

Australia's "Future Gas Strategy" Is the Latest Climate Policy to Be Captured by Fossil Fuel Interests

How lobbying is obstructing science-aligned climate policy worldwide

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On 9 May 2024, the Department of Industry, Science and Resources published the [Future Gas Strategy](#) (FGS), which maps the Australian Government's plan for how gas will support the country - and its trade partners - in their transitions to net zero.

InfluenceMap's February 2024 [analysis](#) of lobbying responses to the FGS by the largest fossil fuel and utility companies in Australia indicated that the strategy was at risk of being captured by the fossil fuel value chain.

It is now clear that the finalized strategy recycles several of the misleading and inaccurate industry narratives that were used in industry responses to promote a prolonged role for fossil gas through to 2050 and beyond. This contradicts science-based policy guidance from the IPCC for achieving global climate goals.

Jack Herring, InfluenceMap's Australia Program Manager, said:

"This research indicates that the Albanese government's finalized Future Gas Strategy appears to have been significantly influenced by advocacy from companies and industry associations across the fossil fuel value chain."

"The government's strategy recycles many of the narratives commonly deployed by the fossil fuel industry to justify a continued role for fossil gas through to 2050 and beyond. Such narratives and claims clearly contradict the advice of the world's climate scientists, who warn that we cannot continue expanding fossil fuels if we are to avoid dangerous levels of climate change."





A Closer Look at Fossil Fuel Industry Advocacy on the FGS

- InfluenceMap’s February analysis tracked responses to the Australian government’s October 2023 FGS consultation paper and found that in 2023, 25 of the worlds’ largest fossil fuel and utility companies provided responses that were misaligned with the IPCC guidance on the global use of gas in 1.5°C pathways. This advocacy pattern continued in 2024, where we saw the same kind of misaligned advocacy repeated - including by [AGL](#), [EnergyAustralia](#), [Santos](#), [Woodside](#), and [Senex](#).
- This industry advocacy has been largely successful in removing mentions of the need to reduce fossil gas demand to reach climate goals and avoid excess supply from the finalized strategy. The need to avoid excess supply was not mentioned once, and the task of reducing fossil gas demand appears to have been relegated to the government’s six decarbonization sector plans.
- InfluenceMap’s analysis showed that both proposals received significant pushback during the consultation process, with 24 respondents appearing to oppose a reduction in fossil gas use.

What’s Next?

The ambition of key upcoming Australian climate policies, including the government’s sectoral decarbonization plans and Australia’s 2035 emissions reduction target, risks being similarly undermined if oppositional advocacy from the fossil fuel value chain is not effectively counterbalanced by positive climate policy engagement from Australia’s corporate sector.

Figure 1: Industry Narratives Identified During Future Gas Strategy Consultation Period

INDUSTRY NARRATIVE IDENTIFIED DURING CONSULTATION PERIOD	IN FGS?
Continued fossil fuel use is aligned with climate goals.	
New Australian fossil fuel supply is required to support the decarbonization of Australia’s trading partners.	
New fossil fuel supply is needed to avoid shortfalls in the future and maintain energy security.	
Australian fossil fuel projects are essential to the economy.	
New fossil fuel supply is essential for consumer affordability.	