

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION NOTE

Creating feminist realities through just transitions – participatory research project

Thank you for participating in IWDA's research, which aims to understand what matters to Australians when it comes to ensuring justice in the transition away from fossil fuels.

This document provides **information about Polis**, the research platform, as well as **background** on the project and **how the findings will be used**.

For further information about the research, or to raise concerns or questions, please contact Alice Ridge, Senior Research, Policy and Advocacy Advisor at research@iwda.org.au

About Polis

What is Polis?

- [Polis is](#) an online tool for deliberative democracy and participatory decision making
- It is an open-source, free to use, conversation platform by [The Computational Democracy Project](#)
- “An evolving, lively, artificially intelligent, interactive “suggestion box” that can realise consensus around a controversial question”
- Real-time system for gathering, analysing and understanding what large groups of people think in their own words
- Through data analysis and reporting (using advanced statistics and machine learning), the Polis algorithm can identify consensus statements and divisive statements

How does it work?

- Participants are invited to **agree/disagree/pass on a set of short statements** or comments (<140 characters) about the research topic.
- Participants are also invited to **add their own statements or comments**, which are then sent out semi-randomly to other participants to agree, disagree or pass on.
- Polis is designed to create consensus, not arguments or disagreements.
- The survey adapts to participation over time and makes good use of people's time by showing statements it believes the participant will agree with first, based on their previous votes and the trends of others voting similarly.
- You **don't have to interact with every comment** for your responses to be included.
- You **don't need to complete the survey in one sitting** – if you return on the same browser it will pick up where you left off.
- You can return to the conversation and **interact with new comments at any time** while the conversation is live.
- Once you have submitted a response, you **cannot go back to edit or resubmit** it.
- The first round of comments was developed in consultation with organisations and experts working on climate justice in Australia. Additional comments will become visible as they are added by participants.

Privacy & Safety

- No log in or account is required to participate.

- Some demographic comments/questions are included in the survey, which will be used in the analysis of results. No identifying information is collected and responses cannot be tied back to individual participants.
- IWDA will moderate participant statements/comments as they are posted to ensure relevance and safety

How will the findings be analysed and used?

- Once the survey is closed at the end of September, we will analyse the full data set:
 - Thematically group statements against the [just transitions principles](#) agreed at COP30
 - Undertake some basic disaggregated analysis using demographic information captured
 - Provide some context and feminist analysis of the need and opportunity for just transitions in Australia
 - Provide analysis about what matters to Australians in the just transitions space based on the above
- IWDA will publish a report based on our analysis of the Polis survey, with the aim to launch before or at COP31
- To receive a copy of the final research report, please [sign up here](#).

Who else has used Polis?

- Think Forward (Australia) uses Polis for [participatory policymaking](#) via their Think Forward Treasury
 - 200 participants
- Solar Citizens used Polis in 2025-26 to test views on [renters' access to rooftop solar](#)
 - 717 participants
- National newspaper in New Zealand [sets up "HiveMind"](#), helps government agency develop policy
 - 1700+ participants
- [Taiwan](#) – Polis' first national-scale deployment
 - 200,000+ participants

Research background

At COP30, Parties decided to develop a just transitions mechanism, known colloquially as the Belem-Antalya Mechanism (BAM), to support countries in implementing just transitions. The decision includes a list of principles developed through workshops held under the just transitions work program, which lay out some of the strongest language on human rights, gender and First Nations rights that have ever been seen in the UNFCCC.¹

While there is no formal deadline, COP31 is a critical moment to capture momentum and ensure the BAM is delivered. With Australia holding the Presidency of Negotiations, pressure on the Australian Government in the lead up to and at COP31 will be critical to delivering a BAM which is rights-based, resourced and participatory.

Additionally, there is a need for greater discussion and action on the importance of justice in Australia's transition away from fossil fuels. This includes expanding the conversation from a narrow focus on energy transitions, to a broader discussion on the future basis of Australia's economy, the role of paid and

¹ Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA). UNFCCC. 10 November 2025. Decision 2/CMA.7 Para 12 <https://unfccc.int/decisions?f%5B0%5D=session%3A4693&page=1>

unpaid care in our economy and society, and the opportunities for progressing gender equality and human rights through this transition.

Understanding what matters to Australians, particularly women, girls and gender-diverse people, is critical to expanding the discussion on just transitions in Australia and for increasing political will for the Australian Government to act on this agenda, both globally and locally.

Research purpose and objectives

Purpose: To create greater political support for landing a Just Transitions Mechanism at COP31, and for implementing Just Transitions in Australia

Research question: What matters to Australians when it comes to ensuring justice in the transition away from fossil fuels?

Research objective: Develop a resource that distributes knowledge about the things that matter to Australians in just transitions in order to create an authorising environment for the Australian Government to champion the Just Transitions Mechanism at COP31, and ultimately expand the conversation about the energy transition to whole-of-society, whole-of-economy transitions grounded in justice.

IWDA campaign alignment

This research is being planned in conjunction with an IWDA advocacy/comms campaign that will run through the month of September 2026 on the topic: *People. Purpose. Plant: Building Feminist Climate Realities.*

Truly addressing the climate crisis requires a fundamental shift in how we think about the economy, our lifestyles, and what our societies value or see as productive. While alternative systems that centre wellbeing, equality and sustainability do exist, these have had limited uptake so far.

The concept of “just transitions” provides a framework for enacting these alternative systems. While transitions are often thought of in narrow, energy-focused terms (ie: transitioning from fossil fuels to renewables), just transitions encompass the need to transition economies and societies away from extraction and growth-beyond-limits. This necessarily prompts the question about what replaces these organising frameworks, with care and sustainability emerging as necessary and viable alternatives.

Further reading

- [Discussion Paper on the Belem Action Mechanism](#) – Women and Gender Constituency + CAN International
- [Just transition and human rights - OHCHR](#)