



First Nations Clean Energy Strategy

Alice Springs, Northern Territory Roundtable

Event details

Location: Alice Springs, Northern Territory

Dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Participants: 110 over two days

** A full list of organisations is available below..*

What is the Purpose of the Roundtables?

The First Nations Clean Energy Strategy (the Strategy) roundtables provide an opportunity for First Nations people to discuss what is important from their perspective and to outline the barriers and opportunities so they can share in the benefits of the clean energy transition.

The roundtables also provide a forum for government and industry to better understand First Nations perspectives and collaborate on actions, policies, and programs that could be implemented as part of the Strategy.

Key Themes from the Alice Springs, Northern Territory Roundtable

1. **Affordable and reliable energy for First Nations people:**

- a) A lack of access to affordable and reliable energy in remote communities, town camps and towns was highlighted as a driver of serious economic and social issues experienced by First Nations communities.
- b) The prevalence of prepayment meters (and associated disconnections) in First Nations communities was raised repeatedly, with the installation of residential solar (and batteries) specifically highlighted as one way to mitigate these issues.
- c) Community members also described the linkages between poverty, housing, energy access, and health in First Nations communities - highlighting that inadequate and / or poorly maintained housing drives up energy usage, results in higher costs and more frequent disconnections and can drive poor health outcomes through reduced access to heating, cooling and refrigeration.

2. **Community-led projects supported by education and communication:**

- a) Community and utility scale renewable energy projects, owned / co-owned by First Nations communities, were highlighted as ambitions by attendees.



- b) Improving community knowledge and understanding regarding the benefits and use cases of renewable energy was flagged as vitally important – both to ensure communities have the capacity to engage with proposed projects, but also to ensure that projects can continue to operate successfully once implemented.
 - c) Large distances make it difficult for qualified maintenance workers to respond quickly to issues. Improving community education and understanding of renewable projects can help to ensure minor maintenance can be undertaken locally (where appropriate). The [Bushlight Program](#) was highlighted as a particularly successful example of this.
3. **Capacity building – for engaging communities and securing employment opportunities:**
- a) Improving the capacity of First Nations community representative bodies to understand and engage with energy system requirements and the interplay of renewable energy requirements.
 - b) The improvement in education and training for community – so that communities may upskill locally so they can operate and maintain their local renewable energy systems, was suggested as one way to mitigate the issues the NT faces in relation to long distance, remote communities and lack of skilled workers.
4. **Transparency and free, prior and informed consent:**
- a) Industry and governments engaging with communities in line with the requirements of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), including community’s right to withhold consent, was highlighted as critically important.
 - b) Community representatives highlighted that First Nations people feel disempowered when it comes to the operation of energy systems in the Northern Territory, with little sense they can influence government decisions regarding their design and operation. Improved transparency and communication from government was noted as one way to solve this issue.

Attendee List

Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory
Australian Energy Market Operator
Anindilyakwa Housing Aboriginal Corporation
Antonia Burke Consultancy
Arid Lands Environment Centre
Atyehenge Atherre Aboriginal Corporation
Australian Renewable Energy Agency (Cwlth)
Baniyala Garrangali Aboriginal Corporation



Beyond Now Sustainability Pty Ltd
Clean Energy Finance Corporation (Cwlth)
Central Desert Regional Council
Central Land Council
Centre For Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
Climate Change Authority (Cwlth)
CSIRO (Cwlth)
Department of Climate Change, Energy, The Environment & Water (Cwlth)
Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (NT)
Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (NT)
Desert Knowledge Australia
Desert Springs Octopus
DICE Aust Pty Ltd
Dynamic Solutions NT
Ekistica
Electrical Trades Union
First Nations Clean Energy Network
Fortescue Future Industries
GHD
Griffith University
GTNT Group
Hardy Fencing Australia
HDF Energy
Impact Investment Partners
Indigenous Business Australia
Ingkerreke Services Aboriginal Corporation
Investment Territory (WA)
Jobs And Skills Australia (Cwlth)



Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation
Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation
Marlinja Community
Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation
Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (Cwlth)
National Indigenous Australians Agency (Cwlth)
Net Zero Economy Taskforce (Cwlth)
Ngardara Cooperative
Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation
Northern Land Council
Northern Territory Council of Social Services
Original Power
Penangke Collaborative Cultural Consultancy
Penske Australia Pty Ltd
Pollination Group
Power and Water Corporation (NT)
Rio Tinto
Tangentyere Council
Territory Families, Housing and Communities (NT)
West Arnhem Regional Council
Yalu Marnggithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation
Yuelamu Solar Project Steering Committee



More information

Web [First Nations Clean Energy Strategy | energy.gov.au](https://energy.gov.au)

Email FNCES@dceew.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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