

# DRAFT Climate Change Response Policy



<b>For Approval by:</b>	Environmental Services Standing Committee of Timaru District Council
<b>Group:</b>	Council-wide
<b>Responsibility:</b>	GM Infrastructure & GM Environmental Services. Lead author: Rhys Taylor, Climate Change Advisor
<b>Date to be adopted:</b>	Environmental Services Committee in draft 14 Nov 2023, final due February 2024
<b>Review:</b>	Review commence May 2026 and to be completed by September 2026 This Policy does not cease to have effect because it is due for review, or being reviewed
<b>Public Consultation:</b>	Received from Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, as Manawhenua, and this Policy builds on consultation for LTP 2021 and 2022-23 public-engagement work towards a Timaru District Climate Change Strategy
<b>Policy Type</b>	Internal, Corporate Management

## Introduction

### Policy Purpose & context

1. **To provide a policy framework for Timaru District Council to adapt to and mitigate climate change**, to meet community expectations and its audit and statutory obligations.

Timing of endorsement of draft in November 2023 is related to the cycle of Long Term Plan preparation. Community wellbeings addressed include environmental, economic, cultural and social.

Section 5ZW of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 sets out requirements for Councils when choosing to report on climate change risks and planning. Our work follows up the Canterbury Regional Climate Change Risk Assessment and also research and community engagement undertaken locally since 2022 towards a Timaru District Climate Change Strategy (TDCCS).

Policy development is to be achieved by:

- (i) integrating those community concerns and ideas for resilience raised in initial stages of the Timaru District Climate Change Strategy (TDCCS) facilitated process 2022-2023 which relate to operation and powers of the District Council, with
- (ii) Invited comment from mana whenua, and
- (iii) staff response to the baseline carbon inventory of Council operations 2022-2023;
- (iv) Government priorities expressed in the National Adaptation Plan and National Carbon Emission Reduction Plan, both published by Ministry for the Environment in 2022, and
- (v) implementing Auditor General advice to all Councils following review of the 2021 Long Term Plans.

### Scope

This Policy applies to all the organisation:

- all employees of the TDC, including temporary employees and independent contractors acting as agents on behalf of the TDC
- any person who is involved in the operation of the TDC, including elected members.
- every business, service, or activity of the TDC, except those functions that are purely procedural, constitute emergency works, or regulatory functions where this policy is not relevant
- where practicable, the TDC’s position in relation to proposals or activities that are enabled or supported by the TDC including Council Controlled Organisations, where they may impact District-wide emissions and/or climate response adaptations.

## 2. Definitions

Council	Timaru District Council, in South Canterbury NZ
Climate change	<i>UN Framework Convention on Climate Change definition:</i> “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.” It concerns mostly addition of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere faster than they break down (see below)
Greenhouse gas emissions	Conversion of fossilised carbon - from coal, oil and methane gas previously locked in the Earth’s crust - burned into carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, where it is a long-lasting ‘greenhouse gas’ (i.e. is trapping solar-sourced heat). Other greenhouse gases released through human-led activity include some refrigerants, nitrous oxides, and methane from the gut of ruminant animals such as cattle and sheep. These varied gases effect on atmosphere is expressed in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO <sub>2</sub> e).
Climate change adaptation	Human response to rapid climate change that seeks to moderate harm and also take up beneficial opportunities created. Nature may also adapt, but with difficulty, as the speed of change now is historically and geologically unprecedented.
Climate change mitigation	Actions that reduce the human-led emission of carbon dioxide, methane or other greenhouse gases. E.g. Seeking alternatives to fossil fuels such as use of renewable energy, although having regard to the carbon ‘embodied’ in manufacture of devices used to capture renewable sources, or to store energy.
Action Plan	Detailed steps, processes or projects consistent with Council Policy and informed by wider District Climate Strategy. To include but not limited to actions within the Long Term Plan.
Resilience	The capacity of systems to cope with external events or more gradual/cumulative changes, in ways that maintain essential functions and allow for manageable transformations.

## (Draft 3) **Climate Change Response Policy Statement.**

### The Timaru District Council will:

- **Make an emissions inventory for TDC,**
  - i. Prepare and publicly-report, at intervals of no greater than two financial years, an emissions inventory or 'footprint' consistent with the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories, completed to an auditable standard (currently ISO 14064-1). Noting that the baseline inventory has just been completed for 2022-2023.
  - ii. Extend carbon inventory to Council-Controlled Organisations.
  - iii. Prioritise gross (absolute) carbon emissions reduction over net (offset) emissions reduction, such as purchase of carbon emission units.
- **Use collaborative working within District and Region,**
  - iv. Collaborate with neighbouring councils in Canterbury to share agreed research effort on risk analysis, adaptation and mitigation, with a view to avoiding duplication and achieving efficiency for investment. Noted that the Canterbury Mayoral Forum offers an initial platform for such collaboration in 2024-2027, subject to shared-funding decisions by all Councils in 2024.
  - v. Consider how the Council and external bodies will contribute to district-wide climate change information gathering and further Strategy development, building on the initial community-based work initiated by TDC in 2022-2023.
  - vi. Extend collaboration to Manawhenua, through Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and their agency Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited, noting a strategic commitment to climate response by Ngai Tahu iwi.
- **Begin action planning at TDC,**
  - vii. Adopt a Resilience Action Plan for mitigation and climate change adaptation within Council operations, to include:
    - (a) actions to reduce direct emissions, starting with fuel use at work and (if voluntarily extended) use in staff commuting to Council workplaces;
    - (b) incorporate climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation into urban development and land use decisions and future updates of the Proposed District Plan (as guided by National Policy Statements made under the Resource Management Act) including identification of economic, environmental, cultural and social opportunities presented by climate change;
    - (c) develop longer term security of energy and water supplies, lower-emission waste treatment, more-durable roads and resilient infrastructure asset renewal;
    - (d) make an adaptive response to accelerating coastal inundation and erosion's likely impacts on Port Timaru and nearby industrial and storage land, main trunk rail-line, vulnerable landfill sites and coastal residences;

(e) when making investment decisions, improve electrical energy-use efficiency of Council owned housing, public facilities and work premises, water pumping and street lighting;

(f) where possible, provide information to help the public and businesses adapt; for example develop the capacity to advise Timaru District’s houseowners, ratepayers and tenants on modifications to and uses of buildings that make them less prone to winter under-heating and summer over-heating, generally drier, healthier and also more-efficient users and/or generators of clean energy such as solar-electricity;

(g) Integrate climate change response objectives into the Council’s purchasing policy.

- **Review before 2027 LTP,**

viii. Review this Policy before mid-2026, early in the next LTP preparation cycle. At that point review emission reductions on baseline achieved and set local carbon emission reduction targets for 2050, compatible with New Zealand’s national targets, made under UN International Agreements.

### Monitoring and Reporting

2. An annual monitoring report requested from Climate Change Advisor(s), to include short case study/studies of effective behavioural or technical changes made, and staff survey results.

<b>Delegations, References and Revision History</b>					
<b>Delegations</b> Identify here any delegations related to the policy for it to be operative or required as a result of the policy					
<b>Delegation</b>	<b>Delegations Register Reference</b>				
To ‘Climate Change Manager’ position (sic)	7.22 (non-statutory) and for carbon unit trading see delegation to Chief Financial Officer 6.4				
<b>References</b> Include here reference to any documents related to the policy (e.g. operating guidelines, procedures)					
<b>Title</b>	<b>Relevant Reference within Document</b>				
Text					
<b>Revision History</b> Summary of the development and review of the policy					
<b>Revision</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approval By</b>	<b>Next Review</b>	<b>Doc Ref</b>
Drafts 2a & 3	Climate Change Advisor				