

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 2 September 2026



UNEP report reinforces need for ambitious climate action

The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP's) report on the risks of accelerating past goals for temperature rises set by the Paris Agreement reinforces the case for urgent action to combat climate change.

The *UNEP Limiting overshoot* report projects that global warming will likely breach the 1.5 °C benchmark within the next few years.

It also says that even if all national climate plans are fully implemented and additional net zero targets are met, warming could peak at 1.8 °C.

The Climate Change Authority's Chair, Matt Kean, said the report reinforced the urgent need to reduce emissions, build resilience and prepare for the climate risks already affecting communities and industries.

"We simply can't negotiate our way past either the science of climate change or the risks it presents to Australian lives and livelihoods," Mr Kean said.

"The cycle of more intense and frequent bushfires, floods, droughts and cyclones is already impacting our way of life and will worsen without action.

"The profitability of farmland is being degraded, homes are becoming uninsurable, and natural disaster recovery costs are on the rise.

"That's why crossing the 1.5 °C threshold should be seen as a call to action, not a stop sign or an excuse to throw our hands in the air.

"We have the tools available to build a safer future and the question now is how quickly we choose to use them.

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“The Authority’s advice on ambitious emissions reduction targets, matched by pathways to achieving them and reducing barriers to progress, helps provide a roadmap for policy makers.

“It’s time to double down on decarbonisation, build resilience into every aspect of our economy and prepare for the climate risks that are already upon us.

“We increasingly have the capital, policy levers, technology and workforce to lower emissions across the grid and begin the work of economy-wide decarbonisation.

“Every measure we take now to reduce emissions further and faster will reduce future costs and impacts.

“By doing so, we can protect our environment and our way of life while unlocking the enormous economic prosperity that comes with being a global pacesetter in the shift to net zero,” Mr Kean said.

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