

Impact Report 2023

Accelerating climate action

Recognition of traditional custodians

Beyond Zero Emissions acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities.

Beyond Zero Emissions maintains offices on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people, the Ngannawal people, the Wonnarua people and the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda peoples. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

We recognise that Aboriginal people's sovereignty over their land was never ceded and the impact of this ongoing dispossession continues to this day.



This page image credit: Pilbara Solar.

Cover image: BZE CEO Heidi Lee and Project Officer Tejesh Kashyap tour Stanwell Power Station in Rockhampton with General Manager Central Generation Angie Zahra (right) and Future Pathways Manager Peter Woodall (left) – November 2023.

Who is Beyond Zero Emissions?

Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE) is an independent think tank creating solutions for a prosperous, zero-emissions Australia.

We publish research on solutions that unlock economic potential for industries, regions and communities.

We showcase real-world projects as opportunities to prosper in a zero-emissions economy, and we supercharge our work through a network of expert volunteers.

Our role in Australia's climate movement is to shift political discourse and accelerate the pace of policy change to address the climate crisis.

Our theory of change

BZE's research, advocacy and communications are designed to solve two problems. The first is that Australia is not bringing carbon emissions down fast enough for a 1.5C degree increase in global warming in line with our science-based targets. The second problem, created and perpetuated by the fossil fuel industry, is the perception that decarbonising Australia will ruin our economy.

When regional communities that depend on fossil fuels become vocal supporters of a clean economy, we will see greater adoption of climate-positive solutions on a national scale. BZE's work is to generate this support, which is critical to decarbonising Australia at scale and at speed.

Chair's Welcome

It's been an honour to have chaired BZE over the past two years. During this time governments, regulators, businesses and the community have all been exhibiting welcome signs of greater ambition around tackling climate change.

Our overarching challenge remains however to prove that all-electric and zero-emissions solutions already exist and are benefiting communities around the country, and also that fossil fuels are not a long term transition solution, nor a significant future energy source for Australia and our trading partners.

Our research and advocacy provides credible technical advice to key decision-makers, showing them the prosperous future possible beyond fossil fuels. Our key focus has been to define and promote the supply chains of critical clean technologies which Australia needs to deploy now, as well as the global economic opportunities of doing so.

Building on BZE's past decade, where we drove a change in the national conversation through landmark research such as the Million Jobs Plan and our Deploy research around clean technology opportunities, we have more recently deepened our strategic work around the potential of regional Australia to help the nation reach zero emissions.

This has included work modelling and promoting Renewable Energy Industrial Precincts – particularly in the Hunter and Central Queensland regions, and demonstrating that these renewable energy clusters of industry, will not only create jobs and save money but also lessen the wider impact on our environment.

As an organisation we continue to grow in the spread of our influence, and our political engagement has also widened to ensure a focus on regional government which complements our research. I commend the content of this report to you, and want to extend my thanks to all of our funders, supporters and friends – you are all vital components in this important work to make a sustainable, zero emissions future possible.

[Geoff Summerhayes](#)

Chair

Beyond Zero Emissions



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Image credit: Tindo Solar

Our Impact on Federal Government Policy

In 2023 we conducted deep research into some of the most difficult challenges facing Australia in its journey to zero emissions. Our policy recommendations showed a clear path to decarbonisation with the federal government adopting key recommendations:

- Adopted significant legislative and funding recommendations from our REIP program in the **National Net Zero Authority**, the **National Reconstruction Fund**, the **Powering the Regions** fund and **Rewiring the Nation**, as well as the **Regional Investment Framework**, which guides their approach to delivering regional infrastructure
- Enacted reforms to unlock consumer benefits and savings in its National Consumer Energy Resources (CER) Roadmap; committed \$125m of stand-alone power systems and microgrids to remote and First Nations communities through the **Regional Microgrids** Program, both called for in our National Supergrid publication in January
- Fast tracked \$3b of **Rewiring the Nation** investment in transmission projects, to connect industrial precincts to renewable energy generation as called for in our **National Supergrid** report
- Announced the expansion of the **Capacity Investment Scheme** – a key recommendation in our *National Supergrid* report released in January, though shy of the increased ambition recommended in our *Battery Supply Chain* briefing paper released in November, as was the approval of 9GW of dispatchable capacity in its Expanded Capacity Investment Scheme

Our ongoing research and engagement agenda also informed the policy detail of the widely-backed *Australian Renewable Industry Package \$100b Investment Ask*, which seeks to influence the government's upcoming sectoral and push for a clean industry export strategy.

2023 Snapshot

28

Submissions
in 2023

4

Reports and
briefing papers
released

13

Conferences,
presentations,
webinars

300+

Industry partners
supporting

900+

Media
appearances/
references

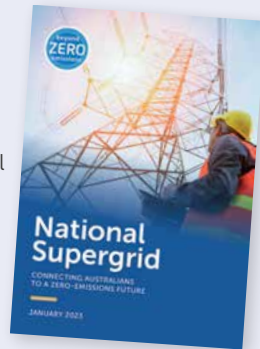
100+

Expert
volunteers

Image credit: Tindo Solar

2023 program and project highlights

- **January:** We launch our **National Supergrid** report, briefing the Ministers for Climate Change and Industry and Science, and the National Reconstruction Fund and Rewiring the Nation policy teams in advance.



- **February:** We give evidence at the National Energy Transition Authority Bill inquiry following our submission. The National Reconstruction Fund invites our CEO to join an Industry Working Group for Renewables. The National Transformation Principles mirror our coordination asks in REIP principles.

- **March:** Our REIP marketing campaign launches in central Queensland and the Hunter.
- We present our REIP and Supergrid research to the National Energy Transformation Partnership.

- **April:** We give evidence to Inquiry into Australia's transition to a green energy superpower following our submission above. The **Hunter Energy Evolution** series launches.

- **May:** The federal **Net Zero Authority** is announced after BZE's crucial input.

- **June:** Our **National Supergrid** report recommends \$500m to support distribution upgrades to community facilities – government provides \$100m and requests we input into the guidelines.

- **July:** The government's **Critical Minerals Strategy 2023-2030** adopts REIP principles.
- The Net Zero Economy Agency requests our message testing research for their planning.
- BZE supports **1MW Talking Climate** launch with our buildings research.

- **August:** Our research and engagement significantly expands the NSW government "clean manufacturing precinct" roadmap initiative to be more regionally-based.
- \$3 billion Rewiring the Nation deal for WA announced aligning with our recommendations.
- We engage on the ground with battery and cleantech industry in the Hunter to inform our research.

- **September:** We launch our **Safeguarding Our Future** report.



- BZE is consulted for the development of the Renewable Energy Superpower Taskforce.
- We brief 20+ MPs and advisors on REIP/SGM paper; appear on Sky News and Ch7 Central Queensland News and reach 1,000s through syndicated news articles.
- BZE joins a wide delegation to Parliament to back the **Australian Renewables Industry Package** – a call for \$100b investment over ten years
- BZE hosts Senator Pocock and team in the Hunter visiting Energy Renaissance and BME

- **October:** BZE launches the **Commercial EVs** paper to the media, in partnership with Climate Energy Finance and Climateworks.
- **Cool.org** launches a teachers' resource based on our **Million Jobs Plan**
- Our CEO chairs the Community Housing Industry Association's Climate Action Network



From left to right: BZE Senior Project Manager Sam Mella, Senator David Pocock and CEO of Energy Renaissance Brian Craighead at the new Energy Renaissance One gigafactory in Tomago, NSW – October 2023.



- November: BZE's **Battery Supply Chains** briefing paper is launched at Australian Parliament House alongside BZE's Cleantech Hub – see page 11.
- BZE undertakes the Regional **Safeguarding Our Future** Tour in Central Queensland, pushing for further announcements on transmission projects to industrial precincts and encouraging coordinated bids for shared infrastructure under the **Safeguard Transformation Scheme**
- Our CEO makes The Australian's Top 100 Green Power Players list for a second time
- Our input into Climate-KICs 1 Million Homes retrofit report helps shape the Government's \$1billion home energy upgrades package



- December: BZE inputs to the **National Battery Strategy**
- Recommendations from our **National Supergrid** report made through the National Energy Transformation Partnership, lead to a National Consumer Energy Resources (CER) Roadmap being developed

Showcasing Hunter Cleantech innovation

Our Hunter Energy Evolution video series – a collaboration with *Out of the Square* launched in April and was well received across the region, with 15 videos and 15 articles in the Newcastle Herald between April 21 and June 10 (energyhunter.com.au), and receiving:

22,000+	170+	800+	8,000+
video views	reposts	reactions	visitors during campaign period

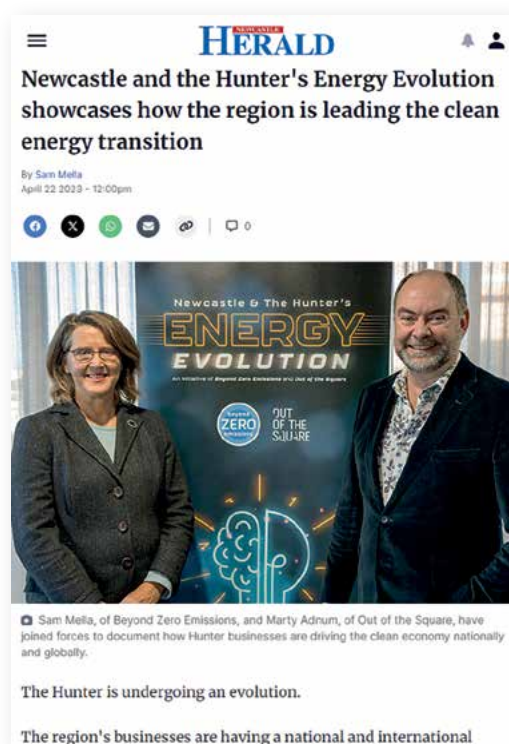
BZE promoted the series on:

Facebook

3,955	1,255	344
reach	views	engagement

LinkedIn

18,466	7,352	957
reach	views	engagement



Showing Central Queensland that REIPs are a great long-term investment

In November we took our **Safeguarding Our Future** research to the regions, presenting the 75% cost savings from coordinating transmission lines to several local industry leaders in Gladstone, Rockhampton and Brisbane. Our targeted socials reached thousands in the region.

Media coverage included:

Radio (Triple M Central Queensland 101.5 & 95.1 Rockhampton) with a potential audience reach of **41,800** in the region.

Gladstone Deputy Mayor Kahn Goodluck and then director of Kwinana Industries Council **Chris Oughton** came out in support of the research

Facebook:

754	800	27
reach	views	engagement

LinkedIn:

2341	351
views	engagement

Creating a resilient organisation

Ways of working and staff health and success

BZE is committed to 'workforce regeneration' activities throughout the year, including staff retreats, working groups and workplace improvements. It's key that staff and volunteers maintain healthy work hours and attitudes, feel supported by their team and are positive about working at BZE (shown through survey results).

It's also important that feedback about our collaborations is positive and there are strong connections between all team members, regardless of location, role, or demographic characteristics.

Reconciliation Action Plan

This year BZE was disappointed with the rejection of the indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum which we endorsed, but we remain committed to reconciliation with our First Nations populations. Our action plan will continue to engender a culture of reconciliation within the organisation, ensuring we are publicly and visibly taking a stance on reconciliation and that our engagement with First Nations people is improved.

Working in Partnerships

To build policy support for cleantech investment in Australia, the **Parliamentary Friends of Clean Investment** launched BZE's **Cleantech Showcase** and **Battery Supply Chain** paper at Australia's Parliament House in November 2023. This event was a collaboration with the **Climate Capital Forum** and the **Environmental Leadership Australia** to raise the profile of these opportunities for the country.



The Highlights

Hosted by Senators Pocock (Independent), Grogan (Labor) and Bragg (Liberal), the Parliamentary Friends of Clean Investment Co-Chairs

100 Australian cleantech companies included in the Cleantech Showcase

Six battery industry leaders gave presentations, which supported BZE findings and recommendations

Senator Pocock took the *Supply Chain* paper to the Senate and spoke to BZE recommendations

The Reach

Reached an audience of 2.8m over 5 days, 8 posts across Social Media, 8,000 total impressions, 400 total engagements

Australian Associated Press syndicated our story across more than 65 print and online publications

An opinion piece in *The Australian* newspaper by Blair Palese – Director of Philanthropy at Ethinvest and Founder of the Climate Capital Forum, on BZE's battery research as an example of a key opportunity for Australia's clean energy future



Heidi Lee chairing a panel discussion at the Australian Renewables Industry Summit. Panel from left to right: Joshua-Clark Hollingsworth, First Nations Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Katie Hepworth, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union and Kelly O'Shanassy, Australian Conservation Foundation – September 2023

Supporting our partners to make a difference

Collaboration is vital to success in addressing the scale of challenges faced by those who want to achieve a stable climate and a just transition to a zero emissions economy. BZE works with friends and allies across Australia to help realise this vision.

As a member of the Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) we are supporting many other groups advocating for wholesale decarbonisation of Australia.

Our educational messaging campaign ran in February and March, promoting positive attitudes towards Clean Industry Hubs in regional Australia. The outcomes have been socialised widely with our network.

A united call for a \$100b Australian Renewables Industry Package

Beyond Zero Emissions was part of a wide coalition of Australian climate NGOs, unions and investors calling for \$10 billion investment in our renewable energy potential, to help re-industrialise the nation, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, diversifying our export base and revenue streams, securing supply chains and developing our sovereign manufacturing capabilities. Our research input into the development of the policy recommendations under-pinning this package.

Community housing Climate Action Network

The Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) has established a Climate Action Network to support the decarbonisation of the community housing sector in Australia, through providing easier access to the knowledge, experience and networks they need. Our CEO is the chair of the steering committee, and BZE elevate the work of the organisation in our parliamentary briefings.

Australia's first Climate and Health Strategy

BZE recognises the importance of intersectional impacts in our complex world – for example, the contribution of our health systems to climate change. As part of addressing this, our CEO was selected to the Australian Chief Medical Officer's Advisory Group, to develop Australia's first Climate and Health Strategy.

The strategy was launched at COP28 in the United Arab Emirates towards the end of 2023, in recognition of the urgent need to address the health risks associated with climate change.

Working with partners in the regions

This past year, Dr Heidi Edmonds supported the work behind the development of the Townsville Precinct, advocating for the development of a new Renewable Energy Industrial Precinct in central Queensland.

BZE has also been supporting the work of trade unions and related bodies, such as the Zero Emissions Vehicle National Innovation Council (ZEVNIC) – a national coordinating body for Australia's transition to zero emission vehicles which includes government, industry, climate and energy policy organisations, and unions for workers in that industry.

1M Women Talking Climate

The 1M Women Talking Climate Get Togethers program launched in 2023 including our research on buildings and 'The Energy-Freedom Home: How to wipe out Electricity and Gas bills in nine steps', with a range of industry partners. This led to 368 climate gatherings in Australia and globally; 1200 people looked at BZE material, with 400+ clicks to the starter pack from eDMs, 706 users/views and a 74% satisfaction rate.

Looking ahead

Adapting our approach

Looking ahead to 2030, Australia stands at a pivotal crossroads for climate. We must swiftly translate policy into action, developing impactful zero-emissions initiatives to be implemented at scale with speed. While there's growing awareness of the urgency across governments, society and industries, the current pace of progress falls short.

At Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE), we champion pragmatic optimism. We recognise the need to name and dismantle barriers to a fast and fair transition. We know we need to end the 'climate wars' for lasting long-term change. Our mission is to guide industries and businesses towards seizing the vast opportunities presented by this shift.

We are committed to empowering those already poised to capitalise on the transition, while providing a clear roadmap for others seeking direction. Mobilising capital is essential to overcoming existing hurdles and mitigating risks associated with the energy transition. Long-term and coordinated action from governments is critical. It is only through the convergence of these actors that we can hope to meet the science-based emissions targets, and deliver on positive environmental, economic and social outcomes.

At BZE, we are fostering an ecosystem where ambition meets action, and where optimism is grounded in practical solutions. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, we can marshal the support of capital markets and government behind the best initiatives from industry to achieve impact.



From right to left: BZE Researcher Kelvin Wicks and BZE Senior Project Manager Sam Mella discuss reducing emissions in steel bar manufacturing through electrification with CEO of Milltech Martin Bright, Fred Reis, in Tomago – August 2023.

We'll achieve these important goals through:



Identifying gaps and evidence to guide decision making



Peer-reviewed research which models the solutions for industry and government needed to transition to zero emissions



Advising government



Compelling communications that drive understanding and action



A network of BZE advocates helping find and share technical and economic solutions

Find out more about our plans and our work by subscribing to our email newsletter at www.bze.org.au.

Our focus areas

Energise Industries to Take Action

Our collaboration with cleantech businesses and industries will serve as the driving force behind implementing the solutions profiled in our national Cleantech Showcase, "Deploy" report and "Electrifying Industry" research. These key assets demonstrate how embracing renewable energy can serve as a catalyst for Australian supply chains and manufacturing, slashing costs while producing zero-carbon goods to meet long-term market demand. Further support behind this initiative will ensure we continue our position at the forefront of zero-emissions solutions and maximise our industry advocacy to full effect.

Collaborate for Success

We will expand our regionally tailored Renewable Energy Industrial Partnership (REIP) model to more energy and industry collaborations nationwide. By empowering industrial clusters to embark on their decarbonisation journeys, we will bring forward a modernised energy grid, coupled with increased investment and support for cleantech manufacturing supply chains. We are seeking support to enable us to continue our targeted work program while supporting partners in this space in their aligned advocacy activities.

Empower Good Decisions

Continuing our mission, we will focus on the key findings from our supply-chain research, identifying areas ripe for growth with the right investments and support. Through our Cleantech Showcase, we will spotlight innovative projects, illustrating how scaling up clean energy production and decarbonising the grid can fuel the production of green exports. Importantly, we will emphasise that revenue loss from fossil fuels can be offset by embracing new zero-emissions opportunities. Support for this work will see us grow and diversify the Cleantech Showcase case studies and promote these success stories widely.

Championing a Pasifika-Australia COP31

As Australia prepares for the COP31 international climate conference in 2026, we are committed to amplifying our knowledge-base and leveraging our networks to prioritise the interests of our region, particularly for the Pacific Islands facing the immediate impacts of climate change. With support, our targeted communication efforts will play a pivotal role in fostering wider public acceptance and understanding of these transformative technologies.



An industrial precinct in Kwinana, WA, which is moving to a renewable energy base

Our Supporters and Community

Our philanthropic partners

A big thank you to our wonderful and generous community of donors, partners and supporters for making our work and the impact it creates possible. We couldn't do what we do without you!



Climate Action Network Australia

Charles Warman Foundation

Julie & Mike Taylor-Mills

For more information about how Australia can prosper in the zero emissions future economy, please contact:

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How you can support our work



1. **Become a regular donor by contributing \$20 a month.**

Ongoing donations are a great way to deepen your connection with BZE and provide us with the financial certainty we need to confidently scale up our programs and our team.



2. **Raise money to help us scale up action on the climate.**

Organise a community, individual, or workplace fundraiser to spread the message about how we can shift to a zero-emissions economy and raise vital funds at the same time.



3. **Double your impact through a multi-year funding commitment.**

A generous major donor has offered to match all new, large, multi-year funding we receive up to \$1 million per year. Contact us to discuss this opportunity to double the value of your donation to BZE.

Ready to help?

visit: bze.org.au/donate
email: donate@bze.org.au
call: +61 444 589 866

