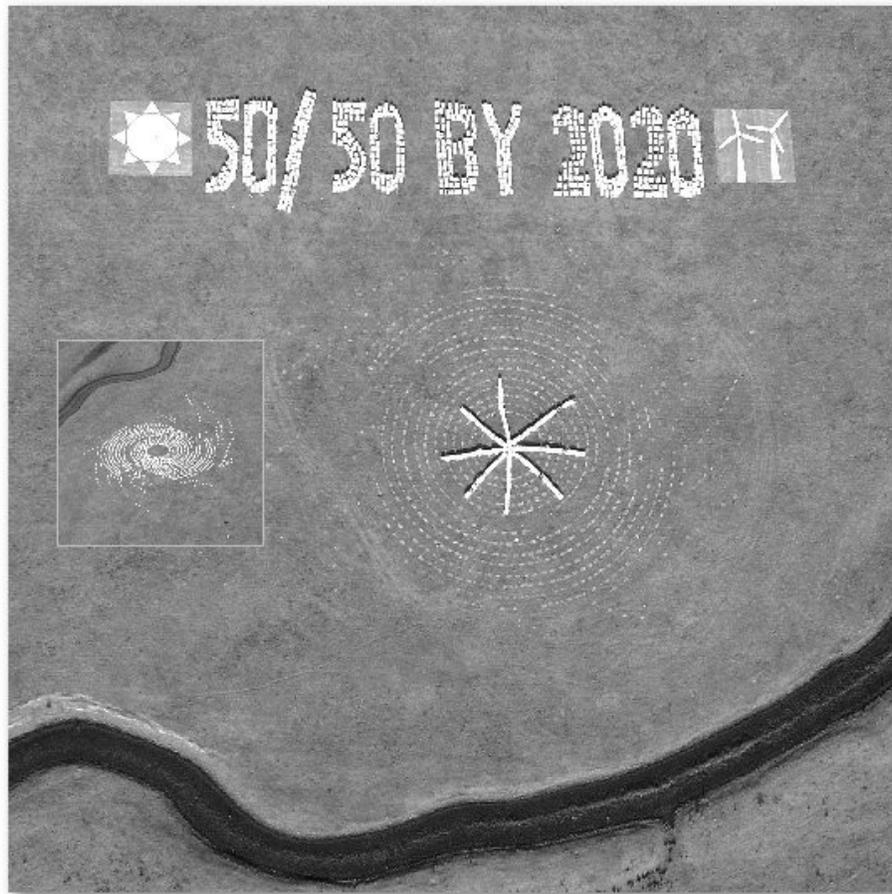


Clean Energy for Eternity Inc., c/- 14 Canning Street, Bega NSW 2550 Tel/Fax 02-6492 4858 <http://cleanenergyforeternity.net.au>

CLEAN ENERGY ACTION PLAN *SUMMARY*

Towards 50/50 by 2020 in the Bega Valley Shire



by the Clean Energy Working Group
Clean Energy for Eternity Inc.

February 2007

Executive Summary

Over the last few years we have seen clear manifestations of the negative impacts of climate change raising the urgent need to act now to mitigate the far greater impacts projected over the next few decades. Bega Valley Shire, fortunate in many respects, is not immune to the threats posed by climate change. These include reductions in average rainfall and streamflow, more extreme weather events, greater fire frequency and intensity, sea level rise and the social consequences derived from these effects on land productivity, health, and the ability of communities to remain viable.

The scale of the changes necessary can be daunting. However, the positive side of accepting that climate change is largely due to human action is the recognition that we can all make significant contributions to improve the situation. There are changes that are surprisingly simple and inexpensive and collectively we can make an enormous difference quite quickly.

In the short term, the easiest and possibly the greatest gains can be achieved through energy efficiency. It is important to note that efficiency means getting more for less such as more comfortable homes for less energy use. Actions include using compact fluorescent globes, simple changes to daily routines, switching off lights and appliances, insulation, considering our energy use, choosing sustainable options wherever we have the opportunity whether we're shopping, cooking, washing, traveling or working the land.

Longer term solutions will involve a gradual transition to sources of clean renewable energy. The report outlines some options that are feasible for a rural shire like Bega, and encourages creative approaches to increasing our energy independence and resilience. This report reveals opportunities for the community of the Bega Valley Shire to take action on climate change - at the individual, community and political level.

Two key issues here are **a)** we have to act boldly now and **b)** we have to act collectively as a community. Individual actions can help but achieving the radical greenhouse reductions in time to make a difference will require widespread adoption. We need to encourage our neighbours, our schools, our churches, our sporting clubs and societies across the region to consider what contribution each and every one can make.



Why the urgency to act now on climate change?

The long awaited report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 4th Assessment, 2007) carried a stark message – climate change is happening faster than expected and we humans are largely to blame. Since the industrial revolution, the burning of fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal formed from the accumulation of plant material millions of years ago), land use change and agriculture have led to increased levels of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere. CO₂ is the most important gas trapping heat near the earth's surface through the greenhouse effect.

Atmospheric carbon dioxide reached 380 parts per million in 2006, the highest concentration in 600,000 years and probably in the last 20 million years. Rapid growth in the world's population, unchecked consumerism and the demand for fossil fuel has increased the rate of climate change to dangerous levels. Respected economists and business leaders are calling for early action, as solutions will be harder, more expensive and less effective with every year that passes.

Internationally, scientists now generally agree that human society has a window of opportunity of perhaps ten years to arrest the more extreme environmental, social and economic effects of climate change. Examine the information below and the situation more present.

Recommendations

To begin the journey towards tackling climate change and meeting our 50% energy reduction and 50% renewable energy targets (50/50 by 2020), we urgently recommend that our community:

1. **Set up a Clean Energy Taskforce** to carry out these recommendations in partnership with the Bega Valley Shire community and the Bega Valley Shire Council.
2. Call for a professional **audit of Bega Valley Shire's current energy status** (production and consumption) to provide a baseline against which our progress towards 50/50 by 2020 can be measured.
3. Develop a full range of **sustainability pilot projects for the BVS**, from renewable energy installation in education facilities through to biogas generation in agriculture.
4. Actively **promote energy efficient appliances and habits** to the BVS community, ideally by a combination of a media campaign and a one-stop shopfront.
5. **Encourage sensible retrofitting** of existing houses, by providing information on the potential for energy and cost savings using home energy audit teams.
6. Encourage consumers to purchase new renewable energy, true **GreenPower**, for household, commercial and industrial electricity supply and provide community information on its benefits.

7. Promote **economies of scale** in bulk-buying renewable energy systems, particularly solar hot water to replace outdated electric systems, solar photovoltaic micro-wind & water tanks
8. Fund **feasibility studies into longer term renewable energy options** for the BVS, such as wind, wave and hydroelectric power.
9. Consider the benefits of increasing the independence and resilience of local power supplies by **encouraging community-owned and decentralized power generation.**
10. **Develop training and education** to prepare for the new energy future.
11. Encourage community members to call on politicians to implement sustainable regional, state and national **policies on efficient energy use, renewable energy and carbon emission trading schemes.**
12. **Develop an adaptive management strategy** to increase the resilience of the human and natural systems in the Bega Valley



Possible Pilot Projects in the Bega Valley Shire

<i>What</i>	<i>How</i>
<i>Households – domestic electricity use</i>	Awareness, behaviour change, energy audits, GreenPower, compact fluorescent light globes, retrofitting, solar hotwater
<i>Energy Efficiency options</i>	Significant gains can be made – what incentives/triggers needed
	Smart metering trial – upgrade Country energy trial with support
<i>Built environment</i>	Improve BASIX with eg. mandatory solar passive design etc
	Surf clubs – solar and wind turbines in 2007
	Schools – energy saving & climate change projects across shire
	New Supermarkets – seek best practice energy efficient design
<i>Communication and Information Sharing</i>	Develop an unbiased reliable clearing house for inquiries, and set up a local service directory with redirection as appropriate.
<i>Agriculture</i>	Biogas trial in dairy industry – potential for carbon credits Identify options for horticulture, nursery & other ag. industries
<i>Forestry</i>	Value-adding for timber industry plus increased forestry sinks
<i>Producers</i>	Capitalize on clean green image, provide information for responsible purchases, brand local products for consumers
<i>Commercial</i>	Promote corporate responsibility, advertising, benefits of reduced consumption, potential for new jobs/enterprises
<i>Management</i>	Local government action as part of Cities for Climate Change
<i>Manufacturing</i>	Bega Cheese Factory – trial biogas &/or energy efficiency
<i>Tourism</i>	Encourage Eco-tourism. Inform tourists of Bega targets, build bike paths to & from tourist attractions in Shire
<i>Transport</i>	Potential for biofuel plant in Bega shire? More public transport?
<i>Business</i>	Create a membership base of businesses willing to embrace energy efficiency, provide identification and program
<i>Shire-wide energy options</i>	Solar – hot water economies of scale, also larger PV systems
	Wind – local potential for individual or community wind farm
	Geothermal & Wave – worth investigating future options now

Your Feedback Is Actively Encouraged

The Clean Energy Working Group was set up to consider and report back to the Bega community on the opportunities for achieving energy conservation and increased adoption of clean energy. This report contains a broad-ranging action plan for all levels of the community. It will be published on the web and on paper. We invite comments and conversation to extend the ownership and effectiveness of this plan. See www.cleanenergyforeternity.net.au and click on Action Plan or collect a copy from your Library.

You can provide feedback via mail to Clean Energy Working Group c/- PO Box 874, Bega NSW 2550, electronically by email to admin@cleanenergyforeternity.net.au, or by phone to 02-6492 4858.

Public meetings on this report will be held to seek your feedback and gather the community support needed for the next steps in this journey. These will be held in:

Bega at 6.30pm on Thursday 15th March in the Bega RSL

Clean Energy Action Plan – Summary – Towards 50/50 by 2020 in the Bega Valley Shire

Merimbula at 6.30pm on Monday 19th March at the Merimbula Bowling Club.