

**Report to the Future Melbourne Committee****Agenda item 6.4****The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) and United Nations Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15)****17 August 2021****Presenter:** Tiffany Crawford, Co-Director Climate Change and City Resilience**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Future Melbourne Committee's endorsement of three declarations in the lead up to the United Nations (UN) Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP 15) in October 2021 and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021.
2. COP26 is the most important global climate event since the 2015 Paris Agreement (refer Attachment 2). Heads of state will seek agreement on emissions targets and actions and creating a global carbon economy. The event elevates discourse on climate action both locally and globally and is an opportunity for the City of Melbourne (CoM) to influence national ambition and demonstrate it is leading by example.
3. CBD COP 15 will convene governments from around the world to agree on a new set of goals for nature over the next decade through the Convention on Biological Diversity post 2020 framework (refer Attachment 2). The meeting is expected to adopt the post 2020 global framework and set a new 10 year strategy for the conservation of biodiversity to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including climate change.
4. In late 2018 Council developed and adopted its Climate Change Mitigation Strategy to 2050. Since releasing the Strategy Council also declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in 2019, and endorsed a response in 2020 recognising that even more urgent action is required.
5. It is identified in the 2021–25 Council Plan (Major Initiative 28) and Council's Response to the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Declaration that the achievement of CoM's emissions reduction and biodiversity targets requires advocacy to State and Federal Government for policy changes.

**Key issues**

6. Ahead of and during COP26 and CBD COP 15, CoM will participate in global, national and local dialogue. This will include:
  - 6.1. Showcasing CoM's climate leadership on the international stage through C40 and other global relationships by:
    - 6.1.1. Endorsing the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group's Renewable Energy Declaration (refer Attachment 3) to be launched publically in September 2021.
    - 6.1.2. Endorsing the Edinburgh Declaration (refer Attachment 2).
    - 6.1.3. Leveraging opportunities to participate in UN and C40 events and communications associated with the UN Climate Change conferences, enabled by endorsing the above declarations.
  - 6.2. Participating in national and local dialogue along-side all levels of government, the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors, business leaders, universities, other institutions and community groups by:
    - 6.2.1. Endorsing the Better Futures Australia Declaration, (refer Attachment 2) a local climate advocacy campaign.
    - 6.2.2. Continuing to encourage both State and Federal Governments:
      - 6.2.2.1. To set a near term national climate target to ensure Australia contributes to limiting average global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
      - 6.2.2.2. To take action towards this target including; accelerate the roll out of the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO's) Integrated System Plan, a nation building project that will leverage significant private investment in renewables, adopt national emissions standards for vehicles, and fast track zero emissions climate adapted building regulation in the National Construction Code.

**Recommendation from management**

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
  - 7.1. Endorse the following declarations:
    - 7.1.1. C40 Renewable Energy Declaration
    - 7.1.2. The Edinburgh Declaration.
    - 7.1.3. Better Futures Australia Declaration
  - 7.2. Authorise the General Manager Strategy, Planning and Climate Change to complete and submit the supporting documentation for each.
  - 7.3. Note management's intention to participate in national dialogue on climate change action aligned to Council Plan and the response to the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Declaration alongside business leaders, universities and other institutions, in the lead up to the UN Climate Change Conference in November 2021 and UN Biodiversity Conference in October 2021.

**Attachments:**

1. Attachment 1 - Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 8)
2. Attachment 2 - C40 Renewable Energy Declaration, Edinburgh Declaration and Better Futures Australia Declaration (Page 4 of 8)
3. Attachment 3 - Text of the Renewable Energy Declaration: Powering Green and Just Cities (Page 6 of 8)
4. Attachment 4 - Summary of global national climate change commitments and policy action (Page 8 of 8)

## Supporting Attachment

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### Legal

1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation made in this report.

### Finance

2. There are no direct financial implications of this recommendation. All actions are included in existing Council endorsed strategies and plans.

### Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

### Stakeholder consultation

5. This report proposes conversation with business leaders at a roundtable led by the Lord Mayor as part of developing a stronger understanding of the needs of business leaders to be well positioned to benefit from global and local policy changes. This report has been developed through conversations with existing advocacy networks and platforms including C40, Better Futures Australia and the Global Covenant of Mayors.
6. Representatives (subject matter experts) from the City of Melbourne attended the Edinburgh Process and C40 Renewable Energy meetings, participated in discussions, and were provided with opportunities to shape the final declaration.
7. All actions are consistent with existing Council endorsed strategies and plans, which have undergone extensive stakeholder engagement processes during their development.

### Relation to Council policy

8. All recommendations in this report are consistent with Council endorsed policy and the Council Plan 2021–24.
9. This approach delivers on a multiple Major Initiatives in the Council Plan 2021–2025, Council's Climate Change Mitigation Strategy, Nature in the City Strategy and the pathway to zero community emissions by 2040 endorsed in the Response to Climate and Biodiversity Emergency.

### Environmental sustainability

10. The recommendation highlights Council's commitments to environmental sustainability, as outlined in the above endorsed strategies.

## C40 Renewable Energy Declaration, Edinburgh Declaration and Better Futures Australia Declaration

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### Global Climate Change Response Process.

**UN Climate Change** is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change. Each year the 196 member nations of the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** review the global response to the thread of climate change at the **Conference of Parties (COP)** meeting.

In 2015 at COP21, the 196 nations adopted an international treaty on climate change called the **Paris Agreement**. The agreement is legally binding and aims to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees compared to pre-industrial levels. Countries set targets and actions in or to reduce emissions as soon as possible to reach this goal. In 2021, nations are meeting to revise these targets in order to meet the goal.

**COP26** (November 2021) is the most important global climate event since the 2015 Paris Agreement. Heads of state will seek agreement on emissions targets and actions and creating a global carbon economy. The event elevates discourse on climate action both locally and globally and is an opportunity for the City of Melbourne (CoM) to influence national ambition and demonstrate it is leading by example.

### Major events

The declarations in this report enable City of Melbourne to demonstrate its leadership at the following major events:

- Better Futures Forum, Australia, 17-19 August 2021.
- United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Energy, New York, September 2021
- United Nations 15th Meeting of Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Kunming, China 11-24 October 2021. The most important global meeting on biodiversity this decade in which nations will commit to biodiversity targets and actions to progress the goal to live in harmony with nature by 2050. These actions will influence climate targets at the following COP26 event.
- COP 26 United Nations Climate Change Conference, Glasgow, 1- 12 November 2021. COP26 is the most important global climate event since the 2015 Paris Agreement was signed. Heads of state will seek agreement on:
  - emissions targets and actions,
  - creating a global carbon economy
  - and compensation for vulnerable nations.

### C40 Renewable Energy Declaration

1. **C40** is a network of the largest cities in the world taking action on climate. The network represents over 700 million citizens and one quarter of the global economy. Mayors in the C40 network are committed to delivering on the goals of the Paris Agreement.
2. The **C40 Renewable Energy Declaration** positions cities as champions for 100 per cent decarbonised energy systems and leaders in driving the decarbonisation of electricity, heating, cooling and cooking. Its purpose is to raise urban ambition on energy, accelerate renewable energy deployment, and harness the collective power of cities to influence global action on climate change.

3. C40's Declaration offers a 'pathway commitment approach', whereby cities choose one of three pathways as appropriate to their city's context, level of development, jurisdictional powers, and priorities. The 'accelerating renewable energy transition' pathway is the appropriate pathway for City of Melbourne's context. Council is well-placed to deliver the commitments of the Declaration, with minimal extra effort.
4. In addition, to meet the requirements of the Declaration, cities must commit to powering their operations with renewable energy, complete a City Action Template, and report progress to C40 annually.

### **Edinburgh Declaration**

5. The **Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity**, in conjunction with the Scottish Government, led a series of consultations with subnational and local governments on the draft Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, particularly the targets and the roles each can play in delivering them. These consultations were called the Edinburgh Process, and resulted in the Edinburgh Declaration, which was finalised in August 2020.
6. The **Edinburgh Declaration** seeks greater recognition of the role of subnational and local governments in achieving the aims and ambitions set out in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. It outlines the aspirations and commitments of Edinburgh Process partners in delivering for nature over the coming decade.

### **Better Futures Australia Declaration**

7. **Bettors Futures Australia** represents a coalition of Australian business and industry leaders, investors, local and state and territory governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, healthcare and social institutions, farmers, developers, unions, workers, artists, academic and cultural institutions, and communities.
8. The Declaration aligns Australian signatories from all of the above sectors to the same goals:
  - taking climate actions through individual effort and collaboration to ensure Australia contributes to limiting average global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels;
  - showcasing new climate commitments and actions to inspire other Australians to realise zero emissions opportunities;
  - advocating for a national response that will deliver action at the scale required to reach net zero emissions well before 2050; and
  - working together, alongside and in partnership with Federal, State and Local Government leadership, to support the delivery of the Paris Agreement.

## Text of the C40 Renewable Energy Declaration: Powering Green and Just Cities

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*As mayors, we know that energy enables our cities to thrive. Cities use over two-thirds of the world's energy<sup>1</sup> – to power essential services, jobs and cultural activities, to cook, to heat and cool our buildings, to light our streets and to power transport and industry. Energy enables us to connect, be safe, work, play and create.*

*But this comes at a cost: energy is still mostly produced from fossil fuels and is the biggest source of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Electricity and heat is responsible for most emissions within the energy sector with half of it coming from energy use in buildings.<sup>2</sup> Increasing fossil fuel generation capacity would lock the world in a high carbon trajectory and turn those oil, gas and coal projects into stranded assets while destroying our local biodiversity and poisoning the air we breathe in cities. In 2018 alone, fossil fuel air pollution was responsible for 8.7 million premature deaths in the world.<sup>3</sup>*

*We are a long way from achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 7: reliable, sufficient, affordable and sustainable energy remains out of reach for many of our most vulnerable city residents. Almost 800 million people still lack access to electricity, almost 700 million people in urban areas are at high risk for nutrition, health and safety due to lack of cooling<sup>4</sup>, over 1 billion people live in urban informal settlements and slums without access to basic services, including energy, and 2.8 billion people cannot cook safely or with clean fuels.<sup>5</sup> Even cities with ample access to electricity are still home to residents affected by energy poverty.*

*The global COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of our societies, our economies and our ecosystems. But it has also given us the unprecedented chance to do things differently. We know that to power sustainable, equitable and vibrant communities and achieve a just transition that leaves no one behind, we need to adopt a new energy system – one that creates good local jobs, improves our health and builds resilience.*

*Renewable energy is one of the key enablers to realise our Paris Agreement compatible climate action plans. Moving away from fossil fuels and switching to renewable energy to decarbonise electricity used in our cities and heating, cooling and cooking needs in our buildings will massively reduce urban GHG emissions and air pollution. Renewable energy technologies are versatile and can be deployed locally, building resilience by helping our cities adapt to and mitigate extreme weather events that will become more frequent due to climate change. Decentralised renewable energy solutions such as community renewable energy projects, rooftop solar systems, battery storage or minigrids can increase energy access and enable communities to have a greater voice in the energy transition.*

*A fair transition to renewable energy brings also other social and economic benefits to our communities. Renewable energy technologies are now cheaper than fossil fuels in many parts of the world thanks to massive cost reductions.<sup>6</sup> They create 7.5 full-time equivalent jobs per USD 1 million of investment<sup>7</sup> – almost three times as many as fossil fuel technologies – and every one dollar invested would bring a payback of between three and eight dollars in reduced environmental and health costs.<sup>8</sup> Prioritising renewable energy investments in stimulus packages rolled out worldwide can enable a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, creating economic growth and jobs in our cities – and by ensuring those jobs are equitably distributed and localised, it can also support a just transition. An estimated 5.5 million jobs would be created by 2030 by reaching the necessary investment level for a renewables-based energy transition in the recovery phase and thereafter.<sup>9</sup>*

*As mayors, we know we must take transformative actions to move away from traditional and fossil fuel-based energy systems and accelerate the deployment of renewable energy technologies that have proven to work and are cost-effective. Cities can create change through leveraging their demand and leading by example for municipal operations. Cities can incentivise renewable energy generation, aggregate local demand, support community energy projects to engage city residents in the energy transition and enable innovation and digitalisation. They can lobby – and collaborate with – state and national governments, regional key players, regulators, utilities and private sector partners to prioritise renewable energy.*

### **Our commitment**

*To meet the goal of the Paris Agreement and build the world envisioned by the Global Green New Deal<sup>10</sup>, we, as mayors of some of the world's largest and most influential cities, pledge to power a green and just recovery from the COVID-19*

<sup>1</sup> IRENA (2016), Renewable Energy in Cities

<sup>2</sup> WRI (2020), 4 Charts Explain Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Countries and Sectors

<sup>3</sup> Vohra, K. et. Al (2021), Global mortality from outdoor fine particle pollution generated by fossil fuel combustion: Results from GEOS-Chem, Environmental Research, 195

<sup>4</sup> Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll) (2020), Chilling prospects 2020: tracking sustainable cooling for all

<sup>5</sup> UN (2020), The Sustainable Development Goals Report

<sup>6</sup> IRENA (2019), Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2019

<sup>7</sup> Garrett-Peltier, H. (2017) Green versus brown: Comparing the employment impacts of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and fossil fuels using an input-output model. Economic Modelling, 61: 439–447

<sup>8</sup> IRENA (2020), Global Renewables Outlook: Energy Transformation 2050

<sup>9</sup> IRENA (2020), Mobilising institutional capital for renewable energy

<sup>10</sup> C40, The Global Green New Deal

*pandemic with renewable energy and take all possible steps to accelerate the full decarbonisation of electricity, heating, cooling and cooking and the phasing out of fossil fuels.*

*To meet this commitment, we will:*

- *Adopt one of the following pathways in line with our objectives, priorities and context.*
- *Lead by example, either switching municipal electricity consumption to 100% renewable energy by 2025 or deploying renewable energy systems on all feasible municipal assets by 2030.*

*Pathways:*

- *Accelerating renewable energy transition: Use 100% renewable electricity citywide by 2035 and fully decarbonised energy to cook, and heat and cool buildings within the city no later than 2050.*
- *Enabling energy access with renewables: Achieve universal access to reliable, sustainable and affordable electricity and clean cooking<sup>11</sup> fuels and technologies by 2030 and use 100% renewable electricity citywide by 2050.*
- *Maximising local renewable energy: Deploy clean energy systems for electricity, heating, cooling and cooking to achieve 50% of the assessed feasible potential within the city by 2030 and 100% by 2050.*

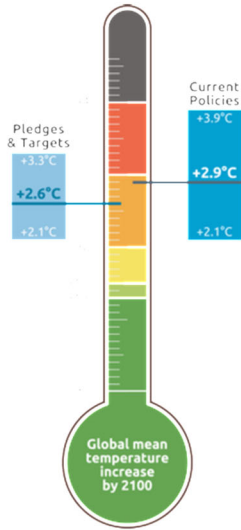
*To achieve our committed targets, we will:*

- *Adopt (if not already in place) a clear roadmap and strategy for our pathway objectives within two years of signing. For the Maximising Local Renewable Energy Pathway, we also will develop an assessment of the feasible potential for deploying renewable and decarbonised energy systems on all buildings and sites within the city within two years of signing.*
- *Ensure that this strategy follows the principle of ‘energy efficiency first’ where it is cost-effective and take all necessary actions to increase the efficiency and electrification of end-use sectors.*
- *Prioritise and secure investments for actions that benefit low income and marginalised groups such as community energy projects, and that strengthen diversity and inclusivity in the energy sector such as initiatives to upskill workers transitioning from the fossil fuel industry into the renewable energy sector.*
- *Champion and publicly advocate for the goal of reaching 100% decarbonised energy systems and phasing out of fossil fuels at the city, state, regional, national and global level in collaboration with other cities and engaging with relevant stakeholders.*
- *Implement ambitious policies, programmes and projects and engage with the private sector to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors while stimulating local markets and jobs.*
- *Publicly report every year on the progress made towards our goals.*

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<sup>11</sup> Fuel-technology combinations that meet WHO guidelines for indoor air quality is considered clean for cooking.

**Summary of global national climate change commitments and policy action**



TRACKING  
 GLOBAL  
 CLIMATE  
 ACTION  
 SINCE 2009

China	Net zero by 2060, in negotiations
Australia	No target, 2-3°C actions, no target
US	Net zero by 2050 In policy, 50% by 2030
UK	Net zero by 2050 in law, 78% by 2035
Melbourne	Net zero by 2040, 75% by 2030

Reference: [Fair Share | Climate Action Tracker](#):