



National Council of Churches in Australia

19 April 2024

Committee Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Australian Churches Ecological Taskforce submission on the *Net Zero Economy Authority and Net Zero Economy Authority (Transitional Provisions) Bill 2024*

The Australian Churches Ecological Taskforce welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the *Net Zero Economy Authority Bill 2024* and the *Net Zero Economy Authority (Transitional Provisions) Bill 2024*. We urge the Committee to recommend that both Bills be passed through the Parliament.

The Australian Churches Ecological Taskforce is a group of representatives from major Christian denominations (Anglican, Catholic, Uniting Church, Lutheran, Salvation Army, and Quakers Australia) that are members of the National Council of Churches, Australia.

Throughout Australia, Christian faith communities affirm the necessity and urgency of legislative and policy reform that will undergird meaningful governmental responses to climate change issues. These convictions have their basis in our shared faith.

[The ACET](#) has been set up by the [National Council of Churches in Australia](#) to investigate the Christian response to the environmental crisis, and the Taskforce supports the absolute necessity to move quickly to net zero carbon emissions.

Christians have diverse views on humanity's response to the environment. Some hold a view that humanity needs to live in harmony with the environment, a perspective known as "ecotheology". Others believe that humanity has been charged with being wise stewards and trustworthy custodians of God's good creation. This is the responsibility of individuals, communities and nations

Anglican Church

Antiochian
Orthodox Church

Armenian
Apostolic Church

Assyrian Church
of the East

Chinese Methodist
Church

Churches of Christ

Congregational
Federation

Coptic
Orthodox Church

Greek
Orthodox Church

Indian
Orthodox Church

Lutheran Church

Mar Thoma Church

Religious Society
of Friends (Quakers)

Roman Catholic Church

Romanian
Orthodox Church

Syrian
Orthodox Church

The Salvation Army

Uniting Church

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We support the establishment of a Net Zero Economy Authority to reduce the impacts of the transition to net zero and assist in:

- Facilitating public and private sector participation and investment in greenhouse gas emissions reduction and net zero transformation initiatives in Australia, including in new industries;
- Supporting workers impacted by the net zero transformation to transition to new opportunities including through the Energy Industry Jobs Plan;
- Supporting First Peoples to effectively engage in, and benefit from, the net zero economic transformation;
- Coordinating net zero efforts across government and key stakeholders, and in key regions, to facilitate the achievement of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and support Australia's transition to a net zero emissions economy; and,
- Building community understanding, confidence and engagement with the net zero transformation.

The ACET believes that governments should take action to ensure the transition to a net zero greenhouse gas emission economy that the negative disruption to the lives or people and their livelihoods is minimised. People have a strong aversion to the reality or perception of loss compared to their current situation. The aversion to losses motivates people to take action more significantly than the possibility of a gain.¹ Thus, the creating losses for people in the transition to a net zero emission economy will create a strong resistance from many of those people to the transition. Therefore, having the Net Zero Economy Authority having the ability to intervene in the case of a coal-fired or gas-fired power station closing to try and facilitate meaningful jobs for those who will lose their jobs is desirable and justified.

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¹ Daniel Kahneman, "Thinking, Fast and Slow", (USA: Penguin Books, 2012), 283-296.