Tracking to Australia’s emissions reduction targets

Australia will overachieve on its 2020 and 2030 targets. The Government’s Climate Solutions Package is driving down emissions to 2030.

Australia’s 2030 target

The 2019 emissions projections show that Australia will overachieve on its 2030 emissions reduction target by 16 Mt CO₂-e.¹ This result is an improvement of more than 300 Mt CO₂-e since the previous estimate in 2018, and an improvement of around 3,400 Mt CO₂-e since the estimate reported in 2008 in the Australia's Low Pollution Future report.

Figure 1: Change in the cumulative emissions reduction task over time, 2030 target²
Tracking progress to the 2030 target

Australia has committed to measuring progress towards its 2030 target using an emissions budget over the period 2021 to 2030.

Australia’s point in time target for 2030 is 26 per cent below 2005 levels or 452 Mt CO₂-e. However, Australia’s target is defined as an emissions budget of 4,777 Mt CO₂-e over the period 2021–2030. Emissions over this period are projected to be 5,169 Mt CO₂-e.

The difference between cumulative emissions over 2021 to 2030 and the emissions budget over the same period before taking into account the overachievement from previous targets is 395 Mt CO₂-e. This is an improvement of 300 Mt CO₂-e since the 2018 projections and more than 3 billion tonnes since the 2008 estimate of the emissions reduction task. Once overachievement (411 Mt CO₂-e) is taken into account, Australia is projected to meet its 2030 target.

Australia’s emissions in 2030 are projected to be 511 Mt CO₂-e, a downward revision of 52 Mt CO₂-e since the 2018 projections and a reduction of over 200 Mt CO₂-e since the 2014–15 projections.

As shown in Figure 2, Australia’s projected emissions profile continues to decrease over time.

The reduction is due to:

• the inclusion of the Australian Government’s Climate Solutions Package abatement measures;
• lower projected electricity demand; and
• more accurate projection of growth in renewable energy generation.

Figure 2: Change in Australia’s 2030 projected emissions over time
Australia’s 2020 target

The 2019 emissions projections estimate Australia will overachieve on its 2020 emissions reduction target by 411 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO\(_2\)-e). This result is an improvement of 44 Mt CO\(_2\)-e since the previous estimate in 2018, and an improvement of more than 1,700 Mt CO\(_2\)-e since the estimate reported in 2008 in the *Australia’s Low Pollution Future* report.

Australia’s point in time target for 2020 is 5 per cent below 2000 levels or 513 Mt CO\(_2\)-e. However, Australia’s target is defined as an emissions budget of 4,508 Mt CO\(_2\)-e over the period 2013-2020. Emissions over this period are projected to be 4,243 Mt CO\(_2\)-e, an overachievement of 284 Mt CO\(_2\)-e.

The changes since the previous estimate reflect lower than previously projected emissions growth across the economy, particularly due to:

- reduced fuel consumption in the manufacturing sector;
- reduced petrol consumption in the transport sector; and
- the ongoing effects of the drought on the agriculture sector.

Australia’s projected emissions in 2020 continue to fall. In 2020 Australia’s emissions are projected to be 534 Mt CO\(_2\)-e, a downward revision of 6 Mt CO\(_2\)-e since the 2018 projections and a reduction of more than 150 Mt CO\(_2\)-e since the 2012 Projections (Figure 4).
Figure 4: Projected emissions in 2020 continue to fall

Endnotes

1 For a target of 26 per cent below 2005 levels, inclusive of overachievement.

2 The cumulative emission reduction targets from the 2018 and 2019 projections is inclusive of overachievement from Australia’s previous targets.

3 This is inclusive of overachievement of 128 Mt CO₂-e from the Kyoto Protocol first commitment period.