



Tasmanian Greens Party Policy 2014

Climate Change

[RATIFIED: 18 JAN 2014 - VERSION: 14.1.0]

The Tasmanian Greens recognise that the Earth's climate is changing and that the scale and pace of this warming is caused by human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. We base this on the overwhelming body of contemporary science, including the most recent U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report which found that scientists are now 95% confident that climate change is human induced.

As a national leader in renewable energy production and the first Australian jurisdiction to deliver an evidence-based climate mitigation and adaptation strategy, Tasmania is well placed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide an example as to how climate change can be addressed, its impact can be lessened, and how the transition to a low-carbon future will build economic resilience into Tasmania, attracting clean investment and growing sustainable jobs.

For the Tasmanian Greens, these beliefs underpin every measure in every policy area upon which climate change impacts. Where climate change is not mentioned directly in a policy, it still forms the background against which all measures are proposed.

The Tasmanian Greens believe that Tasmania can be 100% renewable by 2020 and delivering surplus clean electricity to mainland Australia. We can adapt to the impacts of climate change across the community and economic sectors and become self-sustaining in clean energy and in sustainable, alternative fuel sources. The changes needed to achieve this can make us healthier, fitter people and help to build strong, vibrant communities.

We also recognise that Tasmania's forest estate is a massive carbon store, which must be protected and/or carefully managed to maximise the carbon benefits to the global climate.

Climate change will require government leadership to drive urgent, sustained and coordinated actions at a local, regional, and statewide level. Early action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will be significantly less costly than delaying action. Any positive, early measures Tasmania takes can be exported as intellectual property or technological skill, enhancing our clean, clever, low-carbon and creative brand.

Climate change will increase the severity and frequency of natural hazards, such as coastal erosion and inundation, flooding, storms, bushfire and landslide. The Tasmanian Greens believe the Tasmanian Government must continue to implement a comprehensive adaptation and mitigation strategy that is ambitious and evidenced-based. This strategy needs to support government agencies, local government and the community to respond to the impacts of climate change.

Measures

Legislation and Regulation

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

1. maintaining the ministerial portfolio of Climate Change, as well as the Tasmanian Climate Change Office, Adaptation Unit and the independent Climate Action Council;
2. funding and implementation of measures contained in the Climate Smart 2020 Strategy;
3. legislating to amend the Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008 to increase Tasmania's emissions reduction target to net zero emissions by 2050;

4. ensuring sustainability, mitigation and adaptation initiatives are embedded wherever necessary or appropriate in all regulations, legislation and government policy;
5. developing a forest carbon methodology and project to enable Tasmania to access national and international Kyoto-compliant carbon markets;
6. supporting strategic promotion of Tasmania's forest carbon in global trading and offset markets;
7. directing the transition to a low carbon economy through working constructively across all sectors of the economy and community to lower emissions and, where necessary, establish regulatory mechanisms to drive emissions reductions;
8. creating incentives and showing government support to develop Tasmania as an attractive place for low emissions industries and projects to invest, prosper and create jobs;
9. establishing a Treasurer's Instruction to preference emissions efficient and electric vehicles in government procurement policies;
10. expanding and proper resourcing of climate change actions across all Agencies and in support of Local Government;
11. supporting and strengthening a statewide approach to planning for and managing the response to natural hazards, such as sea level rise, coastal erosion and inundation, flooding, storms, bushfire and landslide through land-use planning mechanisms.

Energy

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

12. reducing reliance on fossil fuels in transport by working with industry, local government and communities to increase active and public transport, improve vehicle fleet efficiency and increase the uptake of electric vehicles, including electric bicycles;
13. converting all energy, fuel and power supply to benign, renewable, low emission sources as a matter of priority;
14. achieving a minimum of 35% reduction on the state's 1990 levels by 2020;
15. subjecting all energy production and distribution projects to a planning assessment process that transparently accounts for, and seeks to minimise, their negative environmental and social impacts;
16. mandating that all future energy production projects are based on renewable power sources;
17. introducing strict minimum energy performance standards for all products, buildings and infrastructure in line with Commonwealth and State specifications, going beyond these where possible;
18. lowering energy emissions and costs through demand management practices, rollout of a Smart Network, and increased efficiency of production, supply, distribution and end use in our electricity system;
19. ongoing delivery of energy efficiency upgrades to low-income households, small businesses and community organisations.

Equity

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

20. investigating mechanisms to distribute the cost of reducing emissions and adapting to climate change equitably between the state, citizens and business, with a particular concern for disadvantaged communities;

21. negotiating with the Commonwealth to recognise and respond to the needs of climate change refugees through Australia's immigration intake, and ensure Tasmania welcomes climate refugees into the future;
22. recognising the reality that climate change will displace populations;
23. addressing the social impacts of the transition to a low carbon economy;
24. delivering benefits to the community through reduced energy consumption in all sectors of the economy which will offset the impact of rising prices, support a diversified renewable energy base, minimise waste and increase recycling as well as provide support for local produce.

Business

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

25. including fair feed-in-tariffs to support household renewable uptake and businesses who wish to invest in renewable energy technologies;
26. factoring in the energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission levels of all businesses that tender for, or supply products or services to, the Tasmanian Government, government projects, and Local Government initiatives;
27. ensuring that any energy price subsidies to energy intensive or high-emission industries are contingent on increased efficiency outcomes;
28. supporting and promoting businesses that research or develop software or technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or adapt to climate change, especially where their intellectual property or technology is exportable;
29. opposing the establishment of any fossil fuel-fired power station, new coal mine or the expansion of an existing coal mine;
30. ensuring that companies are financially responsible for the risks of greenhouse gas leakage;
31. supporting the development of distribution networks for transitional and sustainable alternative fuels that do not include forest biomass.

Education

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

32. emphasising the consequences of, and need to urgently act on, climate change by its inclusion in science and social science curricula at all levels of education;
33. establishing Green Skill courses to train tradespeople in building and construction, electric vehicle maintenance and distributed generation installation and maintenance for households;
34. publicising simple and cost-effective measures to households, business and industry to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
35. promoting the opportunity Tasmania has to increase its emissions reduction efforts, adapt to climate change and create jobs in a sustainable low-carbon future.