect and restore coastal ecosystems through its [Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia](#).

Initiatives being implemented by the South Australian Government to protect its natural capital are numerous and also include:

- Increasing the natural capital in urban areas by providing funding for local councils to establish and maintain street trees under its [Green Adelaide](#) strategy;
- undertaking [Marine Scalefish Fishery Reform](#) to ensure sustainability of stock levels; and
- Delivering [Drought Support](#) and building future resilience under the [Future Drought Program](#).



### **Water Security.**

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

South Australia's unique climate and geography brings relatively low rainfall and drought. The State is recognised internationally for its capabilities in water resource management and its networked water distribution system. The State has moved to diversify water supply sources over a number of years, including by investing in recycled wastewater, stormwater reuse and desalinated water to provide climate-independent sources of water to supplement water from its reservoirs, the River Murray and groundwater.

State based legislation ensures a secure and reliable water supply, which is able to sustain economic growth. [SA Water](#) manages water services in South Australia and has a history spanning more than [160 years](#).

SA Water is also the State's single largest electricity user, and has a zero cost energy future project to effectively manage its long-term energy usage, which includes the establishment of solar panels to meet 70% of its energy needs to treat and transport water.



**More than 50% of Adelaide's annual demand can be met with recycled or desalinated water**

### **Socioeconomic Advancement and Empowerment**

Australia has one of the best performing health systems in the world, ranking second behind the United Kingdom across the range of access, care and outcomes metrics. In June 2021, the Economist Intelligence Unit global liveability index ranks Adelaide as the world's third most liveable city.



### **Health and Well-being.**

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

The [State Public Health Plan 2019-2024](#) establishes a vision for a healthy, liveable and connected community. The Plan aligns with the World Federation of Public Health Association's Global Charter for the Public's Health and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Under the Government's health plan healthcare is coordinated between the State and local councils to address the health needs of priority populations, especially Aboriginal people, and comprehensively address issues such as mental health, wellbeing and the public health impacts of climate change.

In recent years the State has undergone systemic reform of its public hospitals. Reforms have included tackling health inequalities and ensuring safe, accessible, efficient and effective healthcare, and the need for health services to respond to the changing demographics of the State's population.





## Reducing inequality.

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

**81% of South Australian adults report their health to be good, very good, or excellent**



## Investment in Infrastructure.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Commissioning of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital facility is at the cornerstone of the State's health plan, and represents the most significant single investment in health care in South Australia's history. The RAH is one of the most advanced hospitals in Australia and sets a global benchmark for future hospitals.

The sustainability elements of the RAH support the State's transition into a net zero emissions economy. The RAH is one of the most technologically advanced tertiary and quaternary public hospitals in Australia, and has become the first large-scale hospital complex in Australia to achieve a 4 Star, Green Star – Healthcare As Built rating from the Green Building Council of Australia.

Since 1936 the South Australian Government has assisted its citizen's secure affordable housing. Social Housing is provided to low income households through the South Australian Housing Authority. The State's social housing per capita exceeds the national average.

The South Australian Government is continuing to address affordable housing and homelessness through its [Our Housing Future 2020-2030](#) Strategy, which includes, amongst other things:

- Partnering with the commercial sector to create affordable homes
- A targeted program to renew large metropolitan areas with old-low density public housing stock
- Affordable Housing Fund to provide additional HomeStart Finance Starter Loans to assist people into home ownership.

South Australia has over 15 years supply of zoned residential land across greater Adelaide, coupled with a zoning policy that mandates that all new significant (private) developments include at least 15% [Affordable Housing](#).

The State Government is also investing significantly to improve education facilities, vocational education and training in order to further develop a viable, skilled workforce equipped for the jobs of the future. The Government has embarked on a record \$1.3 billion investment program to improve public education infrastructure, including new schools, and fast-tracking capital improvements to existing government schools and preschools.

The State has also implemented innovative initiatives to alleviate homelessness, principally through the [Aspire social impact bond](#), which is an intensive service targeting the most vulnerable of the homeless population.



**Unmet demand for homelessness accommodation in South Australia is 15.5% compared to the national average of 33.6%.**



The Government has also launched a landmark new Early Learning Strategy, which aims to increase the number of children developmentally on track by the time they start school, further building on the State's nation-leading preschool system. The ELS strategy includes additional specific support for Aboriginal children and children with diverse needs and backgrounds. It will complement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the development of the new national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy.



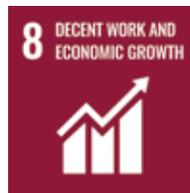
**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

The Government also supports capital investments to improve education facilities for non government schools, and continues to invest in vocational skills and training to modernise the facilities and services of TAFE SA, which is one of Australia's largest vocational education and training providers. TAFE SA works with the State's industry and major employers to deliver relevant, high quality training and trade programs.



**88% of TAFE SA graduates find jobs or continue studying.**

The State Government is committed to its [growth agenda](#) and through collaborations with industry and the broader South Australian community continues to commit to policies, programs and projects to lift social capital within South Australia.



**Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.**

