

HEALTHY COUNTRY, THRIVING NATURE

The Territory's nature is world class. It's one of the reasons locals and visitors love this place. But our land and water is suffering under the pressure of poorly regulated big agribusiness, industrialisation and flimsy legal protections.

For a healthy environment which sustains our communities and economies, we must reject Labor and the CLP's policy of letting big business trash our environment.

The Greens stand with the community to protect our environment, water and biodiversity. Because once it's gone, it's not coming back.

1: Protect the precious biodiversity of the NT

The Greens will:

a) Declare buffel grass a weed to protect our biodiversity & defend our communities from fire.

Buffel grass is considered to be the single [greatest invasive species threat](#) to arid ecosystems and cultures. Buffel-fuelled wildfires [threaten public safety](#), tourism, the arts and the health of Territorians.

Declaring buffel grass a weed in the NT is a key step towards better management. It will enable us to better [plan, and access resources](#) that would help stop the spread of buffel. A weed of National Significance listing is essential. The scale and complexity of the buffel threat means that Federal Government resourcing and leadership is critical.

The Greens will also seek federal funding to focus on research opportunities, and to protect the cultural and natural assets most at risk from buffel across the arid zone.

b) Take land clearing approval power out of the hands of big business.

[Land clearing is a key driver of ecosystem collapse](#). Right now, land clearing applications are approved by the pastoral landholders, executives and lobbyists who make up The Pastoral Land Board. That's a clear conflict of interest.

All major land clearing projects should instead be referred to the NT Environmental Protection Agency.

c) Tackle Litchfield's gamba grass threat.

The Greens would urgently increase funding to eradicate gamba grass from the expanded eradication zone in Litchfield National Park. This is important work to stop further loss of cultural and environmental assets, and reduce fire danger.

d) Adequately fund community & First-Nations-led biodiversity conservation.

First Nations ranger groups and community groups play a vital role in protecting and restoring local ecosystems across the NT. These organisations do incredible work often on a shoestring budget.

This work has practical conservation outcomes, enables sharing and building environmental knowledge at a local level and builds upon thousands of years of First Nations land management knowledge.



2: Establish the NT's first ever biodiversity laws

The Greens will:

a) Establish a Northern Territory Biodiversity Act.

The Territory's land clearing laws are [currently weak](#) and [unenforceable](#).

A Biodiversity Act would protect places like Binyabara/Lee Point, and prevent damaging large scale clearing in ecologically fragile places - like the banks of the Daly river and NT Sites of Conservation Significance (such as Lake Woods and Mataranka Thermal Springs).

The Territory has never had laws that explicitly protect intact native vegetation. We need to listen to the community & act now before it's too late.

b) Create a dedicated NT Biodiversity Strategy - to protect our ecosystems in the long term.

The Northern Territory lags behind the rest of the country on biodiversity conservation.

We need to be investing in research, so we can make the best decisions, informed by evidence. We also need a long-term plan of action to secure the future of our most threatened plants, animals and ecosystems.

The NT is the only jurisdiction in Australia without State of Environment reporting to track the health of our environment.

We are falling behind and our environment is paying the price.

3: Fix the Territory's broken water laws

The Greens will:

a) Strengthen the Water Act - to protect the Territory's rivers, wetlands and aquifers.

The Territory's water laws are broken, and the mistakes of the Murray-Darling Basin will be repeated here if we don't act swiftly. Over-allocating water destroys the environment and local communities. It is expensive to repair a devastated system.

Currently, the Water Act and water plans are unable to protect the Territory's rivers or groundwater dependent waterholes, trees and soaks - despite ninety percent of the Territory's water supply coming from groundwater.

We urgently need new protections to safeguard the Territory's free flowing rivers and groundwater systems. These systems are the lifeblood of the Territory's iconic environment and support local communities and economies.

b) Establish a Safe Drinking Water Act.

Bush communities throughout the NT – from the North to the South – are suffering from poor water quality and security.

There is currently no legally enforceable minimum standard for drinking water in bush communities, and we know [63/72 remote communities](#) supplied by Power and Water don't meet the minimum standards for safe drinking water. All Territorians, not just those living in major towns, have a [right to safe and adequate drinking water](#).

We are committed to creating legally enforceable minimum standards for drinking water quality and security for every town, community and homeland across the Territory.



c) Revoke the Singleton Station Water License.

The Singleton water licence shows just how broken the management of groundwater in the Northern Territory is.

It's the largest groundwater licence in our history and hands over 40 billion litres of water every year, for 30 years, absolutely free. It ensures and fast tracks the destruction of our arid ecosystems.

This sets a dire precedent for the rest of the Territory.

Traditional owners are [united in their opposition to the project](#), which could [lower the water table](#) by up to 50 metres and damage groundwater dependent ecosystems - big trees, soaks and sacred sites.

d) Empower affected communities to make decisions about water.

Repeated poor decisions about water management show that current consultation processes across the Territory aren't working.

We need to empower affected communities to participate in decision-making about water management. This requires sound governance, genuine consultation, community participation, robust water plans and long-term collaboration.

WE CAN'T LET LABOR AND THE CLP SELL US OUT.

The NT Greens are the only party that truly backs our environment, lifestyle and right to safe drinking water.

BECAUSE WE DON'T TAKE CORPORATE DONATIONS.

