

## NOTICE OF MOTION

**SUBMITTED BY:** Councillor D Law

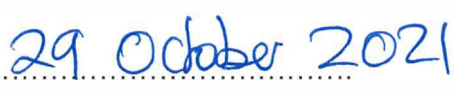
**COUNCIL MEETING:** Ordinary Meeting 10 November 2021

I hereby notify of my intention to move the following motion at the Ordinary Meeting to take place on Wednesday, 10 November 2021:

That Council

- (a) acknowledges the significant action already undertaken through the implementation of the Sunshine Coast Council Environment and Liveability Strategy (ELS) 2017 towards mitigation and reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- (b) accepts the Sixth Assessment Report (August 2021) of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which reveals that the Earth's climate has deteriorated dramatically since they last reported six years ago; and in response to same:
  - (i) recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency that requires urgent and sustained effort to achieve net zero emissions by 2041
  - (ii) request the Chief Executive Officer to investigate the governance structure/framework necessary for a whole of Council response to the climate emergency that strengthens the daily actions of Council to the emergent need and prepare a report with relevant recommendations for Council's consideration by 31 March 2022 and
  - (iii) notes that Council does not require the endorsement or recognition from any third party or external organisation to give effect to this resolution.

  
.....  
Councillor D Law

  
.....  
Date

### To all Councillors and Group Executives

I hereby notify that Councillor D Law intends to move the motion as shown above at the Ordinary Meeting to be held on 10 November 2021.

In accordance with section 16 (4) of the *Standing Orders of the Sunshine Coast Council 2020*, I certify that the motion as shown above complies with sections 16 (1) and 16 (2) of the aforementioned Standing Orders.

  
.....  
Emma Thomas  
Chief Executive Officer

**1 November 2021**  
.....  
Date

# **Notice of Motion Ordinary Meeting 10 November 2021**

## **Councillor D Law – Division 10 SCC**

### **CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

#### PURPOSE

This report provides a summary of my reasons that Council considers and adopts an emergency type response to climate change. By recognising that we are locally and globally in a state of climate change emergency we will be positioned to provide an organisation wide emergency response to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and make our contribution to the reduction of global warming. The CEO will be requested to investigate a governance structure/framework to strengthen our daily actions to be on a climate emergency status and provide a report to Council for its consideration before 31 March 2022 with relevant recommendations to achieve same.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The science clearly demonstrates that climate change is due to the influence of human actions of the past 200 years and that locally and globally we have reached and passed a state of climate emergency. This is because globally greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) are not reducing quickly enough thereby not providing any slowdown in global warming. Global warming must be kept below 1.5°C to prevent catastrophic temperature rises and triggering of abrupt, dangerous, and irreversible changes to our climate. Should global warming temperatures remain above 1.5°C for a long period of time critical ecosystems on which we depend will be destroyed. Every tiny fraction of a degree of global warming avoided will be measured in lives, species and ecosystems saved.

I do not believe we are lacking information on this issue. There is a vast depth of scientific knowledge and expertise. Plus, we have the lived experience of the mega bushfires of 2019/2020 and in March 2020 the Great Barrier Reef had its third mass bleaching event in five years causing irreversible damage.

In September 2017 Council Resolution (OM17/168) adopted the Environment and Liveability Strategy (ELS). The Strategy was developed to provide long-term strategic direction to guide growth, environmental protection and shape the region for future generations. With the continuing implementation of the ELS the five Strategic Pathways and 26 Transformational Actions Council has already actioned a broad range of initiatives to mitigate the impact of climate change and make progress towards Transformational Action 22: net zero emissions by 2041.

To meet Council's existing 2041 net zero target, emissions will need to reduce 5% per annum (from the current level) for the next 20 years. However, despite Council's efforts to date, the fundamental measure of progress in managing climate change, GHG emissions continues to rise. In 2019/20 total GHG emissions rose 11.7% above the 2017/18 baseline; (*Sunshine Coast Council, Organisational Environmental Sustainability Benchmarking Annual Report 2019/20, p. 11.*)

Unfortunately, on current estimates, emissions for the 2020/21 reporting period will still be 8.75% above the baseline.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications, and potential future risks, as well as to put forward adaptation and mitigation options. Through its assessments, the IPCC determines the state of knowledge on climate change. It identifies where there is agreement in the scientific community on topics related to climate change and where further research is needed. The reports are drafted and reviewed in several stages to enhance objectivity and transparency. The IPCC does not conduct its own research ensuring the IPCC reports are neutral and policy relevant. The assessment reports are a key input into the international negotiations to tackle climate change.

In the latest Report (IPCC, 2021: *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*) the IPCC has revealed that the Earth's climate has deteriorated dramatically since they last reported six years ago. They state "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred."

The Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report by IPCC has been released to inform the Global Climate Summit, COP26, that is currently underway in Glasgow, November 2021. For nearly three decades the UN has been bringing together almost every country on earth for global climate summits – called COPs – which stands for 'Conference of the Parties'. In that time climate change has gone from being a fringe issue to a global priority.

Using current IPCC projections for all five climate change scenarios the best estimate for mid-term global warming (2041-2060) is that we will exceed 1.5°C and in three of the five scenarios the long-term projection (2081-2100) is that we will exceed 2.5°C.

On the current global emissions trajectory (SSP5-8.5) the best estimate is that we will reach 1.6°C in the near term (2021-2040) and the best estimate under this scenario for 2081-2100 is 4.4°C.

When we consider this data and notice that all but one projection results in global warming greater than 1.5°C we can easily conclude that we are in a state of climate emergency. (*See Table 1*)

As our Global Leaders are negotiating our future, it is time for the Sunshine Coast Council to increase and strengthen our response and provide the leadership for ourselves, our businesses and communities to do everything possible to respond to the climate emergency.

But leadership is not just a question of financial responsibility and risk management. In good faith the people of the Sunshine Coast have entrusted us with a moral duty as well as a duty of care for us all today and our future generations. I am aware of this whenever I think about my children's future and ask myself what sort of world, what sort of climate, do I want them to inherit? No one can say we didn't know about the climate crisis that is now at emergency status. What we must say is that we did everything in our power to avert the dangerous and irreversible changes to our climate.

Key findings in the recent Lowy Institute Climate Poll 2021 show overall concern about climate change has increased for Australians in 2021. 60% of Australians say 'global warming is a serious and pressing problem (*see Table 2*) and 74% of Australians say 'the benefits of taking further action on climate change will outweigh the costs' (*see Table 3*).

## FINANCE AND RESOURCING

To adopt this motion has no immediate financial requirement. The request to the CEO to investigate the necessary governance structure is contained within normal operations. The report and recommendations to be provided to Council for consideration by 31 March 2022 may result in budget considerations for future years.

## CONSULTATION

Two Councillor workshops have been provided during the 2021 workshop program.

- Climate Change Workshop – response perspectives 20 May 2021
- A Leading Climate Change Response – Next Steps 29 July 2021

## RISK

Failure to act and respond in an emergency status methodology will likely result in not achieving the net zero emissions 2041 target and leave Council exposed to failure to meet our duty of care to the future generations.

## LEGAL

Council is at risk of incurring legal liability if we unreasonably fail to take into account the likely effects of climate change; an obligation established under the Local Government Act 2009.

Council has Regulatory obligations to consider climate risk in The Planning Act 2016 and The Disaster Management Act 2003.

## TABLES

Table 1

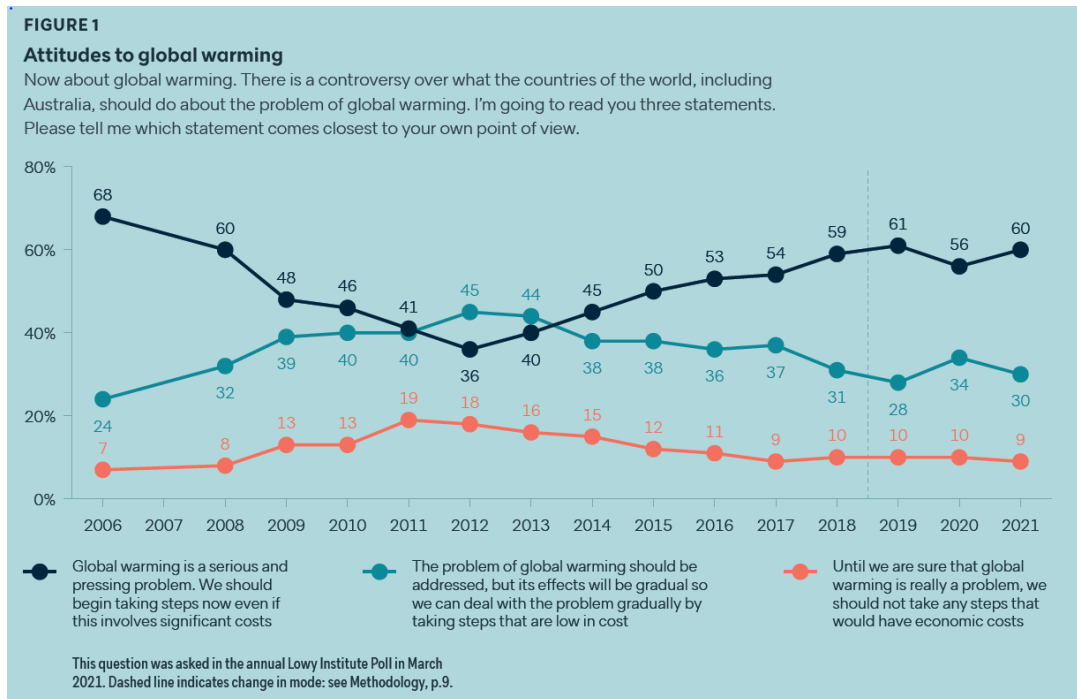
Scenario	Near term, 2021–2040		Mid-term, 2041–2060		Long term, 2081–2100	
	Best estimate (°C)	Very likely range (°C)	Best estimate (°C)	Very likely range (°C)	Best estimate (°C)	Very likely range (°C)
SSP1-1.9	1.5	1.2 to 1.7	1.6	1.2 to 2.0	1.4	1.0 to 1.8
SSP1-2.6	1.5	1.2 to 1.8	1.7	1.3 to 2.2	1.8	1.3 to 2.4
SSP2-4.5	1.5	1.2 to 1.8	2.0	1.6 to 2.5	2.7	2.1 to 3.5
SSP3-7.0	1.5	1.2 to 1.8	2.1	1.7 to 2.6	3.6	2.8 to 4.6
SSP5-8.5	1.6	1.3 to 1.9	2.4	1.9 to 3.0	4.4	3.3 to 5.7

*IPCC 2021: The Physical Science Basis, Summary for Policymakers, p.18*

Where SSP is Shared Socioeconomic Pathway.

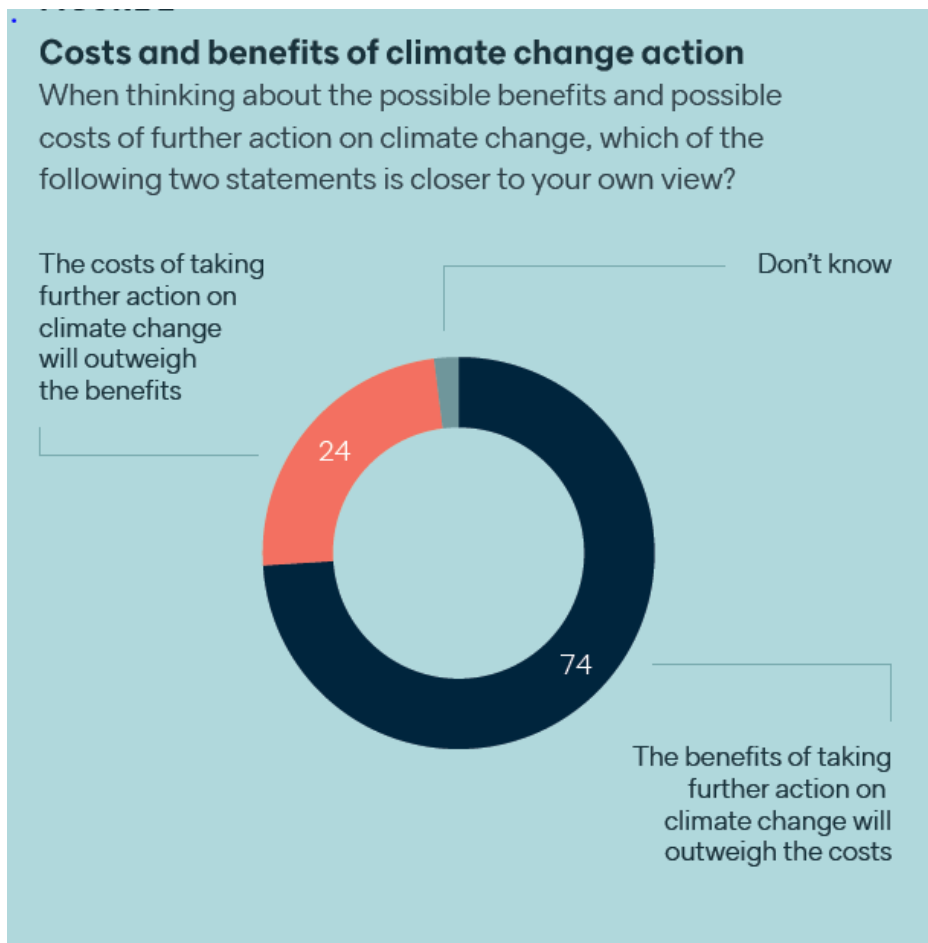
For example, SSP2-4.5 is a “middle of the road” scenario. CO2 emissions hover around current levels before starting to fall mid-century, but do not reach net-zero by 2100. Socioeconomic factors follow their historic trends, with no notable shifts. Progress toward sustainability is slow, with development and income growing unevenly. In this scenario, temperatures rise 2.7C by the end of the century.

Table 2



Lowy Institute Climate Poll 2021, p.2.

Table 3



Lowy Institute Climate Poll 2021, p.3.