



BEYOND COAL AND GAS

Protecting our land, water, communities and climate

No new coal and gas, and a just transition for workers.

Mining and burning of coal and gas are driving dangerous global warming, threatening our Great Barrier Reef, farmland and water and hurting communities. To stop catastrophic global warming, we cannot approve any new coal mines or unconventional gas, and we need a just transition for workers and communities.

The rapid and destructive expansion of mega coal mines and the unconventional gas industry across much of Australia demonstrates what happens when governments put big mining companies ahead of local communities, the environment and our long term future.

> The Greens' plan to move beyond coal and gas

Only the Australian Greens are prepared to stand up to the big polluters in the coal and unconventional gas (coal seam, shale and tight gas) industries and act to protect our climate, precious farmland and regional communities.

The Greens are fighting for:

- **no new coal or unconventional gas approvals or expansions; and in the meantime,**
 - a ban on hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”),
 - the right for landholders including traditional owners to say ‘no’ to coal and unconventional gas;
 - extending the ‘water trigger’ to all forms of unconventional gas, including shale and tight gas
- **at least 90% clean energy by 2030, creating thousands of new jobs;**
- **a just transition and new jobs for workers communities, with a \$ 1 billion Clean Energy Transition Fund; and**
- **full investigation of health impacts of unconventional gas**
- **independent measurement of climate pollution from unconventional gas;**
- **an export levy on thermal coal, an end to fossil fuel subsidies, and a price on pollution with no free permits for big miners;**
- **no new coal or gas ports along the Great Barrier Reef, and no new fossil fuel infrastructure like gas pipelines;**
- **new national environment laws and a new watchdog, the National Environment Protection Authority**

> No new coal and gas

The mining and burning of coal and gas is driving dangerous global warming which threatens to kill our magnificent Great Barrier Reef and endangers the 69,000 Australian jobs it supports, as well as making drought, fire and extreme weather more severe in rural Australia, which is already hurting farmers.

To stop global warming, we need to leave at least 80% of all fossil fuels in the ground. Our Reef and our food producing land shouldn't be subjected to any new coal or gas mines or expansions when we have abundant clean energy that is reliable, creates more jobs and won't worsen global warming.

The Greens would ban all new coal and unconventional gas mines, including expansions to existing mines. While we work towards that goal, the Greens are pushing for:

- **an immediate ban on fracking;**
- **landholders including traditional owners to have the right to say ‘no’ to coal and unconventional gas on their land;**
- **extending the ‘water trigger’ to all forms of unconventional gas, including shale and tight gas.**

The Greens would also ban new coal and gas ports on the Great Barrier Reef, and rule out any new fossil fuel infrastructure like the proposed gas pipeline from the NT to Queensland which would open up even more dirty fracking operations.

> Coal and gas threaten our land and water

The Adani Carmichael mega-mine which threatens the Great Barrier Reef and the Shenhua Watermark mine in the fertile Liverpool Plains are the last, desperate, battles of the coal industry.

In Queensland, the Acland coal mine expansion on the Darling Downs threatens to eat up even more prime farmland, and the CSG industry's creeping expansion around Hopeland is threatening our food bowl.

Coal and unconventional gas mining simply cannot co-exist with farming. Drilling gas wells through aquifers to access coal seams

risks creating connections between the two, potentially lowering as well as contaminating the water table. Extracting CSG, shale and tight gas regularly requires fracking - the high-pressure injection of millions of litres of chemically treated water deep underground, to force the release of gas.

Each type of gas extraction brings its own potentially significant risks such as reducing the quality or quantity of our groundwater, as well as earth tremors and surface subsidence, and industrialisation of good farming land.

> Protecting landholders and regional communities

The Australian Greens stand firmly on the side of Australian farmers and landholders.

The community is already winning in the fight against unconventional gas at Bentley and Gloucester in, NSW, and the industry is on the back foot in the Pilliga forest in NSW. In the NT, sacred sites have been protected because of campaigning by traditional owners. On the Darling Downs in Queensland resistance to fracking is building after the tragic death of George Bender who took his own life after a protracted dispute with gas companies.

The community has forced some State governments to adopt **moratoriums on fracking in Tasmania and Victoria**, and some State Oppositions have announced policies for a moratorium fracking in WA, NT and NSW.

Currently, under state, territory and federal laws, most landholders have no right to refuse mining companies access to explore and, then later, mine their land. **The Greens have introduced three separate bills to give landholders including traditional owners the right to say 'no' to coal and gas, and to ban fracking.** We will keep working towards that objective while we push for an end to these destructive industries.

There is growing evidence of alarming health impacts on people living in close proximity to unconventional gas fields including nosebleeds and headaches in Queensland. **The Greens are calling for a full investigation of these health impacts.**

> Clean energy and a just transition for workers

The Greens have a plan for jobs after coal and gas. Our *Renew Australia* plan for at least 90% clean energy by 2030 would create thousands of new jobs, mostly in regional areas.ⁱ

A \$1 billion Clean Energy Transition fund would help workers and communities adjust to the transition as our coal usage and exports gradually decline. The money will fund regional structural adjustment programs to provide training for new jobs and attract new investment to affected regions.

The Greens have also announced a plan to secure the bonds for mine site rehabilitation up front, before big mining companies flee offshore with their profitsⁱⁱ.

> Measuring fracking's real climate pollution

The gas claims that climate pollution from unconventional gas is around half that of coal. However, this does not count the

“fugitive emissions” — methane that leaks into the atmosphere from wells and pipes. The Greens secured a CSIRO study of fugitive emissions from CSG, but those studies are now many years delayed and have not covered crucial stages of production.

The Greens would immediately commission a rigorous, well-funded independent study of fugitive emissions.

Unconventional gas could in fact be just as bad for the climate as burning coal. The US EPA is now revising its earlier low estimates for fugitive emissions upwards. There are also serious questions to answer about the carbon footprint of shale and tight gas.

> Ending the free ride for big polluters

About 90% of all coal we dig up is exported, creating 1 billion tonnes of pollution per year. Even though thermal coal is in structural decline, coal mining companies can export coal without having to pay for the damage caused when that coal is burned.

The Greens have announced a thermal coal export levy of \$3 per tonne.ⁱⁱⁱ The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates that the levy will raise \$650 million a year from 2017, or \$2.4 billion over the next 4 years. It would not apply to destination countries with an effective price on pollution. The revenue raised by the levy would also help fund Australia's transition to clean energy and climate finance for developing nations.

The Greens have also announced for an end to **fossil fuel subsidies to big polluters**, saving \$24 billion over 4 years and a **price on pollution**, with no free permits for mining companies.

> Where do other parties stand?

The Liberal, National and Labor parties all support the expansion of destruction coal mining, and new fracking. The fossil fuel industry donated a total of \$3.7 million to the big parties since the last federal election.

> Greens' track record on coal and gas

The Greens have been a strong critical voice against the coal and unconventional gas industries and we intend to continue our campaign alongside community campaigns like Lock the Gate to bring a halt to the destruction across rural and regional Australia.

The Greens have also announced plans for a new *Environment Act* as a new generation of national environment laws and a new watchdog, the National Environment Protection Authority with \$130 million in funding per year to enforce it.^{iv} The new *Environment Act* would expand federal responsibility to cover all aspects of the national environment including water, global warming and forests.

ⁱ <http://greens.org.au/renew>

ⁱⁱ <http://greens.org.au/after-coal>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://greens.org.au/save-the-reef>

^{iv} <http://greens.org.au/places>