A DIFFERENT APPROACH COMMUNITY Pty Ltd

Climate Action in Australia

 7 September 2022

State member of Victoria

Member for

Dear Sir,

 **Federal Parliament**

We were excited when there was a change of government in Australia. Our anticipation has been buoyed by the actions of government with respect to such things as action on climate change, fostering closer links with our geographic neighbours, and action on aged care.

However, we have been very disappointed by the decision to cut the support to the crossbench in the House of Representatives and The Senate. A third of the people of Australia, 31.7 per cent [1], voted for this crossbenchof 16, and the cutting of their research support staff from 4 to 1 is a cynical and anti-democratic act. They will not have the support they need to investigate legislation properly. How can this be in the best interests of effective government?

By way of example, the office of the Member for Waringah, Zali Steggall, has commented that they will not have the research staff and resources, in the 47tth parliament, to further develop and contribute to the Climate Change Act, as Zali Steggall did in the 46th parliament.

Since Dec 2019, our ADAC group, has mailed over 4,085 letters to all 227 politicians in Canberra asking for real climate action and for support of Zali Steggall’s Climate Change Bill 2020.

The community is waiting for the up-coming Victorian elections, on 26th of November 2022, and hoping Victoria can do more to improve the **Victorian Renewable Targets.**

Link: (2)[Victorian Renewable Targets (VRET) to 50 per cent by 2030](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-targets)to further reduce emissions. [**VRET Victoria**](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-targets)

Link: (3) Climate above the interests of big polluters[**Victorian EPA 2021**](https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/09/23/why-were-taking-the-epa-to-court/)

Link: (4) Sweeping environmental reform and new legislation.[**Federal**](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/19/tanya-plibersek-pledges-new-environment-laws-to-end-years-of-wilful-neglect-by-coalition) **E**[**PBC 1999**](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/19/tanya-plibersek-pledges-new-environment-laws-to-end-years-of-wilful-neglect-by-coalition)

**State of Victoria Parliament**

The Victorian Government is doing great work with the Lily D'Ambrosio Gas Substitution Road map and also with the new State Planning Scheme Amendment by 24 councils across Victoria for energy efficiency,

However it has come to public attention that Viva Energy has a proposal for a new fossil fuel development in Corio Bay, Geelong. This is under consideration and has recently been through a 30-day IAC Inquiry Committee hearing.

The Victorian EPA and Federal EPBC were described at the IAC committee hearings as ineffective and of poor quality in assisting and abating the real climate change crisis that is now upon us. It was also asked: *Are regulations and laws up to the mark for wise decisions to be made with respect to ever rising emission levels?*

Our ADAC group has had members listening to the IAC committee meetings. Some also participated in this democratic process by making submissions, collecting signatures, signing petitions, and making personal presentations to the committee.

The IAC hearings ended on 5th August 2022. Will the environment, sea birds, sea grasses and the fish life of Corio Bay be heard? During the IAC hearings much was made of Scope1, Scope 2, Scope 3 and up stream and down stream emissions. These issues of scopes and streams are totally immaterial if we as a community continue to allow Viva and the fossil fuel companies wriggle room to further increase emissions. There are ineffective and poor quality regulations in many sections of the Victorian EPA Act.

This is a Victorian issue to be approved by the Minister for the Environment, Land, Water and Planning Department.

This project, if approved, is not in step with the United Nations, the IPCC and also groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria, Geelong Renewables Not Gas, many local council efforts and hundreds of local groups both large and small.

ADAC strongly disapproves of this development because to save the environment, we now need new urgent approaches, stronger laws and regulations to lead us to zero emissions by 2050. **If the laws and regulations are inadequate and out-of-date then we ask if you can please help to make the changes required.**

Link:(3) The *Climate Change Act* (2017) has been tested. [**Victorian EPA short comings**](https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/09/23/why-were-taking-the-epa-to-court/)

For all the talk within Australia, we are not keeping up with world environmental and scientific bodies which continue to state. They message is in short:

 **NO NEW FOSSIL FUELS TIME IS RUNNING OUT IT IS NOW OR NEVER**

The IAC committee has heard experts from many quarters and disciplines, and it now has over 500 pages of expert evidence, over 2,200 submissions from the community of which over 2,000 were against this development.

The presentations from the community showed real concerns for the health of Corio Bay, Climate Change effects on the environment and the safety for local residents. The wider community is totally against this Viva development because of the continuing rise of global CO2 levels and rising temperatures. Is a rise by 2050 to 550ppm and a temperature increase of 2.5C degrees plus acceptable to the Victorian Dept of Planning IAC committee?

It’s very well understood that most fossil fuels must be phased out by 2050, so starting a new fossil fuel development in Geelong is not moving in the right direction.

The state government must allow more time for the current regulations and laws and the Federal Energy policy to be developed further with a plan for the next 30 years that reflects the community’s expectations and concerns.

The questions and issues that arose from the community during the IAC 30 day hearing:

* Is Victoria short of gas? We need to work towards renewables.
* Will wind and rooftop solar reduce emissions in time, before increases of above 2.0 degrees?
* Do more than 75% of the Victorian community want Real Climate Action Now?
* How much will new Australian fossil fuel developments further increase emissions by 2030?
* Will CO2 levels rise above 500ppm by 2050 with temperature increases of 2.7 degrees?
* Is Viva Energy acting as a responsible corporate citizen when in a few years the fossil fuel industry will have many stranded assets?
* Did Geelong Ports present evidence of safety concerns with LNG carriers in Corio Bay?

As your local voters, we would love to meet with you at your electorate office as soon as convenient for you, and well before the 26th November 2022 Victorian elections.

We would appreciate a meeting to discuss more of the process, your strategies and personal views.

Would you please personally pass on to Minister Blandthorne our concerns? We also ask that you help stop this new fossil fuel development, Viva Energy’s Gas Terminal in Geelong.

We hope that the Victorian parliament will continue to work for all Victorians to give them the opportunity, through their representatives, to have a voice in parliament. But most importantly a voice in the democratic process so we trust and we can again feel safe in the world in which we all live.

**Yours faithfully Forwarded by:**

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 Mobile

 ADAC email contact number as of August 2022: **1,264**

 A Different Approach Community P.O.Box 1906, Geelong 3220, Victoria [www.adacaust.com.au](http://www.adacaust.com.au)

SOURCES

1. ABC News link: [Federal Results May 2022](https://www.abc.net.au/news/elections/federal/2022/results/party-totals)

The Labor government received 32.6 % of the vote, LNP received 35.7% of the vote and the crossbenchers received 31.7% of the vote. On this basic principal the crossbenchers should receive a very much larger research staff team than you are giving them and thus giving to 31.7% of people who voted for them. (ABC News “Two Party Preferred” Figures)

2. Victorian Renewable Targets link: [VRET Victoria](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-targets) [to 50 per cent by 2030.](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-targets)

<https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorias-renewable-energy-targets>

3. Victorian EPA link: [EPA Victoria 2021](https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/09/23/why-were-taking-the-epa-to-court/) - [short comings EV, Guardian](https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/09/23/why-were-taking-the-epa-to-court/)

<https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/09/23/why-were-taking-the-epa-to-court/>

4. Federal EPBC link: [Federal EPBC](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/19/tanya-plibersek-pledges-new-environment-laws-to-end-years-of-wilful-neglect-by-coalition) - [end years of neglect](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/19/tanya-plibersek-pledges-new-environment-laws-to-end-years-of-wilful-neglect-by-coalition)

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/19/tanya-plibersek-pledges-new-environment-laws-to-end-years-of-wilful-neglect-by-coalition>

5. Carbon Brief UK.Org link: [Carbon Brief UK](https://www.carbonbrief.org/about-us/) how much the Earth will warm in the current century and what are the implications.

6. EPA - Enviroment Protection Authority Victoria.

7. EPBC - Enviroment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

8. IAC - Inquiry and Advisory Committee.

9. EES - Enviroment Effects Statement.

10. IPCC - UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

11.The Conversation: a setback for democracy. Labor’s planned cuts to the research staff of independents.