



AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICIES

www.greens.org.au/policies

Contents

Ecological Sustainability

Animals
Biological Diversity Climate
Change and Energy
Environmental Principles
Genetically Manipulated Organisms Marine
and Coastal Areas
Natural Resources: Forests, Mining and Fisheries
Population
Science and Technology Sustainable
Agriculture Sustainable Planning and
Transport Waste
Water and Inland Aquatic Environments

Economic Justice

Economics
Employment and Workplace Relations
Global Economics
Overseas Aid

Democracy

Community Participation in Government
Constitutional Reform and Democracy
Corporate Governance
Human Rights Justice
Media and Communications
Multiculturalism

Peace and Non-violence

- Global Governance
- International Relations
- Nuclear and Uranium
- Peace and Security

Social Justice

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Arts and Culture
- Children and Young People Disability
- Drugs, Substance Abuse and Addiction Early
- Childhood Education and Care Education
- Health
- Housing
- Immigration and Refugees
- Older People
- Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity
- Social Services
- Sport and Physical Recreation
- Women

Ecological Sustainability

Preamble

The Australian Greens seek to cultivate a global, ecological consciousness based on a long-term perspective in order to safeguard the interests of both existing and future generations and species. Human society depends on, and our economy is constrained by, ecological resources and we must avoid actions which risk long-term or irreversible damage to the environment. Fundamental to ecological sustainability is the maintenance of biodiversity – the natural complexity which provides balance in the interplay of all living things. The Australian Greens recognise the interdependence between humanity and the rest of nature as we seek to move to an ecologically sustainable path.

The scale and impact of climate catastrophe can be lessened by reducing our dependence on non-renewable resources and ensuring sustainable use of renewable resources. The climate challenge is an opportunity to transform Australia into a carbon-neutral economy that creates new jobs and a healthier planet. An ecologically sustainable future relies on stable and enduring social, political and economic systems, based on equity, justice and the support of human rights.

Policies

Animals

Biological Diversity

Climate Change and

Energy Environmental

Principles

Genetically Manipulated Organisms

Marine and Coastal Areas

Natural Resources: Forests, Mining and

Fisheries Population

Science and Technology

Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable Planning and

Transport Waste

Water and Inland Aquatic Environments



Animals

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Animals have intrinsic value, separate from the needs of humans, who have a responsibility to ensure that animals' rights and welfare are respected.
2. Humans have a duty of care to minimise physical and psychological suffering of animals resulting from human activity.
3. Strong animal welfare standards are necessary.
4. Native animals and their habitats are at particular risk and require stringent protections.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

5. A strong, uniform, properly enforced national legislative framework for the protection of the welfare of broad categories of animals, which makes acts of cruelty subject to criminal penalties and also regulates conditions of captivity, transport and slaughter.
6. An end to cruel and unnecessary use of animals for teaching and research purposes.
7. The establishment of a national regulatory body for animal welfare.
8. Increased community understanding of the impacts of consumer choices on animal welfare and on the environment.
9. An end to the export of live animals for consumption.
10. An end to inhumane farming practices that are inconsistent with animals' natural behavioural needs, and a phasing out of intensive farming practices in meat, dairy and egg production.
11. The development of an Australian standard for free-range farming practices for all agricultural animals.
12. A ban on the importation of animal products produced by methods which do not accord with Australian animal welfare standards.
13. A ban on the importation or exportation of animals for zoos, except where it will assist the overall conservation of the species.
14. Improved global conservation of habitat for endangered species through Australia's trade, diplomatic and aid relations.
15. An accurate national labelling system for foods and other products identifying cruelty-free, free-range, organic, and free from content derived from habitat destruction, such as palm oil.
16. The abolition of the cruel or inhumane use of animals for sport, recreation or entertainment, including the use or display of animals in circuses.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Animals (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

17. Research into and development of more humane methods of introduced pest and introduced species management and control.
18. The most humane and effective means available to be used in the control of introduced and pest species, including humane population management methods.
19. Community education on the needs of animals and our responsibility to minimise any physical, psychological and emotional suffering of animals caused by human activities, and to maximise their quality of life.
20. An end to the production and testing of consumer items, including cosmetics and fur, that entail cruel or inhumane use of animals or that threaten species survival.
21. A ban on commercial and so-called 'scientific' whaling in recognition of its gross cruelty.
22. To allow persons or organisations other than the RSPCA the right to prosecute charges relating to animal welfare in appropriate courts and tribunals.
23. An end to jumps racing.
24. A ban on recreational shooting of all animals, including Australian native water birds.
25. To ensure education programs are in place for responsible pet ownership.
26. The elimination of all cruel practices in relation to the breeding, sale and confinement of native animals and companion animals.
27. The end of selective breeding that results in characteristics detrimental to animal health.
28. The consideration of Australian animal welfare standards when negotiating relevant trade agreements.

[Back to Contents](#)



Biological Diversity

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem processes maintain Earth's life support systems, including the climate system.
2. The protection and conservation of biodiversity is essential for the wellbeing of all life on Earth, including human life.
3. The loss of Australia's biodiversity poses an unacceptable threat to human and ecosystem health, and dramatically reduces our ability to cope with major ecological threats such as climate change.
4. Protected areas are vital to the preservation of Australia's biodiversity, and therefore to the health and wellbeing of all Australians.
5. Habitat loss and fragmentation, together with the spread of invasive species, exacerbated by climate change, are major threats to the biodiversity of the planet.
6. Australian ecosystems are vital for the survival of internationally significant species of migratory animals and the loss of biodiversity in Australia has ramifications beyond our borders.
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have an important role to play in the protection of Australian biodiversity.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. Maintenance of Australia's ecosystem, species and genetic diversity.
9. A comprehensive, adequate and representative system of terrestrial, freshwater and marine protected areas (MPAs), including all remaining areas of high conservation value, managed primarily to protect biodiversity.
10. Effective habitat management, including ecologically appropriate use of fire.
11. Protection from accidental or deliberate introduction of exotic plants, animals and organisms, including Genetically Modified Organisms, which pose a threat to Australia's biodiversity, agriculture or human health.
12. Protection, restoration and extension of the habitats of Australia's native animals including marine and riverine species.
13. Full integration of the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD), particularly the precautionary principle, into all decision-making that impacts our biodiversity.
14. Introduction of national measures to end broadscale clearing and incremental loss of native vegetation including the degradation of native forests.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Biological Diversity (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Establishment of evidence based buffer zones in high conservation areas, with linkage and restoration of ecological fragments on public and private land.
16. Development and enforcement of recovery plans for threatened and endangered species and ecological communities, and threat abatement plans for nationally listed threatened processes.
17. Research into humane and sustainable means of controlling existing and potential threats to biodiversity from feral animals, weeds and pest species.
18. An increase in and enforcement of penalties for the killing and/or capture of nationally listed threatened and endangered species, and for deliberate habitat destruction.
19. Support for programs that work with private landowners to protect and restore nature conservation values on their land, including conservation covenants.
20. An increase in funding to biosecurity services to anticipate new invasive species threats posed by climate change and expanded pathways resulting from globalised trade and travel.
21. The creation of urban bushland reserves where appropriate native animals and plants may become re-established in close proximity to dense human settlement.
22. Recognition and development of native plants as important sources of nutrition and agricultural products.

[Back to Contents](#)



Climate Change and Energy

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Human induced climate change poses the greatest threat to our world, and urgent and sustained local, national and global action is required in this critical decade to 2020 to ensure a safe climate.
2. A safe climate will require a return to an atmospheric concentration of 350ppm or lower of greenhouse gases (and CO₂ equivalents).
3. Current global climate change is primarily caused by human activities contributing to increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and is already contributing to disruption of human societies through sea level rise, extreme weather events, desertification and other effects. This is the overwhelming consensus of international scientific research.
4. Australia is a wealthy nation and is therefore ideally placed to lead the world in addressing climate change rather than being one of the largest per capita contributors. The Greens are committed to ensuring that Australia takes that lead.
5. Australia needs to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions, actively support international mitigation measures to reduce global emissions, and plan to adapt to climate change impacts which are now inevitable.
6. Early action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will ultimately be fairer and more cost effective than delaying action.
7. The cost of creating an economy that supports a safe climate and adaptation to climate change must be distributed fairly, both domestically and between nations.
8. The equity principle must be at the core of climate change negotiations and measures and the social impacts of the transition to an economy that supports a safe climate.
9. Climate change will result in the displacement of people, creating environmental refugees and intensifying the threat of regional and global conflict.
10. Australia must use its diplomatic and economic influence to promote the development of alternatives to fossil fuel based energy.
11. Energy prices should reflect the environmental and social costs of production and use.
12. Subsidies to the fossil fuel sector, including funding for research and development, should be transferred to the renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport sectors.
13. The major refurbishment of existing coal fired power stations undermines the effort to increase end-use energy efficiency, demand management and renewable energy.
14. Australia needs to plan for a future that does not rely on fossil fuels for export or electricity generation.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Climate Change and Energy (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Australia has a responsibility to assist other nations, particularly in our region, to create safe climate economies, and adapt to climate change through appropriate technology transfer and other forms of assistance including resettling and rehousing displaced populations where required.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

16. Net zero or net negative Australian greenhouse gas emissions within a generation.
17. A leading role for Australia in negotiation of a multilateral emission abatement treaty which shares the burden equitably.
18. Binding national emission targets for each year through to 2050 supported by a detailed strategy to reduce emissions from the energy, transport, industry, waste, agriculture and land management sectors.
19. An equitable transition to a net zero carbon economy through a range of market-based and regulatory mechanisms.
20. A low greenhouse trigger in the Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC), ensuring Federal oversight of developments which are liable to have a significant impact on domestic or global greenhouse emissions.
21. A national system of energy efficiency targets and stringent Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for products, buildings and infrastructure.
22. 100% stationary electricity in Australia from renewable sources as soon as possible by increasing the renewable energy target (RET) and in addition measures such as feed-in tariffs and regulations to support a range of prospective new renewable energy technologies.
23. Exclusion from the RET of new large-scale hydroelectric and native forest fuelled power stations.
24. Reform of electricity markets to remove the bias towards centralised fossil fuel-based generation and encourage demand management and the development of distributed generation and renewable energy.
25. Rapid rollout of smart technology, including meters, appliances and grids, with measures to protect people on low or fixed incomes from any associated impacts.
26. No new coal-fired power stations or coal mines, and no expansions to any existing power stations or mines, plus the development of programs to assist coal dependent communities to make the transition to other more sustainable sources of economic prosperity.
27. The adoption of the precautionary principle in relation to carbon capture and storage (geosequestration) by opposing public funding, and ensuring that companies are financially responsible for the risks of CO₂ leakage.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Climate Change and Energy (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

28. To use the Government's vehicle fleet procurement policies to contribute to the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions.
29. Research, development and commercialisation of sustainable alternative fuels.
30. The development and expansion of robust distribution networks for sustainable alternative fuels and charging facilities for electric vehicles.
31. To build support in the community for urgent action to achieve a safe climate.
32. Corporations exporting fossil fuels to be required to include in their annual reports the quantities of greenhouse gases embodied in their exports.

[Back to Contents](#)



Environmental Principles

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Human beings are part of the natural world, and all forms of life on Earth deserve our respect.
2. Human society depends upon the ecological resources of the planet, therefore we must protect and maintain the integrity of its ecosystems.
3. Australians as global citizens have a duty of care to manage our unique natural environment and its resources, to ensure their ongoing sustainability for future generations, and to help protect the ecological integrity of our planet.
4. The precautionary principle must be fully integrated into decision-making in order to secure the continued availability of the resources of the planet for present and future generations.
5. The cultural knowledge of the indigenous peoples of the world as the original custodians of land and sea must be recognised and their land and sea country rights supported.
6. Human induced climate change poses the greatest threat to our world, and urgent and sustained local, national and global action is required in this critical decade to 2020 to ensure a safe climate.
7. Climate change will increase the intensity and frequency of bushfires; scientifically-based, ecologically appropriate use of fire is an important means to protect biodiversity and manage habitat effectively.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. A society which lives within the ecological, resource and atmospheric limits of the planet.
9. A curtailment of the use of natural resources so sufficient resources are left for future generations.
10. An improved quality of life for all Australians, with a reduction in the material consumption that contributes to the degradation of the planet.
11. Encouragement, empowerment and resourcing of the participation of local communities in the planning and implementation of strategies to protect and manage the environment.
12. To work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to protect and restore our country, including implementing shared management agreements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop meaningful employment in natural resource management.
13. Rigorous evidence based bushfire research that considers the use of fire, and best environmental and fire risk minimization in building practices.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Environmental Principles (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. An effective and sustainable strategy for fuel-reduction management that will protect biodiversity and moderate the effects of wildfire for the protection of people and assets, developed in consultation with experts, custodians and land managers.
15. To strengthen and expand the Commonwealth powers to protect and enhance Australia's environment and heritage including broader oversight of state government decisions with national environmental significance.
16. To clearly define in domestic law all Australia's responsibilities under international environmental treaties to which we are a signatory, and to contribute to global sustainability through support of international cooperation on environmental issues.
17. Inclusion of ecological and environmental principles in primary and secondary school curricula.
18. Reserve systems that are comprehensive, adequate and representative of all of our unique ecosystems, supported by a nation-wide approach to protection and restoration of Australia's natural environment.
19. To phase out persistent and bio-accumulative chemicals, prevent the release of hazardous chemicals into the environment and rehabilitate affected environments where possible.
20. Strong Australian biosecurity systems to prevent the introduction of pest plants, animals and diseases.
21. To establish a national ecological sustainability commission to focus on issues of ecological integrity.

[Back to Contents](#)



Genetically Manipulated Organisms

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Genetically manipulated¹ organisms (GMOs), their products, and the chemicals used to manage them pose significant risks to natural and agricultural ecosystems and human health.
2. The precautionary principle must be applied to the use of GMOs and the techniques for producing them.
3. Scientific evidence must be the basis for assessing and licensing GMOs. GMO assessments must be broad, independent and scientifically robust.
4. Living organisms such as plants, animals and micro-organisms are not inventions. Patents on life are unethical and against the public interest.
5. The Australian government must prohibit the use of 'terminator' technologies (Gene Use Restriction) that prevent seeds from germinating when planted.
6. Farmers and consumers have a right to grow and consume non-GMO foods.
7. Everyone has a right to know if foods contain any ingredients made using GM techniques, through the comprehensive labeling of those products.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. A moratorium on the release of GMOs into the environment until there is an adequate scientific understanding of their long term impact on the environment, human and animal health. This includes the removal as far as possible of all GMOs from the Australian environment and food supply while the moratorium is in place.
9. Mandatory clear and obvious labelling of all foods containing any ingredient, additive, processing aid or other constituent produced using GMOs.
10. A ban on patenting all living organisms, including plants, animals and micro-organisms, and naturally occurring DNA code sequence information.
11. A rigorous peer reviewed approach to assessing and licensing GMOs which sets objective benchmarks, standards and quality assurance systems in advance of the use and release of GMOs.
12. A strengthened, transparent, precautionary regulatory and monitoring system which prevents GMO contamination.
13. Assessment and research processes that ensure GMOs are safe for the environment, and that derived foods are safe for consumption.

¹ The artificial transfer of genes from one species to another with which it does not normally cross fertilize.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Genetically Manipulated Organisms (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. Fulfilment by Australia of its responsibilities under the Convention on Biological Diversity. This includes signing and ratifying the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol on the safe international transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.
15. Certification of all imported seed, food and other products as GM or GM-free through stringent independent testing.
16. Balanced, accurate, complete and high quality information to be made available to the public, on the environmental, economic and social aspects of the genetic manipulation of living organisms.
17. Publicly-funded agricultural research and development to prioritise sustainable production methods not genetic manipulation.
18. Legal liability for adverse effects arising from planting, harvesting, distribution, sale of GMOs to lie with growers using GMO and licence holders.

[Back to Contents](#)



Marine and Coastal Areas

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. A cooperative national and international approach to the management of our marine environment is required to deliver clean and healthy oceans, integrated ecosystems and sustainable coastal communities.
2. The application of the precautionary principle is fundamental to sustainable management of marine, coastal and estuarine ecosystems.
3. Fisheries must be managed as a part of a broader ecosystem which meets the needs of natural predators as well as humans.
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights to sea country must be recognised as well as the right to sustainably access customary fishing grounds.
5. The health of Australia's marine, estuarine, and coastal environment is dependent on land and waste management that recognises the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.
6. Ecosystems-based management is the most sustainable and appropriate model for the management of Australia's marine territories.
7. The health of Australia's fishing industries is dependent on adequate conservation and sustainable management measures that ensure the replenishment of fishing stocks.
8. Sea level rise, ocean warming, acidification, and increased severity and frequency of storms as a result of climate change pose grave threats to marine and coastal ecosystems.
9. Australia has a role in protecting the world's oceans including advocating for sustainable fishery practices on the High Seas.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. Statutory ecosystems-based bio-regional marine planning that enables the full range of uses and impacts to be identified and managed, and allocates resources across and within marine industry sectors.
11. The protection and conservation of key target and endangered marine species and elimination of fishery by-catch and habitat damage from both commercial and recreational fishing and other marine activities.
12. A strengthened cooperative national approach to the identification, containment and eradication of introduced marine pests.
13. The protection and conservation of marine mammals and protection of their habitat.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Marine and Coastal Areas (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. A global ban on commercial and so-called scientific take or other killing of all whales and other cetaceans, except for sustainable indigenous subsistence hunting, and a ban on the sale of whale meat and by-products.
15. The inclusion in the Indigenous Protected Areas Program of marine based proclamations and management programs for using traditional marine law and customary tenure systems for ecologically sustainable marine management.
16. Elimination of sources of marine pollution and hazards, including harmful and toxic waste dumping.
17. Stronger regulation of shipping and marine installations in Australian waters including the phasing out of single skinned tankers.
18. Restrictions on the use of seismic devices, mining techniques and other technologies, including the testing of military and naval explosive devices in the oceans, that cause ecological harm, particularly to marine mammals.
19. Payment by resource companies of the full costs of clean-up and monitoring of any marine and coastal damage resulting from their activities.
20. Adequate public funding for research to inform protection, conservation and responsible management of Australian marine and coastal environments.
21. The introduction of national standards for the ecological health of all marine and coastal bio-regions.

[Back to Contents](#)



Natural Resources: Forests, Mining and Fisheries

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia's natural resources must be managed in accordance with the principles of intergenerational equity, the precautionary principle, biodiversity conservation and respect for the traditional ownership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
2. Resource extraction decisions must be guided by rigorous independent environmental and social impact assessment.
3. Climate change must be a central consideration in the management of forests, fisheries and mining.
4. Coal seam gas mining and underground coal gasification pose unacceptable threats to Australia's land, water and industries, such as agriculture, grazing and tourism.
5. Soil is a valuable natural resource and as such must be managed in a manner which maintains soil fertility and health.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

Forests, Plantations and Wood Products

6. Recognition of the essential role played by mature forest ecosystems in wildlife habitat, carbon storage and water supply.
7. A sustainable and productive wood products industry on public and private land that maintains or enhances the resilience of natural ecosystems and that creates long-term skilled jobs and social sustainability in regional communities.
8. An end to the destruction of old-growth and high conservation value forests from logging and regeneration burns.
9. A prohibition on use of native forests for electricity generation.
10. An end to the export of woodchips and whole logs from native forests.
11. An end to tax arrangements which advantage plantations over other crops.
12. World's best practice, certified, farm-scale plantation forestry.
13. Plantations with a diversity of species rather than monocultures.
14. Nomination of Australia's qualifying ancient forests for listing on the National or World Heritage registers.
15. Abolition of the Regional Forest Agreements and equal treatment of forests, plantations and the wood production industry with other activities under environmental law.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Natural Resources: Forests, Mining and Fisheries (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

16. A national wood production industry plan that will complete the transition from native forests to existing plantations, including retraining and other assistance for workers and the development of sustainable alternative fibre industries.
17. An immediate end to broad scale land clearing to protect biodiversity and to arrest soil loss, river degradation and salinity.
18. The management of re-growth forest to an old growth state to maximise biodiversity, carbon uptake and water yield, which are more valuable outcomes than logging.
19. The revegetation of land including salt affected land with biodiverse native vegetation which can provide carbon sinks, hydrological management and biodiversity restoration.

Fisheries

20. The management of recreational and commercial fisheries under a national framework to maintain sustainable fish populations and fisheries, and to minimise the environmental impacts of fishing.
21. An evidence based strategy to maintain adequate, representative and comprehensive 'no-take' areas in all marine bioregions for the conservation of marine biodiversity, fish nursery habitat and fish stocks.
22. The continuation by Australia of its proactive stance on illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, including assisting in the development of alternative employment opportunities for impoverished communities that rely on the illegal trade.
23. A national framework for the assessment and regulation of environmentally benign aquaculture developments based on ecosystems management principles.
24. A moratorium on deep-sea bottom trawling in Australian waters and reduction in by-catch in all trawl fisheries.
25. A ban on all factory-ship based fishing in Australian pelagic fisheries.
26. Sustainable employment transition programs to assist commercial fishers and people employed in associated industries affected by changes in marine management practices.
27. Recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as traditional custodians and protectors of marine resources, their sea country rights and their rights to cultural fishing and an increase in their involvement in marine areas planning, management and decision making.

Mining and Mineral Exploration, Including Coal Seam Gas

28. A robust economy built on diverse sectors and not reliant on any one sector for its prosperity.
29. A mining and mineral exploration sector that meets stringent environmental protection standards and delivers both long and short term benefits to the wider Australian community.
30. A requirement that all mining activity be consistent with the rights, desires and needs of affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Natural Resources: Forests, Mining and Fisheries (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

31. Legislation that recognises that mining is incompatible with all other land uses and therefore needs to be rigorously assessed before being approved.
32. Accurate and independent environmental, health and social impact assessments addressing the true environmental, social and economic costs and benefits, rigorously applied and implemented on all mining proposals and projects.
33. Rigorous independent ongoing monitoring and compliance with undertakings and legal obligations of all mining projects including during the rehabilitation phase.
34. Prohibition of mineral exploration and mining including the extraction of petroleum and gas, in residential areas, good quality agricultural land and terrestrial and marine nature conservation reserves, national parks, wilderness areas and other areas of high nature conservation value.
35. No new coal seam, shale or tight gas developments, given the short and long term risks to our water, land, communities, the climate, food production and marine areas.
36. Ongoing independent research and monitoring of existing coal seam gas, shale and tight gas projects, especially those which involve fracking, to ensure they are not causing significant damage to aquifers, and withdrawal of approval of those projects if damage is occurring.
37. To strengthen rights for landholders regarding access, negotiation, appeal and compensation rights in all their dealings with mining and resources companies.
38. Inclusion in all new mining proposals of a fully costed and funded allocation for the restoration and rehabilitation of the impacted areas to world's best practice standards.
39. Prohibition on the exploration for, and mining and export of, uranium.
40. To oppose the establishment of new coal mines and the expansion of existing mines.

[Back to Contents](#)



Population

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The current level of population, population growth and the way we consume are outstripping environmental capacity. Australia must contribute to achieving a globally sustainable population and encourage and support other nations to do the same.
2. Our environmental impact and ecological footprint is not determined by population numbers alone, but by a range of factors including per capita consumption patterns and levels, distribution of resources, agricultural practices for domestic consumption and export, levels and types of industrial activity, urban design and transport options.
3. Australia's population policy should be determined by its commitment to:
 - a) ecological sustainability;
 - b) global and domestic social justice and equity, including women's rights;
 - c) intergenerational equity;
 - d) multiculturalism;
 - e) international human rights obligations; and
 - f) decent wages and conditions for all workers.
4. Population policy should not be primarily driven by economic goals or to counter the effects of an ageing population.
5. An Australian population policy must consider the geographical distribution of human settlements rather than just concentrate upon population size at the national level.
6. Australia has an obligation to accept humanitarian migration including that resulting from climate change.
7. The continuing rapid increase in the human population has the potential to adversely affect national or international outcomes in environmental sustainability, human health and welfare, and other areas. Current rates of resource use are not sustainable and are compounded by inequitable distribution of wealth and power.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. A reduction in Australia's use of finite natural resources to a level that is sustainable and socially just.
9. Human settlements which are:
 - a) designed and built to minimise environmental harm and maximise social well-being;
 - b) located in areas where their ecological impact is minimised.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Population (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

10. Full implementation by Australia of the 1994 United Nations International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, including:
 - a) increasing our contribution to programs that empower women and increase their access to a wide range of safe family planning options;
 - b) increasing our overseas aid budget to 0.7% of GNI;
 - c) ensuring that overseas aid to the world's poorest, which often include women, is focussed on clean water and sanitation, education and high quality accessible health services, including sexual and reproductive health services;
 - d) community debate about population, acknowledging that there are complex issues involved in population policy, including:
 - limits to unsustainable growth and resource use;
 - the survival of other species and ecosystems;
 - women's rights and especially education and access to family planning;
 - unsustainable resource use; and
 - inequitable distribution of wealth and power.

[Back to Contents](#)



Science and Technology

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Science is a critical tool for developing a deeper understanding of the universe.
2. Government has an important role to play in the development of scientific knowledge, and the ethical framework in which scientific research is conducted.
3. Environmental technologies are powerful engines for the creation of national prosperity.
4. Innovation in advanced technology and methods are key elements for success for business and industry.
5. Innovations in science and technology are essential if we are to meet the challenges of addressing climate change and the transition to a sustainable society.
6. Patent reform should promote technological innovation while avoiding excessive concentration of intellectual property or the monopolising of discoveries.
7. Investment in science education at all levels of schooling and training is essential to develop high levels of science literacy in the Australian population.
8. The scientific tradition of independent, peer-reviewed research is essential to the creation of high-quality knowledge about the functioning of human, ecological and planetary systems, and must not be compromised.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

9. A society in which the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and the sustainable application of new techniques are valued in the education system and by Australian business.
10. A scientific research and development focus that addresses community needs and national goals to prepare Australia for emerging challenges and opportunities, and utilises innovative technology and methods.
11. Increased expenditure on public and private research and development in Australia to at least 3% of GDP.
12. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) research that is in the public interest, is independent and is world class.
13. A precautionary approach by Government to the application of new technologies.
14. Improved public funding to Australian universities to expand their research capacity.
15. To prioritise funding for research into sustainable energy technologies with the aim of developing competitive energy technologies with zero carbon emissions.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Science and Technology (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

16. Greater support for the Australian Research Council (ARC), including abolition of the Minister's capacity to veto board decisions.
17. Greater regulation of nanotechnology including the application of the precautionary principle, occupational health and safety notifications and mandatory labelling of consumer and industrial products that contain free manufactured nanoparticles.
18. Community involvement in decisions about the safe application of new technologies.
19. Greater, more consistent, and more predictable funding for the CSIRO and Cooperative Research Centres with programs less reliant on industry funding, and improved job security for their employed scientists.
20. Science and technology, in particular information and communication technology, available to help maintain the viability of rural and remote communities.
21. Government policy and support that fosters greater commercialisation of Australian innovations in Australia by local companies.

[Back to Contents](#)



Sustainable Agriculture

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Sustainable agriculture is fundamental to food security, environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation.
2. The implementation of sustainable farming systems is essential for maintaining healthy, productive landscapes and addressing the grave threats of land and water degradation, climate change and peak oil. Sustainable farming systems are those that apply ecological concepts to the management of agriculture - often called agro-ecology.
3. Sustainable agriculture cannot be delivered without thriving, resilient rural communities, and farmers and land managers who play a critical role in maintaining healthy landscapes and ecosystem services.
4. Urban and peri-urban agriculture are important components of sustainable and community food systems in Australia.
5. As the most arid inhabited continent with fragile ancient soils, Australia's prime agricultural land and water supplies are vital national assets which must be protected from competing and unsustainable uses.
6. Government policy should not compromise the primacy of sustainable food and fibre production.
7. Sustainable agriculture cannot be delivered without a skilled workforce and an Australian population that understands and values our food systems.
8. Ongoing innovation, research, development and extension are essential to maintain and improve the sustainability and prosperity of Australian agriculture.
9. The Precautionary Principle, as defined in the Convention on Biological Diversity, must be applied to all new agricultural technologies and the use of their products in the environment.
10. Australia's trade policy including free trade agreements must not compromise domestic and international food security or food sovereignty.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

11. A national strategic plan for sustainable agriculture to deliver adequate, safe and nutritious food for all Australians; the well-being of our agricultural communities; a skilled and supported workforce; and the health and maintenance of the ecosystems that underpin our food and fibre production.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Sustainable Agriculture (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

12. Assistance for farmers to implement sustainable agricultural systems that repair, maintain and improve soil health including carbon storage, water quality, water use efficiency and biodiversity, modelled on natural systems at the landscape scale.
13. To foster community-based decision making and empower and resource Australia's rural communities to implement sustainable agricultural systems and address key challenges such as climate change and oil scarcity.
14. Support for initiatives that increase local product quality and nutrition, local value-adding and local distribution, fair prices for farmers, and the promotion of Australian produce to the Australian community, including urban agricultural initiatives.
15. To develop and implement measures to eliminate waste in the entire food production system, including fuel, transport, packaging and consumption.
16. To incorporate sustainable agricultural and food systems including landscape management into the national curriculum for primary and secondary levels.
17. To improve the uptake of tertiary and vocational agricultural courses to increase Australia's agricultural skill base and workforce retention.
18. To develop and implement an effective framework including financial incentives, pricing mechanisms, extension services and regulation to ensure that farmers and land managers are rewarded for the repair and maintenance of ecosystem services.
19. To strengthen and increase research, development and extension to support sustainable agricultural systems, healthy landscapes and resilient rural and regional communities.
20. Protection of prime agricultural land, water and infrastructure from urban expansion, mining, inappropriate biofuel crops and other competing uses and encroachments.
21. Support for the development and use of biofuels which are derived from agricultural waste, or from biofuel crops grown to rehabilitate marginal and degraded land.
22. To ensure that Australia's regulation of irrigation water including groundwater extraction delivers resource security, maximum water use efficiency and environmental sustainability, including the protection of critical ecosystems such as wetlands and base stream flows.
23. To end broad-scale native vegetation clearing and restore native vegetation and biodiversity.
24. To ensure Australia maintains and properly resources an effective biosecurity system, including the recognition of internal regional differences in pest and disease-free status, to protect Australian agriculture and the environment that supports it from invasive species, pests and diseases.
25. Reform of competition policy to address the unacceptable level of concentrated ownership in Australia's food production, distribution and sales systems that undermine sustainable agriculture and rural and regional communities.
26. Re-orientation of Australia's approach to international food trade to ensure it does not undermine food security or sovereignty domestically or internationally, compromise our biosecurity, or undermine the prosperity and sustainability of farming systems and communities.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Sustainable Agriculture (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

27. To encourage the sustainable and appropriate use of local native plants for food and fibre to reduce land degradation, greenhouse emissions and increase their protection.
28. To assist the reinvigoration of rural communities by providing programs that support young people wishing to become farmers or work in agricultural industries.
29. To ensure that drought assistance and other incentives for land managers encourage long term risk reduction strategies.
30. Adoption of enforceable Codes of Conduct in Animal Welfare by all sectors of the livestock production industries, and adequate funding of the authorities responsible for monitoring of these activities.
31. To ensure that the Foreign Investment Review Board rigorously regulates, monitors and reports on all foreign acquisition and ownership of agricultural land to ensure that it does not impact negatively on Australian agriculture and food security.

[Back to Contents](#)



Sustainable Planning and Transport

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Oil depletion and climate change make Australia's present way of life in car-dependent cities and regions unsustainable; there is an urgent need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.
2. Human settlements must be designed and built to minimise environmental harm and maximise social well-being.
3. Australia's transport system must function on principles of ecological sustainability, equity of access, and public ownership of critical public transport infrastructure.
4. Environmental and social sustainability must be the fundamental cornerstones of transport planning.
5. A high quality national rail network is essential to a modern economy.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

Sustainable Planning

6. Planning that is based on sustainable urban design principles, minimises urban sprawl and promotes development in mixed-use compact settlements.
7. Development that is affordable, ecologically sound, water and energy efficient, public transport friendly, and enables community interaction. A nationally agreed sustainability charter to be agreed across all industry sectors.
8. Improved integration of planning and transport.
9. Ecological sustainability and contribution to a safe climate as funding criteria for all federal development and infrastructure programs.
10. A national report card for development targets and building standards to promote Australia's progress towards its ecological sustainability goals.
11. A Sustainability Fund to deliver funding to states, local governments and community organisations to assist with implementing sustainability initiatives.
12. National urban planning standards that provide for the location of high density housing and commercial buildings close to high capacity public transport, and the clustering of medium-density housing, community facilities and small-scale businesses around neighbourhood shopping centres.

Transport

13. Increased opportunities for the community to participate in and guide transport planning.
14. Public transport services to be provided under community service obligations.
15. Public transport services that are competitive with private motor vehicles – fast, frequent, reliable, affordable, accessible and safe.
16. Major airports located to minimise social and environmental impacts.
17. More high quality footpaths, bike paths and lanes to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.
18. Better transport services to, within and between rural and regional areas.
19. Improved transport services for people with special needs.
20. A national plan for passenger and freight transport which is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable and outlines a transition to net zero carbon transport.
21. To eliminate dangerous level crossings in urban areas, and ensure the presence of signals on all crossings in rural and regional parts of the national rail network.
22. Adopted and enforceable world's best practice fuel efficiency standards and mandatory fuel efficiency labelling of new petrol and diesel cars.
23. Greater research and development in net zero carbon fuels and propulsion systems for transport.
24. A national program of planned investment to upgrade rail corridors between major cities and regional centres, to support fast and efficient freight and passenger services, including east coast high speed rail.
25. Where there is government ownership, funding or support for construction or maintenance of ports, management in the public interest to maximise social and ecological outcomes.

[Back to Contents](#)



Waste

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Waste management policy and production processes should adopt a zero waste goal to conserve natural resources for future generations, avoid the build-up of toxic and noxious substances, conserve water and achieve deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Avoiding, reducing, reusing and recycling waste are integral to effective waste management and to achieving zero waste.
3. Waste should be treated as a resource and reused in a way that achieves the maximum economic and environmental benefit.
4. The full social, environmental and economic costs must be measured and factored in to decisions about creating, managing and disposing of waste.
5. The transportation of hazardous waste must be minimised, and the Australian community must be fully informed about its location, disposal and transportation.
6. Manufacturers, distributors, and retailers should be required to adopt extended producer responsibility, taking financial and/or physical responsibility for a product at the end of its life.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. A comprehensive national waste strategy, addressing each stage of the production and consumption cycle, with mandatory targets for the avoidance, reduction and recycling of the different categories of waste.
8. Australian states and territories to work to achieve a nationally consistent approach to:
 - a) implementing a national phase out of the use of landfills for the disposal of unsorted waste;
 - b) documenting and monitoring the generation of different waste streams, with a focus on hazardous materials, with the aim of keeping all stockpiles and newly generated hazardous waste to a minimum;
 - c) phasing out non-recyclable and hazardous material; and
 - d) working with manufacturers, distributors and importers to provide sustainable waste and e-waste re-use and recycling facilities, including re-use and recycling strategies that meet minimum health, safety and environmental standards;
 - e) incentives for recycling and reusing products.
9. Independent verification of the National Pollution Inventory to ensure it comprehensively documents all point source substances released to the environment.
10. Active management of greenhouse gas emissions from current and legacy landfill sites.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Waste (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

11. The elimination of the incineration of materials producing toxic emissions.
12. Strict enforcement of penalties for illegal dumping.
13. A national container deposit scheme.
14. To prohibit the export of hazardous waste and e-waste unless similar health, safety and environmental standards exist in the importing country.
15. Mandatory labelling of electronics and large manufactured goods that clearly indicates that they may not be placed in household waste or municipal landfill streams.
16. A national labelling scheme for products that are biodegradable, reusable or recyclable, and for products which are primarily made from recycled materials.
17. Landfill levies, with funds raised used to discourage waste disposal to landfill.
18. Manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to be required to adopt extended producer responsibility, taking financial and/or physical responsibility for a product at the end of its life.

[Back to Contents](#)



Water and Inland Aquatic Environments

Policy Category: Ecological Sustainability

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Access to clean and adequate water is fundamental to life.
2. Australia's freshwater resources are coming under increasing pressure as a result of climate change and growing human demand.
3. The health of Australia's catchments, rivers, wetlands, groundwater systems and estuaries underpins the health of our environment, communities, agriculture and industry.
4. We have a responsibility to restore, maintain and protect Australia's rivers and freshwater environments as part of our natural heritage and future prosperity.
5. As a scarce and fluctuating resource, Australia's major water supplies must be publicly owned and managed through a system of regulated water allocation.
6. Water efficiency and recycling measures must be considered before expensive, environmentally damaging and greenhouse gas intensive alternative water management strategies.
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must have the opportunity to participate in water catchment planning and management.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. Legislation and regulations that protect our catchments, rivers, wetlands, estuaries and groundwater systems, including a permanent prohibition on new large-scale dams on Australian rivers.
9. Monitoring and reporting of water quality to ensure that Australian drinking water consistently meets or exceeds World Health Organization (WHO) and National Drinking Water standards.
10. Inclusion of sustainable water use as a compulsory element of planning in Commonwealth, state or territory water reform legislation and agreements, including for new developments, mining, infrastructure and agricultural projects.
11. National research and planning to address the impact of climate change on our catchments, rivers, wetlands, estuaries and groundwater systems.
12. Public ownership and control of major water infrastructure systems.
13. States and territories to adopt targets for a reduction in water consumption and increase in recycling and reuse.
14. A Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) system of reserves for Australia's unique and high conservation value freshwater ecosystems.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Water and Inland Aquatic Environments (cont'd)
www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Restricted extraction from groundwater systems unless an independent hydrogeological assessment verifies that recharge rates will not be exceeded and extraction would be sustainable.
16. Water allocations that are ecologically appropriate and based on best available scientific analysis of the hydrological systems involved (both surface water and groundwater) and which are subject to regular review.
17. Integrated national catchment management to ensure sufficient environmental water flows in all catchments.
18. Planning and management of the equitable use of Murray Darling Basin water resources that limits extraction to environmentally sustainable levels, maintains the health and resilience of the river and its ecosystems, and supports sustainable food production and rural enterprises for the long-term viability and wellbeing of basin communities.
19. Return of water to environmental flows through improved water efficiency measures for irrigated agriculture and buy back of water entitlements in severely degraded and over-allocated systems.
20. Meaningful consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in integrated catchment planning and management, and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander water rights and the allocation of water for cultural flows.
21. Rigorous environmental impact assessments, prior to commencement, for schemes involving re-insertion of waste-water into an aquifer.
22. Action to address threats to Australia's freshwater systems such as land clearance and mining, including coal seam gas erosion, sedimentation and pollution.
23. Comprehensive minimum water efficiency standards for new buildings and industries as well as new domestic and commercial appliances.
24. Adoption by states and territories of Water Sensitive Urban Design principles and methods for both new and existing development and infrastructure.

[Back to Contents](#)

Economic Justice

Preamble

The Australian Greens support an economy that sustains the needs of people and nature, now and for future generations. Economic activity should support, rather than deplete the social and natural capital of our world - that is, the natural environment on which we all depend, and the social relationships that make people happy and healthy. These principles apply at all levels of economic activity – local, regional, national and global.

Patterns of human production and consumption in the global economy, where driven by the pursuit of economic growth at any cost, have resulted in increased inequality. The Australian Greens believe that protecting common interests, including the need to conserve natural resources and public assets for future generations, should take priority where these conflict with private interests. Governments should ensure that corporations reflect and act on the concerns and interests of all stakeholders including citizens of countries in which they operate. Not-for-profit organisations working for the common good should also be supported so that this sector is able to flourish.

The costs to our economy and environment will continue to escalate unless strong action is taken to end our reliance on fossil fuels and other non-renew- able resources. The cost of addressing climate change now is far less than fail- ing to do so and having to pay the cost later. Therefore, we support a transition to a thriving economy based on 100% renewable energy which will create new jobs and improve living standards.

Policies

Economics

Employment and Workplace Relations

Global Economics

Overseas Aid



Economics

Policy Category: Economic Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. A prosperous and sustainable economy relies upon a healthy natural environment. Economies exist within, and are dependent upon, natural systems. Environmental stewardship is, therefore, central to good economic management.
2. The pursuit of continuous material-based economic growth is incompatible with the planet's finite resources. In order to provide for the needs of present and future generations, economic management should prioritise improving the quality of life rather than the production and consumption of material output.
3. Human induced climate change poses the greatest threat to our world, requiring Australia, and all nations, to transform to a low carbon economy. The cost of addressing climate change now is far less than the cost of failing to do so.
4. Measures of national progress should include indicators of ecological sustainability and social wellbeing.
5. Equity of access to the essentials of life and the promotion of equality are central goals for a civilised society.
6. The continued existence of poverty and growing inequalities of income and wealth undermine social wellbeing and democracy. Achieving social justice and eliminating poverty depend on greater democratisation of the economy.
7. Governments have an essential role in regulating markets and ensuring that any externalities are reflected in market prices of goods and services. In a mixed economy, markets that function well and are fair, efficient and competitive, have an important role in the allocation of resources.
8. Deliberate and coordinated government intervention and, where appropriate, government assistance, is necessary to encourage a diverse and resilient Australian manufacturing industry and create more green employment opportunities in a dynamic economy.
9. While government finances must be sustainable over the long-term, it is appropriate to stimulate the economy during economic downturns and save during economic booms. Government financing should be responsibly managed so as to minimise intergenerational debt.
10. Government policies that guide investment should prioritise the long-term public interest not the short-term desire of companies to maximise profits.
11. Natural monopolies and essential public services should generally be in public ownership. Whether in public or private ownership, natural monopolies and essential public services should be subject to a regime of transparency, accountability and stewardship that ensures maximum benefit to the public. Not-for-profit involvement with the provision of essential services and infrastructure should also be subject to a long-term community benefit test.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Economics (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

12. Government financing is the preferred mechanism for funding public infrastructure.
13. A secure and expanded revenue base is required so that governments can fund a high standard of infrastructure and human services including education, health, transport, environmental protection and social security. Much of the additional revenue required should be raised by taxing polluting industries, resource extraction and economic rent.
14. The taxation and transfer system should operate on a progressive, not regressive, basis.
15. Tax revenue from the extraction of finite resources should be invested for the future or focussed on providing public infrastructure, rather than used to meet recurrent expenditure that does not meet these ends.
16. The tax regime can be a powerful tool to transform the economy using appropriate incentives and penalties that reward socially and ecologically responsible effort.
17. Social services such as health, education and social care, should be available through universal access to high quality public and community services.
18. Public assistance is generally best provided through universal service provision or targeted payments, rather than through tax concessions which often fail to assist low-income earners.
19. Unemployment benefits, pensions and other government allowances should enable all Australians to live with dignity, provide an adequate income and be structured to avoid poverty traps.
20. Co-operative and collaborative structures for the organization of work and the provision of goods and services can provide important community benefits.
21. Strong support for local and regional economies is important as they contribute to a sustainable national economy by providing diversity and resilience.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

22. An economy that will reduce greenhouse gas pollution to an atmospheric concentration of 350ppm or less.
23. The introduction of broad measures of genuine national progress including the production of a comprehensive national balance sheet that reflects this.
24. A reduction in the inequities in the current tax and transfer system, including:
 - a) taxing trusts as companies;
 - b) removing fossil fuel subsidies;
 - c) redirecting funding from subsidising private health insurance towards direct public provision;
 - d) strengthening the progressivity of the income tax and transfer system across all income levels including by reducing effective marginal tax rates for low income workers, and increasing the marginal tax rate on incomes over \$1 million.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Economics (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

25. Taxation reforms that improve housing affordability by no longer rewarding speculation and reducing asset inequality.
26. A shift in taxation that helps restructure the economy by rewarding productive activity that avoids pollution, degradation of natural resources and rent seeking.
27. An end to subsidies and tax concessions to environmentally harmful industries. Instead, subsidies should be provided to aid the development of alternative industries and training to assist in re-employment.
28. To increase the rate of minerals resource rent taxation and broaden the commodity base.
29. The prioritisation of social and environmental goals in any reform of public service delivery. Where market-based mechanisms are used in the delivery of public services or goods, such mechanisms should not undermine the achievement of social equity and ecological sustainability.
30. To increase the transparency and accountability of the Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) in making its decisions against the National Interest Test. The National Interest Test should be strengthened to incorporate national, ecological and social objectives.
31. To provide direct industry assistance towards the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries, in order to spur research and development, overcome market inertia, create new long-term employment and rapidly decarbonise the economy.
32. A simpler, more transparent superannuation system with fairer rates of taxation and ethical investment structures, which provides equitable retirement incomes, particularly for women.
33. Better incentives for superannuation funds to invest in government securities and public infrastructure.
34. Full accountability of government and corporations to the broader community, including implementing holistic accounting measures at all levels of government to incorporate social, environmental and financial impacts into policy development and assessment.
35. Transparent and accountable public utilities and government business enterprises. Where public subsidies are provided, information on the full environmental, social and fiscal costs should be publicly available.
36. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to have the powers and resources to prevent the formation of monopolies through 'creeping acquisitions', and to divest monopolies and oligopolies of assets if they are abusing their market power.
37. Measures to reduce excessive executive salaries.

[Back to Contents](#)



Employment and Workplace Relations

Policy Category: **Economic Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia must have a fair and equitable industrial relations system for all workers.
2. All people have the right to pursue their well-being in conditions of freedom and dignity, economic security and equal opportunity.
3. Australia's workforce must be highly skilled, highly trained and well-paid. The existence of a safety net and the right to collectively bargain are essential to achieving these aims.
4. Working people must receive fair and equitable remuneration for their work.
5. Working people have the right to be involved in decisions about their work, free of intimidation.
6. The right to be a member of a union, to collectively bargain, to collectively withhold labour and collectively organise in the workplace are essential to achieving a sustainable and democratic future.
7. Free, independent and democratic unions are an essential pillar of a civil society.
8. People have the right to a safe workplace free from occupational hazards.
9. Industrial manslaughter is a crime.
10. The objectives of profitability and efficiency should not override social and ecological objectives.
11. Effective processes of dispute resolution, including conciliation and arbitration before an independent tribunal are a necessary element in any fair and effective industrial relations system.
12. Workplace laws should provide better work-life balance, with people having more control over their working arrangements and enforceable rights to flexible working practices, balanced against the legitimate operational needs of the employer. People should also have legal protection against working excessive hours.
13. There must be equal pay for equal work.
14. Industrial laws and government policies should promote full employment and job security.
15. Workplace safety should have an overriding importance over all other aspects of work and Workers Compensation schemes should prioritise cost-free rehabilitation and full compensation for injured workers.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

16. An industrial relations system that protects and enhances the rights of employees and workers by:

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Employment and Workplace Relations (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

- a) legislating a minimum standard for pay, annual leave and hours of work that protects all employees and workers;
 - b) providing comprehensive industry-wide awards that give rights and entitlements in excess of the legislative minima and which are determined by conciliation and arbitration before an effective and independent industrial tribunal;
 - c) facilitating industry wide collective agreements that are union negotiated and exceed the Award standards;
 - d) ensuring no workers are subject to laws and regulations detrimental to their interests on the basis of the industry in which they work;
 - e) ensuring individual arrangements cannot be sub-standard compared with awards or collective agreements;
 - f) conforming with international law, especially ILO conventions no. 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise (1948) and no. 98 on the right to organise and collective bargaining (1949).
17. To require employers to:
- a) enter into collective agreements with their workforce unless a majority are demonstrably opposed to collective bargaining, with Fair Work Australia to have the power to arbitrate if no agreement can be reached; and
 - b) inform new and existing employees that they are entitled to join a union, and enable the provision of information about the unions responsible for the sector and industry.
18. Recognition of the rights of workers to take industrial action, including the right to strike, and to advance their economic and social and environmental interests. Workers themselves are best placed to determine how such industrial action is to be approved. Workers and their unions should be protected against sanctions under non-industrial laws (such as the Competition and Consumer Act 2010) or common law actions when undertaking legitimate industrial activity.
19. Full protection of the rights of workers to join a union and of unions to protect and enhance the rights of their members.
20. Stronger right of entry rights for unions to recruit members, inspect for and remedy breaches of occupational health and safety provisions, breaches of the Fair Work Act and relevant awards or agreements, and other activities relating to strengthening workers' organisations.
21. Full protection of accrued entitlements of employees.
22. Greater protection for casual, fixed term and probationary workers and employees of small businesses, including full rights to challenge termination of employment where it is unfair, with reinstatement to be the remedy except in exceptional circumstances.
23. Reform of industrial laws and the portability of entitlements (such as long service leave) to reflect the growth in insecure employment and the fact that people are more likely to work for multiple employers during their working lives.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Employment and Workplace Relations (cont'd)
www.greens.org.au/policies

24. Equal access to paid work based on ability and irrespective of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, marital or civil status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, union membership, disability or religion.
25. Elimination of the gender pay gap.
26. A fairer sharing of paid work through mandated shorter standard working hours and a reversal of current trends towards increased unpaid overtime.
27. Greater flexibility for employees in workplace arrangements to allow for a better balance between work and family, social and community involvement.
28. Restriction of independent contractor arrangements to individuals who are genuinely running their own business and enhanced protection for individuals who are engaged under sham contractor arrangements and greater resources for prosecution of entities that engage sham contractors.
29. Relevant training and skills development available to all workers, including apprentices, trainees, part-time and casual employees, without loss of pay.
30. Improved minimum employment standards for trainees and apprentices.
31. Enacted and enforced industrial and immigration laws that stop the exploitation of foreign workers, by ensuring they receive the same pay, entitlements and conditions of employment as a local worker doing the same job.
32. Publication by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) of more meaningful monthly measures of underemployment and unemployment, with broader definitions of unemployment.
33. To reinstitute a publicly owned employment service.
34. To abolish and oppose any building and construction industry laws or codes that undermine working people's collective and human rights, and the complete removal of any coercive powers over workers. One set of laws should apply equally to all workers.
35. An enhanced national paid parental leave scheme.
36. The establishment of mechanisms both budgetary and statutory to eliminate the gender pay gap such as industrial tribunals with full powers to make orders to give effect to gender pay equity, on a workforce, industry or workplace basis.
37. A legislated minimum of five weeks annual leave for all employees.
38. To repeal any independent contractors legislation that strips employment rights from individuals.
39. The introduction of nationally consistent industrial manslaughter laws.

[Back to Contents](#)



Global Economics

Policy Category: Economic Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. All peoples in the world have the right to ecologically sustainable economic development.
2. Global economic systems must be ecologically sustainable, democratic, transparent and accountable.
3. Global economic systems and institutions must promote and respect human rights and enhance the right of communities to democratically determine their own future and priorities.
4. Public debt crises in developing countries flow from a number of causes including gross income inequality between and within countries and are the responsibility of both debtor and lender nations. Governments and international institutions should introduce policies to avoid excessive levels of net public debt.
5. International financial institutions should not force national governments to resolve economic crises primarily through cuts to social and environmental programs.
6. Global trading rules should promote fair trade to ensure developing countries are adequately and fairly rewarded for their productive output.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. A global economic system that promotes environmental sustainability, human rights and a decent standard of living for all.
8. International financial institutions that are democratic and that promote sustainable trade and development. This would require reform and democratisation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO), or failing that, their replacement.
9. The elimination of poverty, an end to the exploitation of children and other vulnerable people, and promotion of the trade of goods that have been produced through fair trade principles.
10. Preference to be given to multilateral trade agreements, except where a bilateral trade agreement favours a developing country.
11. Support for Australia's membership of financial organisations that promote human rights and environmental sustainability.
12. The global implementation of an international financial transactions tax (Tobin Tax) to discourage global currency speculation and to provide an independent revenue base to address global issues such as climate change and poverty alleviation.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Global Economics (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

13. The provision of incentives for developing countries to pursue economic development strategies that encourage self-reliance and prioritise the sustainable production of goods and services from local sources.
14. Compliance by Australian companies operating internationally with international human rights, labour and environmental laws and standards.
15. The creation of a United Nations sanctioned regulatory environment to govern the operation of transnational companies, tax havens and flags of convenience.
16. Continued advocacy for fair trade over free trade agreements.
17. Promotion of debt cancellation for least-developed countries when the debt repayment conditions result in increased poverty and social, environmental and economic injustice.
18. Resistance to the development of international trade regimes that seek to extend the concentration of control over intellectual property.
19. Reform of international trade agreements to enable national governments to fairly regulate in relation to labour or environmental standards of production, health standards, or other matters of legitimate public interest.
20. The alignment of taxation legislation to secure appropriate tax revenues from transnational corporations. This would occur in collaboration with taxation agreement partners and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) members.
21. To ensure that national governments do not allow the pressures from the globalisation of trade to override the democratic preferences of their citizens.

[Back to Contents](#)



Overseas Aid

Policy Category: Economic Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia has a responsibility to contribute to both long term development aimed at eliminating global poverty, enhancing self-reliance and reducing climate change vulnerability in developing nations, and to humanitarian emergency relief where people become vulnerable and suffer because of natural disasters or social conflict.
2. Australia has an obligation, particularly as a wealthy country, to encourage positive and equitable change in the social, economic and environmental conditions for citizens of developing nations.
3. All aid programs should be consistent with a human rights-based approach to development, economically and environmentally sustainable, should promote local participation and gender equality, and enhance the political, economic and social rights of the recipient communities.
4. Aid effectiveness requires development strategies and programs that are designed with and accountable to people living in poverty.
5. The human rights and agency of women should be placed at the centre of Australian aid.
6. Long-term aid should be directed towards enhancing self-reliance in developing nations.
7. Aid should contribute to a world free from structural inequalities, where people can determine their own futures, and where trade and debt no longer exploit peoples, but instead promote environmental and social justice.
8. Emergency relief to save lives and alleviate suffering of vulnerable people during social conflicts and natural disasters should be provided:
 - a) with impartiality and based solely on need;
 - b) with neutrality, not favouring either side in any armed conflict;
 - c) independent from the political, economic, or military objectives of the Australian government in the area concerned;
 - d) by civilians, except in relation to situations involving natural disasters where ambiguity over the military role is unlikely to arise; and
 - e) with full implementation of international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights.
9. Aid programs should not be used to influence the democratic preferences of any nation.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. A focus in Australia's aid program on working with developing countries to realise the millennium development goals.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Overseas Aid (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

11. An increase in the level of Australian overseas aid to a minimum of 0.7% of GNI phased in over time, as mandated by the United Nations, with provision for additional increases in the event of natural disasters or conflicts requiring major humanitarian interventions.
12. Transparency and accountability in the purpose and impact of all aid programs, to both the Australian people and the communities and countries the programs are designed to benefit. This includes ensuring governance structures and processes serve the interests of those communities.
13. A non-commercial aid program. Aid must not be used as a means of subsidising Australian business.
14. Long-term aid programs that combat climate change as an integral part of their poverty elimination strategy.
15. Australia to play a lead role in securing global contributions to UN and other international appeals for funding, expertise and logistical support to deal with humanitarian emergencies wherever they occur.
16. The establishment of AusAID as an independent department with its own cabinet-level minister, separate from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
17. Environmental, social and gender impact statements for all aid programs.
18. International aspects of Australian policies on trade, economic and social issues that are consistent with, and contributing towards, global poverty alleviation goals.
19. The Australian government to recognise and support the valuable role of non-government aid organisations in providing critical analysis and scrutiny of the aid program.
20. Selection of implementing agencies for the aid program based on their developmental effectiveness, participatory approach and cost effectiveness.
21. An increased funding focus on strengthening health systems to address sexual and reproductive health, and the prevention and consequences of HIV-AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases.
22. Targeted assistance, particularly in the Asia Pacific, for climate change adaptation measures so communities can remain in their own countries and maintain cultural cohesion.
23. Australian government agencies organised, trained and resourced to carry out effective overseas relief work, collaborating with Australian non-government organisations in building their emergency response capacity.
24. Collaboration with developing countries in disaster prone areas to reduce their vulnerability and the impact of disasters, enhancing the capacity of both governments and local non-government organisations.
25. The inclusion of 'good governance' activities within the aid program which promote governance structures and processes which serve the interests of those in poverty.
26. The removal of any discrimination against small non-government organisations in AusAID's funding and tendering processes.

[Back to Contents](#)

Democracy

Preamble

Green philosophy is underpinned by a belief in grassroots democracy, in which all citizens have the right to express their views and have the capacity and opportunity to directly participate in environmental, economic, social and political decisions.

The Australian Greens seek to increase opportunities for public participation in decision-making and to break down the inequalities of wealth and power which inhibit participatory democracy. Parliaments should serve the best interests of all Australians; transparency and accountability in government decision-making at all levels are essential for democracy to flourish.

A key pillar of democracy is the free flow of information between citizens and all spheres of government, which requires locally responsible, diverse, and independent mass media, including publicly owned broadcasting.

As well as strengthening democracy at home, Australia should play an active role in promoting participatory democracy worldwide. This means promoting respect for and protection of human rights as well as social justice and environmental sustainability.

Equality between men and women is also central to democracy, particularly in developing countries where gender disparities in power and resources often exclude women and their concerns from decision-making.

Policies

[Community Participation in Government](#)

[Constitutional Reform and Democracy](#)

[Corporate Governance](#)

[Human Rights Justice](#)

[Media and Communications](#)

[Multiculturalism](#)



Community Participation in Government

Policy Category: Democracy

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The contribution of diverse range of groups and perspectives to the political process is inherently valuable.
2. Active, engaged citizenship should be encouraged to assist ongoing community participation in the making of laws and policy.
3. Marginalised groups must be enabled to participate in policy debates.
4. Community participation in planning should be enshrined in law and be an ongoing process.
5. Community groups and individuals must be provided with sufficient information in plain language to enable meaningful participation in all levels of government.
6. Non-government organisations provide a vital democratic role as advocates and as providers of services.
7. There is a right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. Community organisations to be able to participate in public debate without fear of adverse consequences.
9. Marginalised groups to be provided with support and resources enabling them to participate in consultation and deliberation processes.
10. Government agencies to take account of the time and money required by community groups' participation in consultation and deliberation processes.
11. Governments to provide free and timely information to citizens.
12. Strong Freedom of Information (FOI) laws that exempt community groups and individuals from fees for material gained under FOI.
13. Strong whistleblower protection legislation.
14. Stronger parliamentary and public scrutiny of government funded programs to enhance transparency and accountability.
15. Support for participatory deliberative methods or processes, where appropriate, that increase levels of interaction between decision-makers and the public.

[Back to Contents](#)



Constitutional Reform and Democracy

Policy Category: **Democracy**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. All citizens have the right and the responsibility to participate in and to equally access the processes of government.
2. An egalitarian democracy requires that all people are treated equally.
3. The Constitution must recognise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first peoples and their rights as owners, and their enduring connections between lands, water and culture of Australia, and acknowledge the past injustices that have been done since European occupation.
4. The Constitution should express our aspirations as a community and define our rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of the community.
5. Parliament is the central authority of representative and responsible government.
6. The composition of Parliament should reflect the diversity of opinion within society.
7. Government decisions should, where appropriate, be made by the level of government that is closest to the people affected.
8. Australia should become a republic with an Australian head of state.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

9. Our rights and responsibilities to be set out in, and protected by, law.
10. An Australian Bill of Rights.
11. Constitutional recognition of Australia's cultural diversity, and the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original and ongoing residents of Australia and their rights as the traditional owners of the land.
12. Constitutional recognition of the powers and responsibilities of local government.
13. Parliament to be more democratic and representative of the Australian population.
14. A strong Senate that can always act as a house of review.
15. Increased independence of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate.
16. Electoral reforms that would enable:
 - a) all Australian citizens over the age of 16, including those who are incarcerated, to be eligible to vote;
 - b) proportional representation in the House of Representatives and local government;
 - c) fixed terms of Parliament;

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Constitutional Reform and Democracy (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

- d) amendment of section 44 of the Constitution to allow any public servant who has no conflict of interest, and Australian citizens with dual nationality, to stand for election to Federal Parliament; and
- e) electoral funding reform that provides for:
 - i. public funding of political parties and candidates for election campaigns and for the administration of political parties, to be set at a level that ensures proper democratic participation by voters and reduces corporate influence on political decisions; and
 - ii. bans on political donations from for-profit corporations and caps on individual political donations, excluding bequests, and donations from not for profit organisations; and
 - iii. caps on electoral expenditure by parties and candidates and strict limits on third party expenditure: and
 - iv. prompt, comprehensive public disclosure of political donations and funding on a public website.
- 17. For a period of at least two years following their term, Ministers not to be engaged in a private enterprise which raises a conflict or particular benefit from their role and connections developed as a Minister.
- 18. A reduction in the deposit required to stand for election to Parliament to remove financial barriers to democratic participation.

[Back to Contents](#)



Corporate Governance

Policy Category: **Democracy**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Corporations and governments operating in Australia have a responsibility to conform to the intent, as well as the letter, of Australian and international law.
2. Corporations and governments must behave ethically in all transactions and work to prevent corruption.
3. Laws governing corporations and business practices should promote social and environmental responsibility and respect for human rights.
4. Laws governing corporations and business practices should reflect the concerns and interests of all stakeholders including shareholders, employees, business partners and communities.
5. Government entities, including statutory authorities, should demonstrate leadership in providing exemplary governance and high levels of social and environmental responsibility.
6. Government-owned service delivery corporations should prioritise adequate, affordable and accessible service delivery over making profits.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. A business environment that encourages businesses and governments to fulfil their corporate, social and environmental responsibilities.
8. Effective regulation of the conduct of the corporate sector including international entities, to include:
 - a. increased funding for regulatory agencies, adequate to enable enforcement;
 - b. increased sanctions, and increased fines, sufficiently high to deter breaches of the law;
 - c. extended liability of directors and managers;
 - d. extended range of effective penalty provisions such as publication orders, restrictions on Government related work, barring and delisting of individuals and entities.
9. Decision-making processes in publicly listed companies that ensure informed and comprehensive participation by shareholders.
10. Widespread awareness of, and adherence to, the United Nations Global Compact and the principles it embodies.
11. Publicly listed companies and government departments to be required to independently audit and annually report their performance against economic, environmental and social criteria.
12. Elections of boards of publicly listed companies to be conducted by an independent statutory body.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Corporate Governance (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

13. The inclusion of corporate ethics and environmental and social responsibilities in all business and commerce course curricula at secondary and tertiary institutions.
14. The disclosure of documents relating to government tenders and procurement processes, once such processes are finalised, and strong powers for the Commonwealth Auditor General and the Commonwealth Ombudsman to examine the propriety of government tenders and procurement.
15. Persons detrimentally affected by the operations of Australian corporations overseas to be able to take legal action against those corporations in Australia.
16. All government-appointed boards to be representative of their stakeholders.
17. Stronger consumer education initiatives in the areas of reduced and responsible consumption, consumer rights and responsible investment.
18. Investigation of tax-based incentives for socially and environmentally responsible initiatives.
19. A review of Competition Policy monitoring and enforcement to ensure that individual stakeholder or sector interests do not override the public interest.
20. Amendment of all relevant legislation to ensure the directors of 'phoenix' companies and the new entities themselves can be pursued for outstanding liabilities.
21. Increased exposure and, where possible, prosecution of companies (and their directors) based in Australia who are responsible for/involved in human rights, industrial or environmental law breaches overseas.

[Back to Contents](#)



Human Rights

Policy Category: Democracy

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Universal human rights are fundamental and must be respected and protected in all countries and for all people.
2. Economic, social, cultural, environmental, civil and political rights are universal, interdependent, and indivisible.
3. Cultural, religious, gender and other differences often give rise to specific needs and circumstances that must be taken into account in order to ensure equal rights for all.
4. Greater equality is both a cause and effect of ensuring human rights are respected.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

5. Australia to ratify and adhere to, both locally and abroad, all human rights conventions, including their optional protocols.
6. Greater international respect for and protection of human rights.
7. To promote and strengthen the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and encourage all nations to ratify its status.
8. To progress an Australian bill of rights and incorporate Australia's international human rights obligations into domestic law.
9. The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to investigate alleged and potential human rights abuses in Australia. This would include Australian compliance with any recommendations.
10. Legal and diplomatic protection of Australian citizens subjected to human rights abuses by foreign powers.
11. Promotion of agreed international human rights with other countries, including the application of diplomatic and commercial pressures on regimes and governments that violate human rights.
12. Reform of Australia's 'counter-terrorism' legislation and other relevant legislation, to ensure freedom of expression and association, freedom from arbitrary detention, legal due process, and privacy, and the repeal of sedition laws.
13. Reform of Australia's migration regulations, particularly with regard to freedom from arbitrary detention, protection of the family unit, and other United Nations guidelines.
14. An end to, and war crimes investigations into, secret detention, rendition, torture and other illegal and unconscionable acts.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Human Rights (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. An end to the death penalty and opposition to the death penalty in all cases, as well as support for campaigns for its abolition.
16. The role of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) expanded to encompass the full range of Australia's international human rights obligations and the power to determine complaints.
17. An end to the practice of forced evictions and land grabs for ethnic, religious, territorial and development reasons.

[Back to Contents](#)



Justice

Policy Category: Democracy

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. All Australians have a right to a safe, peaceful and ecologically sustainable existence, free from crime and fear of violence.
2. The rule of law, the protection of human rights and access to justice for all people are fundamental to a democratic society.
3. The separation of powers between the executive, the parliament and the judiciary is crucial to the maintenance of freedom, justice and democracy.
4. Equality before the law can only be achieved when there is recognition of the way in which cultural, social and economic structures and practices influence decision-making processes and affect people's choices and opportunities.
5. The fundamental principles of the right to a fair hearing – such as access to open, impartial and independent courts and, in the case of criminal proceedings, habeas corpus, the right to silence, the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law and the right to a trial by jury - must be preserved and upheld.
6. Access to justice requires policies and resources that overcome social, economic and cultural inequalities to ensure equality before the law.
7. Australian law must address the particular cultural and social needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
8. Australian law must address the historical and continuing injustice faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
9. A fairer, more equal and inclusive society will improve social cohesion and reduce crime.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. Courts and tribunals that are impartial, well-resourced and independent of the government of the day.
11. Domestic laws that fully incorporate Australia's international legal obligations.
12. An end to politically motivated law and order campaigns that exploit and fuel public anxieties; and to the threat of terrorism being used to undermine or discard basic principles of law.
13. Secure funds for community legal centres and legal aid in both criminal and civil jurisdictions to ensure access to justice for all Australians.
14. A criminal justice system that is human rights compliant and based on principles of restorative justice and the rights of victims and the accused.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Justice (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. A comprehensive, multi-disciplinary and evidence-based approach to reduce crime by addressing the underlying causes of crime and recidivism.
16. Implementation of alternatives to imprisonment, where appropriate, including restorative justice, diversionary programs and justice reinvestment strategies.
17. All those held in Australian prisons to have access to quality rehabilitation, education and training programs in an effort to reduce recidivism.
18. To uphold judicial discretion in sentencing and repeal mandatory sentencing legislation.
19. Customary law to be taken into account by judges in determining sentences.
20. A family law system that is fair, accessible and based on the best interests of the child.
21. The urgent implementation of the outstanding recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths.
22. The decriminalisation of consensual adult sex work.
23. Stronger citizens' privacy protection.
24. The prohibition of racial profiling, and the arbitrary use of racial descriptors by police or other government agencies.
25. To progress gun law reform, including prohibition of the possession and use of semi-automatic hand guns in the community.
26. To implement a prohibition on the use of electroshock weapons and Tasers; starting with disallowing their distribution to general duties police and restricting their use to situations where life is threatened.
27. To ensure that judges, magistrates and tribunal members have tenure in order to protect their independence.
28. To oppose attempts to restrict litigants' capacity to seek compensation under the civil law.

[Back to Contents](#)



Media and Communications

Policy Category: Democracy

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Freedom of the press and effective, affordable and accessible media and communications systems are integral to the functioning of a successful democratic society.
2. All Australians should be able to access a variety of affordable telecommunications.
3. Media diversity in content and format is a right of all Australians.
4. Strong, independent public and community media are an essential part of Australia's media sector.
5. Australian content should be strongly supported and well funded.
6. Australia must have an independent regulatory framework for media, communications and advertising.
7. Public ownership of essential communications infrastructure is in the best interests of a democratic society.
8. Net neutrality is important for an open internet.
9. Digitalisation of broadcasting and other services requires government support and a public education campaign.
10. Documents placed in the public domain by government should be accessible with free non-proprietary software, and public data should be made available in open, inter-operable formats.
11. The government should lead by example and embrace open source and open standards.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

12. Diversity of both opinion and ownership of media across Australia and a strict limitation on the number of media outlets an individual entity can own or control.
13. Our public broadcasters ABC and SBS to continue to be leaders in the production of independent news, investigative journalism, analysis, entertainment and innovative programming, be free of advertising and be funded to achieve these ends.
14. The ABC and the SBS to be governed by boards independent of government that include staff elected representation.
15. High quality Australian content across all media genres.
16. A vibrant and adequately publicly funded community media sector providing services that reflect geographical and cultural diversity.
17. Affordable and reliable high speed internet connections available for all Australians.
18. Australia Post to remain a publicly owned provider of postal services.
19. The equitable installation of new communications infrastructure across Australia.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Media and Communications (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

20. Free and open publishing of publicly funded academic research within a 12 month period of initial publication and a research archive for all publicly funded academic research.
21. Truth in political advertising legislated.
22. A nationally consistent approach to the regulated sale of X-rated material.
23. Free-to-air coverage of important sporting events, and other events of national and cultural significance.
24. Individuals protected from defamation actions designed to stifle participation in public debates.
25. The protection of anonymous journalistic sources to ensure press freedom.
26. Reform of copyright and licensing schemes to give legal protection and clearer guidelines for fair use, crown copyright and public domain works.
27. Regulation of the internet to be transparent, accountable and protective of privacy, freedom of speech and access to information.
28. Transparency and public accountability for the workings of the Australian Classification Board and OFLC and the ACMA website blacklist.
29. The installation of communications infrastructure, including mobile phone towers, to be subject to improved state, territory and local government planning provisions and community consultation.
30. Adequate funding to maintain a healthy Australian film industry and to ensure Australia's cultural media history is preserved and protected.
31. The establishment of an independent regulatory body with adequate funding and powers.
32. Establishment of a national regulatory framework on energy efficiency standard for Data Centres.
33. Effective regulation of the digital games industry to ensure children are not exposed to excessive violence or sexual content.
34. Greater resources for libraries to improve their digital services.

[Back to Contents](#)



Multiculturalism

Policy Category: Democracy

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia's cultural plurality is a part of the nation's identity and should be recognised as such.
2. People have the right to celebrate and express their cultural heritage within universally accepted human rights.
3. All people, regardless of culture, ethnicity, religion, language, place of birth or citizenship status should have equal rights and the right to participate equally in social, economic and cultural life.
4. Australia is a culturally diverse society and this should be fully reflected in Australia's social and political institutions.
5. The Australian Greens should represent the cultural diversity of Australian society in its own organisation, and in all of its policies and activities, in Parliament and in the community.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

6. Australia to be a cohesive community that respects and is accepting of diverse cultures and backgrounds.
7. All Australian citizens and permanent residents to have equal access to education, work and services provided by all levels of government regardless of culture, religion, language and place of birth.
8. All Australians to have equal opportunity for representation and inclusion at local, state and national levels of government regardless of culture, religion, language and place of birth.
9. To implement proven, successful models of racism prevention programs throughout the community which develop belonging and connection between people and that eliminate racism.
10. Policy development and program implementation that is based on wide and inclusive consultation that gives voice to Australians' diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and interests.
11. Adequately resourced non-government refugee and migrant organisations to carry out advocacy and support work on behalf of their members and communities in Australia.
12. Government and government-funded services to be delivered in languages other than English, by bilingual staff where appropriate, and interpreting and translation services to be well resourced and widely available.
13. Cross-cultural training available for government staff and widely available in other organisations.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Multiculturalism (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. Adequate data on cultural and linguistic diversity to be collected, published and used to improve services and programs.
15. To promote and adequately resource community language studies for all Australians, especially in all schools and tertiary institutions.
16. To extend the provision of adequate, publicly provided and readily accessible ESL (English as a Second Language) courses and improve the quality of contracted English language teaching provision.

[Back to Contents](#)

Peace and Non-violence

Preamble

The Australian Greens are deeply committed to the principle of nonviolence, as essential to the prevention and reduction of conflict. Peace can only be achieved by addressing the underlying causes of conflict and basing conflict resolution on cooperation, human rights, natural justice and disarmament, as per the United Nations Charter. The Australian Greens believe that United Nations mandated military action should be a last resort and can only be justified if it is necessary either to avert a major violation of human rights or attempted genocide, or to counter the military invasion of a country.

The Australian Greens believe that Australia's foreign policy should be independent and non-aligned, benefiting both the Australian people and the people of the countries with which we engage. Australia's defence policy should not be reliant on the United States nuclear umbrella and that our military forces should be geared for defensive rather than offensive operations. Military capability alone cannot guarantee human security, nor can it address some of the most urgent threats we face, including climate change and resultant natural disasters, food and water shortage, and poverty. Security can only be guaranteed when human rights, a healthy environment, and fair economic and social development are realised.

Policies

Global Governance

International Relations

Nuclear and Uranium

Peace and Security



Global Governance

Policy Category: Peace and Non-violence

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The system of global governance must be reinvigorated to advance global peace and security, justice, human rights, poverty alleviation, health and environmental sustainability.
2. Major structural reform is needed to provide stronger, more effective and more representative multilateral institutions.
3. The leading role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security must be recognised and respected by all countries.
4. The international financial institutions that govern aid, development, trade and transnational financial movements must contribute to global economic justice.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

5. A renewed commitment by Australia to multilateralism as the means of addressing global challenges through supporting the United Nations Charter and meeting financial obligations to the organisation.
6. Democratisation of the United Nations, including the phasing out of permanent membership, ending veto power in the Security Council and ensuring greater transparency.
7. Full support for, and adequate resourcing of, the International Criminal Court (ICC).
8. The upholding of international legal codes on the accountability of all perpetrators, including political and military leaders, for human rights abuses and crimes against humanity.
9. Early parliamentary engagement in Australia's negotiations of treaties, with agreements being reviewable by parliament.
10. Support for the establishment, by the United Nations, of an international crisis prevention and response centre to address threats from conflicts, to provide rapid response peacekeeping forces, and to rapidly respond to humanitarian crises.
11. Support for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 which calls for more women at every level of governance, and for women and gender issues to be included in all aspects of peacemaking and peace-keeping.
12. International financial institutions that are democratic and that promote sustainable trade and development. This would require reform and democratisation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO), or failing that, their replacement.

[Back to Contents](#)



International Relations

Policy Category: Peace and Non-violence

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia must act diplomatically to promote peace, democracy, ecological sustainability and human rights.
2. Australian foreign policy should benefit both the Australian people and the people of the countries with which we engage.
3. The principles of the United Nations Charter and Declaration of Human Rights, and adherence to effective global environmental governance, must underpin foreign policy.
4. All peoples have the right to self-determination.
5. Developing nations have the right to economic independence and to sovereignty.
6. Lasting solutions to conflicts either between or within nations depend on delivering social, environmental and economic justice to the peoples involved, and on ensuring they can exercise their civil and political rights.
7. Achieving a durable resolution to conflicts requires a commitment to non-violence and an outcome that gives expression to the social, civil, political, cultural, environmental and economic rights of the peoples involved.
8. Women should be fully included in all aspects of international relations and peacemaking initiatives.
9. Developmental models should seek to achieve ecologically sustainable outcomes, respecting the sovereignty and desires of the host population.
10. Australia must act decisively within UN supported operations and also use humanitarian or non-military measures, to prevent and oppose acts of genocide and violations of international human rights law and to bring perpetrators before the International Criminal Court.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

11. Independent, transparent and accountable foreign and defence policies based on mutual respect.
12. Peaceful, fair and just international relations with other peoples and governments in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law.
13. To use United Nations forums and structures to ensure that all countries act to prevent acts of genocide and violations of human rights.
14. Mutually beneficial trading relationships with other nations that ensure just rewards for local producers and help to alleviate poverty.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: International Relations (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. To establish closer cooperation with countries of South East Asia, and support localised participatory democracy to strengthen social cohesion and foster the active participation of disenfranchised communities, particularly women and young people.
16. Ongoing commitment to the demilitarisation of the Asia Pacific region and the development of a Regional Non-Aggression Pact.
17. To engage with the South East Asian and Pacific countries, as well as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) group and Pacific Forum, to work towards improved educational, health and environment initiatives for the region to assist those living in poverty and to improve their quality of life.
18. To seek international support for peoples living under military occupation to realise their right to self-determination.

[Back to Contents](#)



Nuclear and Uranium

Policy Category: Peace and Non-violence

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The world should be free of nuclear weapons and the nuclear fuel chain.
2. There is a strong link between the mining and export of uranium and nuclear weapons proliferation.
3. The use of nuclear weapons, nuclear accidents or attacks on reactors pose unacceptable risks and consequences.
4. Future generations must not be burdened with dangerous levels of radioactive waste.
5. Nuclear power is not a safe, clean, timely, economic or practical solution to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.
6. Australia's reliance on the United States nuclear weapons 'umbrella' lends our bases, ports and infrastructure to the US nuclear war fighting apparatus, and is in conflict with our national sovereignty.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. A nuclear-free world.
8. Cessation of Australian uranium mining and export.
9. Medical support and compensation provided to workers occupationally exposed to radiation.
10. Compensation for the victims of British nuclear weapons testing in Australia, and rehabilitation of nuclear test sites.
11. Uranium mining companies to be liable for rehabilitation of uranium mining sites and subject to enforcement of standards to safely contain and monitor radioactive tailings wastes for at least 10,000 years.
12. Closure of Australia's ports and territorial waters to nuclear-powered or nuclear-armed vessels.
13. Removal from Australian territory of all facilities which enable deployment of nuclear weapons.
14. Prohibition of food irradiation and the importation of such food.
15. Prohibition of the importation and reprocessing of international nuclear waste and fuel rods.
16. Closure of the OPAL nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights and development of non-reactor technologies, such as particle accelerators, for the production of radioisotopes for medical and scientific purposes.
17. Safe, long-term containment of Australia's existing nuclear waste, stored and monitored above ground, in dry storage at or near the site of generation.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Nuclear and Uranium (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

18. The elimination of nuclear weapons through a Nuclear Weapons Convention, nuclear weapon free zones, municipalities and ports.
19. To cease production and use of depleted uranium weapons.
20. Prohibition of nuclear power plants and the promotion of safe, ecologically sustainable energy options.
21. Prohibition of government funding of mining, research, development and commercialisation of technologies directly related to the enrichment or weaponisation of nuclear material.
22. Prohibition of the mining and export of thorium.

[Back to Contents](#)



Peace and Security

Policy Category: Peace and Non-violence

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Genuine security rests on cooperation, fair economic and social development, environmental sustainability, and respect for human rights, rather than on military capabilities.
2. Non-violent conflict management is the most effective means of promoting peace and security in the international arena.
3. United Nations mandated military action should be a last resort and can only be justified if it is necessary either to avert a major violation of human rights or attempted genocide, or to counter the military invasion of a country.
4. Civil society organisations, including ethnic and women's groups, should be fully involved in conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict reconstruction.
5. Conscription has no place in a democratic society.
6. The deployment of Australian Defence Forces (ADF) must be for defence and peace-keeping, and not for offensive action.
7. No nuclear armed or powered forces should be deployed within Australia's maritime boundaries.
8. The deployment of Australian military forces must require the endorsement of federal parliament.
9. The use and promotion of violence against civilians or elected Governments or representatives, whether perpetrated by a state, an organisation or individuals, should be rejected as a means to achieve political ends.
10. To reduce the threat of terrorism, the social and economic injustices which contribute to terrorist actions should be addressed.
11. Climate change represents one of the greatest threats to international peace and security.
12. Environmental degradation caused by sea-level rise and other climate change impacts will increasingly result in the displacement of people, undermining global peace and security.
13. Involvement in military actions has broad and long lasting consequences, including economic and social costs to those directly involved, their families and the broader community.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

14. The elimination of weapons of mass destruction.
15. All countries to sign, ratify and implement outstanding international human rights and disarmament agreements and strengthened nuclear non-proliferation treaties.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Peace and Security (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

16. The reconstruction and empowerment of war ravaged communities to facilitate sustained peace and security.
17. A reallocation, and where possible, reduction in Australian military expenditure consistent with the defensive security needs of Australia and the peace-keeping role of Australian forces.
18. An ADF adequate to Australia's defence and peacekeeping needs.
19. The ADF and other public security agencies to be non-discriminatory, and reflect the diversity of Australian society.
20. A United Nations-sponsored international peace conference on global nuclear non-proliferation and general nuclear disarmament.
21. An international ban on the manufacture and use of arms that indiscriminately kill and maim, including landmines, cluster bombs and depleted uranium; and an immediate end to ADF participation in any joint training or military operations with other military forces, where those forces are utilising such weapons.
22. To reinvigorate peace research in Australian universities and peace education in schools.
23. Gender equality in peace processes, agreements and transitional governance structures.
24. To ensure that trade embargos and other economic sanctions are used as part of a strategy of conflict resolution, and have minimal harm to civilians.
25. To ensure that regional defence treaties promote Australia's independent role in the region and are consistent with our international and human rights obligations.
26. An end to Australia's participation in the United States Missile Defence program and a global ban on the militarisation of space.
27. Closure of all existing foreign bases in Australian territory and an end to foreign troop deployment, training and hosting on Australian territory.
28. The development of an Australian Coastguard to replace military personnel and equipment in coastal policing.
29. A voluntary Australian Defence Force where personnel have the right to conscientiously object to illegal military actions, where personnel are not used in strikebreaking or policing activities, and that has a military justice system and culture that is transparent and reduces discrimination and harassment amongst ADF members.
30. An end to training and joint exercises by the ADF with armed forces known to have committed human rights abuses.
31. Australia to sign and ratify all treaties directed towards achieving arms control and disarmament.
32. Comprehensive and transparent accounting of the costs, including social and health costs, associated with past, present and future involvement in military action.
33. No Australian participation in the sale of weaponry, the sale of weaponry components overseas or arms fairs.
34. The United Nations and associated agencies to strengthen the push for strong limits on the manufacture and trading of armaments of all kinds.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Peace and Security (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

35. Decisions on defence procurement to be based on Australia's defence needs.
36. Defence procurements that do not restrict the operations of the ADF by increased reliance on any one country.
37. A renegotiated defence relationship with our allies that promotes Australia's independent role in our region.

[Back to Contents](#)

Social Justice

Preamble

The key to social justice is recognition and action to support the rights of all people. All people have equal economic, social and cultural rights, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, class, religion, disability, sexuality or membership of a minority group. Everyone should have the opportunity for personal development and be able to fully participate in society without discrimination. A more equitable distribution of resources should eliminate poverty.

Australia's diversity is to be respected and reflected in our social institutions. In particular, we recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a unique relationship with the land, and their rights and obligations as custodians must be respected.

The Australian Greens aim to develop a culturally rich, participatory and equitable society that enables the flourishing of progressive change and the promotion of an ecologically sustainable future.

Policies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Arts and Culture

Children and Young People Disability

Drugs, Substance Abuse and Addiction Early

Childhood Education and Care Education

Health

Housing

Immigration and Refugees

Older People

Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity Social

Services

Sport and Physical Recreation

Women



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The Australian Constitution must recognise the prior occupation and sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a strong cultural and spiritual connection with the land and waters and their rights and obligations as owners and custodians must be respected.
3. Australia must comply with international agreements and laws that recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to self determination and political representation, and must be partners in the development and implementation of public policies, programs and services that affect them.
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to retain, and benefit financially from, the cultural and intellectual property and heritage rights invested in traditional knowledge and in the biodiversity of their own lands and waters, in accordance with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.
6. Where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been dispossessed from their lands and waters, they have a right to redress through measures that assist them to acquire, own and/or manage their land and waters in a way that enhances their social, cultural, spiritual, economic and environmental wellbeing.
7. All Australians, including those living in remote communities, have an equal right to essential government services such as health, education, training, housing, community infrastructure, employment support, and policing.
8. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should have the same life expectancy and living standards as other Australians.
9. Australian governments must recognise the continuing effect of past treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and provide restitution to the stolen generations.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. A treaty that recognises the prior occupation and sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be enshrined in the constitution.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

11. Government institutions' policies which respect the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination, improvement of their social and economic conditions, to participate in decisions that affect them and to freely determine their development policies.
12. Protection for cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including their right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs, including language, and to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures.
13. Equality of access to essential services and development opportunities.
14. Equality of outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on all major indicators of education, training, housing, community safety, employment and living standards within a decade, and to fully close the gap in health outcomes in 25 years within a framework which acknowledges the diverse aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
15. Culturally appropriate and community controlled health, housing and infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
16. Increased resources in both community-controlled health services and mainstream health services and prioritization of programs to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's health.
17. Family violence and abuse addressed through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community initiatives and networks, alcohol and other substance abuse initiatives, Aboriginal Women's Legal Services, and safe houses.
18. Genuine opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and enterprise development in remote, rural and urban communities.
19. Culturally appropriate education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which incorporates language and culture into curricula and supports families and children to engage with the education system.
20. An education system which enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to establish and control their own education systems where they choose to do so, in their own language, consistent with their culture.
21. Support for and recognition of the establishment and operation of appropriate local and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies elected by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all levels of government and other decision making roles.
22. Culturally appropriate services and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on local language, cultural aspects and community priorities. These services to employ qualified community members where possible.
23. Qualified local-language and cultural interpreters available in courts, hospitals, clinics, and government meetings when needed.
24. Youth programs to be treated as an essential service in remote communities.
25. Rescinding of the Stronger Futures legislation.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

26. The compulsory quarantining of income support revoked and any other measures which directly and indirectly discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
27. Fair compensation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples where property has been taken from them or wages have been withheld.
28. Effective heritage protection laws and bodies that:
 - a) protect all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage including intellectual property;
 - b) respect customary law restrictions;
 - c) guarantee access to significant sites by people with cultural connections to the site;
 - d) ensure that heritage decisions are made by the relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
 - e) ensure items of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage are returned to their rightful owners and custodians.
29. A fair and effective native title system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which is consistent with international human rights law.
30. The rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to sustainably hunt, fish and gather native flora and fauna in line with traditional cultural practice.
31. Full implementation of the recommendations of the following:
 - a) Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (1997);
 - b) The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991);
 - c) The NT Coroner's (1998, 2002), WA Coroner's (2004) and SA Coroner's (2002, 2005) reports on petrol sniffing related deaths;
 - d) The Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle (Little Children are Sacred) Report into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (2007);
 - e) The HREOC Social Justice Reports The Senate Community Affairs Committee reports into: petrol sniffing (2006 and 2009); Suicide (2010) and Hearing (2010); and
 - f) Report on the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (1996 'The Evatt Review')with the Social Justice Commissioner to be responsible for the monitoring and reporting on the progress of implementation as part of annual reporting.
32. Comprehensive strategies to address the impacts of climate change on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
33. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in regional and remote areas to achieve and sustain food security.
34. Long-term, re-current, sustainable funding for a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Land and Sea Ranger Program for IPA's and NT determined areas.

[Back to Contents](#)



Arts and Culture

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Artistic expression and cultural engagement are fundamental aspects of social wellbeing.
2. Access to diverse and innovative artistic and cultural experiences should be available to all Australians.
3. Australian artistic expression, culture, works and institutions should be protected and promoted both within Australia and overseas.
4. Australian artists play an essential role in our nation's cultural life and should be fostered and supported.
5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and their work represent cultures and heritage which are unique to Australia and must be supported, respected and appropriately protected through legislation, policy and funding priorities.
6. Australia's cultural heritage must be protected and preserved.
7. National libraries and collecting institutions are essential to our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world, and must be maintained and developed as the primary custodians of our cultural heritage.
8. Specialist artistic education and training programs provide a unique learning environment for aspiring artists and should be well funded and resourced.
9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage including language, knowledge, rituals and stories must be recognised and preserved.
10. The National Curriculum must provide all Australian children with a rich and varied arts education.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

11. Australian arts and culture to maintain its unique character and diverse nature through support and promotion of local content and the development of local projects for all forms of art and culture.
12. An integrated approach to arts and culture policies and programs that encourages cross-portfolio awareness of their broad social and economic benefits.
13. A national cultural policy that supports and encourages the development of local arts policies and programs and promotes access to arts and cultural events.
14. A greater recognition of the role of local government in the development of arts and cultural policies.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Arts and Culture (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Increased access to arts and cultural experiences in rural and regional areas and in areas of social and economic disadvantage.
16. The support and promotion of arts and culture that reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian population.
17. Artists' intellectual property rights to be protected.
18. The Australia Council, as the principal independent body for policy development and administration of arts grants programs, to invest in a greater diversity of artists, communities, and art forms; and to prioritise the development of innovative and creative cultural contexts.
19. More programs supporting emerging artists, such as the introduction of a fixed income support scheme and better access to small business start-up grants and schemes.
20. Australia to sign and ratify the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003.
21. To ensure that any trade agreement or other international instrument does not adversely affect Australian artists and cultural expression.
22. The inclusion of culture infrastructure to be required in the development of greenfield sites.
23. Improved access and participation opportunities in Arts and Culture activities for people with disabilities.
24. To support the expansion of the Artbank art rental program with a focus on emerging artists.
25. To ensure that the national retail royalty scheme applies to the resale of all existing artworks and that Australian artists can access resale royalty schemes in other countries.
26. To recognise the important role private sponsorship and philanthropy play in the arts and commit to continue supporting it.

[Back to Contents](#)



Children and Young People

Policy Category: **Social Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Children and young people have a right to a loving and nurturing environment which is free of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.
2. To reach their full potential and live a healthy life, children and young people should have access to resources, education and opportunities for personal growth, lifelong learning, and participation in decision making about their lives.
3. All children and young people have a right to access appropriate services regardless of where they live or the socio-economic status of their parents.
4. Prevention strategies play a significant role in setting children and young people up for lifelong success and giving them a good start in life. The development and implementation of policies and strategies which emphasise prevention and early intervention reduce future harm to people and in the long term is cost saving to society.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

5. Funding programs, service delivery and decisions regarding child protection to be consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
6. Through the National Children's Commissioner and other federal or state/territory initiatives such as appropriately resourced youth advisory committees, to ensure that children and young people have the means to express themselves to their community and at all levels of government.
7. Greater national and state coordination in children and youth policy formulation.
8. Adequate and secure allowance income for young people to enable full participation in education and training opportunities.
9. Improved education and secure, satisfying, employment opportunities for young people, including in remote, rural and regional areas.
10. Affordable, accessible and secure housing options for young people.
11. A reduction in the rates of suicide and mental illness among children and young people through adequate funding for mental health services.
12. Adequately funded children's and young people's services particularly for addressing mental illness, youth suicide, disability or special care and protection needs.
13. Electoral laws to allow voluntary voting for people aged 16 and 17.
14. A national youth affairs peak body with elected and representative members.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Children and Young People (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. The promotion of healthy food, including a ban on junk food advertising on children's television.
16. An increased investment in programs that focus on community awareness, prevention and reporting of abuse against children and young people.
17. Well-funded high quality services for child survivors of abuse and neglect.
18. Development of new, and improvement of existing, education and preventive health programs for children and young people.
19. To increase programs and services to redress inequitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

[Back to Contents](#)



Disability

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. All people have a right to independence, self-determination and choice in their lives. Disability policy and law is therefore a matter of human rights, as well as individual health and well-being.
2. People who experience physical, intellectual, cognitive and/or psychiatric disability, and their families and carers, have the right to actively participate in all levels of policy, service planning and delivery and evaluation, including their own.
3. There are a variety of medical, societal, environmental and cultural reasons why people's individual abilities differ; society has a responsibility to accommodate this diversity and remove barriers to equitable access for all.
4. It is a responsibility of governments to ensure substantive equality and equal opportunity, to promote attitudinal change, and to provide funding to ensure this in all areas including education, health, housing, mobility, employment, transport and sport, cultural and social engagement.
5. Australians should develop and maintain a culture of support for, understanding of, and respect for people with disabilities.
6. There must be adequate, ongoing, fully indexed funding for high quality, lifetime care and support for people with a disability, which is sufficient to meet their needs, regardless of how or where the person acquired a disability or where they live.
7. Care and support for people with a disability should be accessible, individualised, self-directed and age-appropriate.
8. Society should be free of harassment, abuse, vilification, stigmatisation, discrimination, disadvantage or exploitation on the basis of disability.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

9. Full opportunity for people to participate in all aspects of life, including education, training and employment, regardless of ability, taking account of specific needs.
10. The establishment of an ongoing and fully funded national disability scheme that provides lifetime care and support to people living with disability, regardless of how they acquired their disability or where they live.
11. Access for people to appropriate facilities and support in order to undertake their chosen activities regardless of ability.
12. Strong and well-funded individual and systemic disability advocacy services.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Disability (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

13. Access to free legal advice and advocacy where disability limits the individual's capacity to put their case forward.
14. Community education programs to promote public awareness of human diversity, disability issues, and reduced discrimination affecting people with a disability.
15. A guaranteed and adequate income for people with a disability and their carers to cover living, medical, transport, equipment and accommodation costs and support services.
16. Greater national legislative protection for people with a disability including giving the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) greater powers in discrimination complaints, and the ability to initiate complaints to enable systemic change and lessen the onus on individuals to make complaints.
17. Implementation of stronger national access standards.
18. Adequate funding for high quality, age-appropriate care for people with very high or complex care needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities.
19. Sufficient respite care services and facilities, in-home and emergency support, crisis accommodation and a range of accommodation options.
20. Pathways that support school leavers with disability to make the transition from school into meaningful employment, educational and vocational programs or other community-based activities.
21. Improved pay, conditions, support and career structures for workers living with disabilities.
22. Workforce improvements driven through the provision of training, development and personal support for disability support workers.
23. The extension of anti-vilification laws to include vilification on the basis of disability.

[Back to Contents](#)



Drugs, Substance Abuse and Addiction

Policy Category: **Social Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. The use of all drugs, including illegal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and pharmaceuticals, has the potential to cause harm to the individual and to the community.
2. The response to illegal drug use is best addressed within a health and social framework.
3. A harm minimisation approach is the most appropriate way to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of drug use, for the individual user and the community.
4. Policy and programs should be adopted that are evidence-based and subject to continuous evaluation.
5. All Australians with a substance abuse problem should have access to a range of evidence-based and regularly evaluated treatment and recovery services.
6. Information and education programs should be available to enable informed debate about the effects of all drugs, including prescription, non-prescription, legal and illegal drugs.
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities must control, to the greatest extent possible, the development and management of harm minimisation policies and treatment and recovery programs in their communities.

Illicit Drugs

8. The Australian Greens do not support the legalisation of currently illegal drugs.
9. There should be greater funding for demand and harm reduction.
10. The individual use of illegal drugs should not fall within the criminal framework.

Alcohol

11. The costs to the community of alcohol abuse are enormous, and include negative health effects, traffic deaths, violence and domestic abuse.

Tobacco

12. Active and passive consumption of tobacco smoke is a demonstrated health risk and is a significant cost to the community and health.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

13. A reduction in harmful substance abuse, including smoking rates that are close to zero and alcohol consumption patterns that are within the limits recommended by public health experts.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Drugs, Substance Abuse and Addiction (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. The cost to government and the community of regulating drug use to be reduced with improved health and social outcomes.
15. Improved effectiveness of all management, treatment and other regulatory and judicial responses to drug use in the community, to maximise harm reduction, supply reduction and demand reduction, and to improve health and social outcomes.
16. Universal access to drug and alcohol treatment programs for those in need.
17. An increase in public dissemination of scientifically rigorous information on the risks and safe use of licit and illicit drugs.
18. The regulated use of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) for specified medical purposes, such as intractable pain.
19. Increased availability of harm reduction programs including drug-substitution therapy, medically supervised injecting rooms, and widely accessible supply of clean needles, including in prisons.
20. Public funding of drug substitution treatment and its distribution.
21. The removal of legal barriers to both research and the evidence-based management of substance-abuse and other medical conditions, where considered necessary by the public health community.
22. Severe penalties for driving under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs that impair cognitive or psychomotor skills.
23. To address the problem of inhalant misuse by supporting the rollout of measures, such as non-sniffable fuel throughout regions of Australia where petrol sniffing is a problem, as well as associated diversionary and rehabilitation programs.
24. To support research trials and evaluation of policy and treatment programs.
25. To extend the range of counselling and treatment programs covered by Medicare.

Illicit Drugs

26. Maintenance of criminal penalties for drug dealers, and introduction of a system of civil sanctions for personal use of illicit drugs, when not associated with other crimes, including measures such as education, counselling and treatment, rather than criminal penalties.
27. Increased availability of diversion to rehabilitation and treatment and recovery programs as a sentencing alternative for people convicted of crimes committed to support a personal addiction to drugs.
28. Improved communication between relevant agencies and local communities to address problems associated with harmful drug use.

Alcohol

29. No advertising promotions of alcohol in sport, that target young people, or encourage excessive drinking.
30. All alcoholic beverages to be taxed based on alcohol content rather than value.

Tobacco

31. A ban on financial donations from the tobacco and alcohol industries to political parties and candidates.
32. Australia to lead the world in reducing the consumption of tobacco products.
33. Increased assistance to support programs to quit tobacco, and treatment strategies for nicotine addiction.
34. To reduce the effects of passive smoking, by disallowing smoking in defined public spaces.

[Back to Contents](#)



Early Childhood Education and Care

Policy Category: **Social Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Care for children is the responsibility of society as a whole. The quality of care received by babies and children produces flow-on effects for the whole of their lives and the community.
2. The needs of Australian families are diverse. Families should be able to access high-quality, affordable childcare and early childhood educational experiences to care for their children.
3. Positive, interactive learning and socialisation opportunities offered by childcare can benefit children and the community by assisting a smooth transition to formal education.
4. All carers of children should have the opportunity to re-enter or maintain their engagement in the workforce.
5. Childcare should be a not-for-profit service.
6. People working in the childcare sector should be fairly remunerated for the work they do.
7. Families should have diversity in their choice of childcare alternatives within easy access, including via public transport, to the home and workplace.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. Increased and targeted funding for community-based and not-for-profit child care facilities, especially in areas of high unmet demand or growth and areas of high socio-economic need.
9. Increased access to publicly funded childcare for carers of children on low and middle incomes who are working or undertaking training or education.
10. Reform of the commonwealth support for childcare to ensure improved affordability of childcare for low and middle income families, including parents and carers who are studying.
11. A pay rate for childcare workers that reflects the skill level required in, and the importance of, childcare work.
12. Greater assistance for a national planning system for childcare services, including a national demand model for childcare service planning.
13. Improved professional development opportunities and professional standards for childcare workers.
14. Comprehensive and transparent reporting requirements across the childcare sector.
15. Increased financial assistance for childcare centre programs that offer flexible hours and occasional childcare in what has become an increasingly flexible workplace.

[Back to Contents](#)



Education

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Education is principally a public good.
2. Differences in educational outcomes should not be the result of differences in wealth, income, power, possessions or location.
3. Universal access to high quality education is fundamental to Australia's economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, well-being and social fulfilment.
4. All people are entitled to free, well-funded and high quality, life-long public education and training.
5. The government has a primary responsibility to fund all levels of the public education system - early childhood education, schools, vocational education and training and universities - to provide high quality education to all students.
6. Federal funding to the education system, including both the public and private sectors, should be on the basis of need and equity to ensure that all Australian children have the opportunity to fulfil their best educational outcomes.
7. Federal schools funding policy should prioritise the public education system to ensure that public schools are able to provide the highest quality educational experiences and set the educational standards for the nation.
8. Decision making in education should be open to input from teachers and academics and their unions, and parents and students.
9. The salaries and conditions of teachers, early childhood educators and other educators should be set at a level that recognises their professionalism, training and the importance of their work, provides secure career structures, and encourages committed and capable people into the teaching profession at all levels of the education system.
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's educational outcomes should match the rest of the Australian population.
11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should be able to exercise meaningful control over the design and delivery of educational services for their children and other community members.
12. Early childhood education is a critical component of lifelong learning and should be provided by government and accredited community organizations and not-for profit providers.
13. A publicly owned and properly funded TAFE system plays an essential role in providing economic prosperity and a socially just society by offering lifelong educational opportunities and skills development to a broad range of our community.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Education (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

14. Vocational education and training (VET) should be primarily provided through the public TAFE system while the community and not-for-profit VET sector should also be supported.
15. Universities are places of learning and research where the needs of the whole community and the values of service to the public, scholarship and academic freedom should take priority over sectional and commercial interests.
16. Full-time university and VET students are entitled to a living allowance that enables them to focus primarily on their studies.
17. Education unions are the appropriate representatives of educators in all educational matters.
18. Competition between schools based on narrow measures of performance is not an effective way to improve Australia's education outcomes.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

19. A public school system that is recognised as among the best in the world.
20. Schools funding provided on the basis of equity and need.
21. Funding levels based on a transparent standard that recognises the real cost of educating students to a high level. Public schools must be fully funded at this level, including the full cost of addressing disadvantage.
22. Recognising that the substantial growth in federal funding to non-government schools has had an adverse impact on public education, any funding to non-government schools:
 - a) to be set so that total public subsidy to the non-government sector does not advantage private education at the expense of public education; and
 - b) to take into account the resources of each individual school, a direct measure of parental socio-economic status, and the school's capacity to generate income from all sources, including fees and other contributions.
23. The money saved from ending the public funding of those very wealthy non-government schools, which would not receive government funding under such a model, reinvested into public schools with the highest proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
24. Increased funding to public education through funding models for all sectors of the education system that prioritise public education.
25. To ensure that the viability and diversity of existing public schools is not endangered by the development of new private schools.
26. The same accountability and transparency frameworks for public funding to be required of non-government schools as are required of government schools, including:
 - a) non-discrimination in the hiring of staff;
 - b) non-discrimination in the selection of students, and an admissions and expulsions policies similar to government schools, including an obligation to enrol;

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Education (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

- c) provision of all information necessary to calculate the income the school has the capacity to generate from fees and all other sources; and
 - d) accounting for their use of public funds.
27. Public education infrastructure to be adequately funded for capital works and maintenance to create an optimal learning environment whilst meeting the highest environmental sustainability standards.
 28. Where public education infrastructure and land is sold because of changing demand, the proceeds to be redirected into a fund for the construction of new public schools and buildings.
 29. Public education infrastructure and land to remain in public ownership and control.
 30. Smaller class sizes throughout the public education system to achieve manageable workloads for all educators and the best educational outcomes for all students.
 31. More teachers to educate children with special needs, in schools that suffer socioeconomic disadvantage and schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 32. An increase in specialist teachers and support services for students and pre-school children with special needs, including those with a disability or a learning difficulty.
 33. Rejection of performance based pay for school teachers and other educators, as it undermines the cooperative environment that is essential to achieving the best educational outcomes, cannot be fairly implemented, discriminates against disadvantaged schools and students, and places downward pressure on overall pay and conditions.
 34. Increased pay, professional recognition, improved pre-and-in service training and increased release time for the development of, and participation in professional learning communities.
 35. Increased support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
 36. Increased support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds.
 37. Inclusion of the history, culture and contemporary experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the school curriculum, and in the training and professional development of all teachers.
 38. Decisions about curriculum, testing, reporting and teaching to be made in consultation with appropriate educational experts, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders.
 39. Increased resource allocation for the teaching of community languages in public primary and secondary schools, and well-resourced centres for the study of community languages and trade-specific English language courses.
 40. Support for schools in the provision of high quality information to parents and the community and an end to the public ranking of schools in league tables.
 41. Schools and curriculum material free from corporate sponsorship and influence including the use of sponsors' material or logos.
 42. Education funding across all sectors that does not include or promote competition, privatisation, outsourcing, and other market based mechanisms; and that rejects:

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Education (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

- a) the use of funding vouchers for schools;
 - b) competitive tendering and entitlement-based funding for TAFE; and
 - c) demand-driven and entitlement-based funding for universities,
noting that such mechanisms undermine standards and integrity and do not further the complex policy objectives of our education system.
43. Governments to have overall responsibility for public school finances and staffing, because inappropriate devolution of decision making can:
- a) shift blame for funding constraints more easily to individual school principals rather than government;
 - b) undermine a system-wide transfer system that rewards teachers who are prepared to teach in more challenging environments;
 - c) increase negative competition between schools and result in the entrenchment of school disadvantage in some geographic locations;
 - d) open up the way for privatisation of key aspects of our public schools.
44. To redirect funding for the National School Chaplaincy and School Welfare Program, or equivalent program, to increase funding and support for qualified school welfare and family support professionals in public schools.
45. Home schooling options for parents to educate their children if they meet requirements to provide a balanced education, core educational outcomes and social interaction with peers.
46. No government funding for schools that operate for private profit.
47. VET funding priorities which balance student needs, employment demand, and providing skills in satisfying and sustainable employment.
48. To phase out public funding of privately provided VET where TAFE can provide the same educational and training outcomes.
49. To address the over-casualisation of TAFE teaching by introducing a benchmark of 80 percent of teaching by permanent staff throughout public and private VET providers.
50. A substantial increase in the availability of apprenticeships, in rural and regional Australia and other locations where there is a shortage.
51. Educators to have a key role in developing and reviewing training packages.
52. A fee and charges free TAFE system, where income contingent loans are unnecessary and the Commonwealth government increases its contribution to the costs of a high quality accessible system.
53. Improved access to comprehensive publicly provided tertiary education for rural, regional and remote communities.
54. Increased funding to the tertiary sector and maintenance of sufficient student places to meet the demand of suitably qualified applicants.
55. An increase in the cost-index per-student funding of all public universities, and adequate funding to all rural, regional and outer-suburban universities.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Education (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

56. Free university education for Australian students by immediately reducing and progressively phasing out fees for educational services and significantly reforming the existing regime for the repayment of HECS debts and FEE-HELP debts at public universities.
57. Internationally competitive conditions for academic staff.
58. Legislation for elected staff and student representatives on university governing bodies and increased democratic participation by academics, staff, students and community representatives in the decision-making processes within universities.
59. Affirmative action entrance provisions, residential programs and ongoing assistance to improve university entrance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
60. Recognition of the rights of academics to be supported in developing and maintaining their pursuit of research.
61. Increased funding for pure and public-outcomes research to ensure that adequate resources are being directed towards this sector of the research community.
62. The student amenities fee to be collected and spent by democratically elected, student-controlled organisations in order to ensure the best and fairest provision of student services on university campuses.

[Back to Contents](#)



Health

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Access to quality health care is a basic human right.
2. Individual health outcomes are influenced by the inter-relationship of biological, social, economic and environmental factors.
3. Governments are responsible for ensuring that all people have access to the resources and opportunities essential for good health.
4. Preventive approaches, measures to alleviate social disadvantage, and universal access to an effective health care system are necessary to address inequities in health outcomes.
5. An effective health system must be based on primary health care and preventive health care measures, such as health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction and early intervention, in order to manage chronic disease, reduce ill-health and avoidable hospital admissions.
6. The publicly-funded health system is the most equitable and efficient way to resource and deliver health services.
7. The health system must be focussed on individual and social wellbeing.
8. People have the right to participate individually and collectively in the planning and implementation of their health care.
9. An effective health care system is dependent upon a skilled, well-resourced workforce.
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should have health outcomes and life expectancy equal to other Australians.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

11. A universal publicly-funded health care system for all Australians.
12. Medicare to remain a universal health insurance system funded from progressive taxation.
13. Universal access to publicly funded primary dental care.
14. Primary care and prevention services that provide first contact, community-based care.
15. Adequate access to bulk-billing GPs across Australia and greater access to healthcare delivered in locally run community health centres.
16. Health funding that supports preventive care and health promotion, multidisciplinary teams and networks, and co-located services.
17. Adequately funded mental health services, including adequately resourced services for the prevention and early detection of mental illness and suicide, and hospital and community-based assessment and support services.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Health (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

18. Health planning that meets the increasing demands resulting from climate change and pandemics and includes a systematic approach to addressing the social determinants of health, shared across all areas of government.
19. A properly resourced Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme free from political interference.
20. The membership of regulatory bodies, such as the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, to be made up of independent scientific experts, clinically based health care advisors and consumer representatives, in order to provide independence from undue influence.
21. Well-funded preventive health programs which include appropriate screening activities and healthy lifestyle education.
22. The promotion of healthy choices, including a ban on junk food advertising on children's television.
23. Further restrictions on the marketing and promotion of pharmaceuticals to health professionals, including undergraduates.
24. Accessible, culturally-appropriate and community-controlled health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that will raise their health status to a level comparable to other Australians.
25. Measures that facilitate the training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and migrant health professionals at the needed levels.
26. Improved access to health professionals in rural and remote areas.
27. Access for all women to legal, free and safe pregnancy termination services, including unbiased counselling, and access for all women to a full range of birthing services.
28. An improved food labelling system that is comprehensively enforced and mandates full contents and nutritional disclosure and allows only verified health and nutritional claims.
29. Expanded community-based support services and agencies to enable people with chronic mental and/or physical illnesses, and their carers, to live in and participate more fully in their communities.
30. A comprehensive program of research into cost-effective care and prevention and a rigorous system for the assessment, approval, regulation and marketing of pharmaceuticals, therapeutic goods, medical devices and other health technology.
31. A more effective national approach to the prevention of work and road related accidents and provision of injury rehabilitation services.
32. Redirection of funds from subsidising private health insurance to the public health system, including public hospitals.

[Back to Contents](#)



Housing

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Affordable housing is a human right.
2. Access to secure, appropriate, affordable housing is a crucial determinant of health and well-being and is an important precondition for social participation and gaining access to other social services.
3. The housing needs of low income Australians should be met through the provision of a mix of affordable options, including community housing, community land trusts, public housing, shared equity with social housing providers and private rental housing.
4. Governments should provide sufficient public and community housing to meet current need and projected demand.
5. New urban developments should be environmentally sound, close to employment and public transport, and should facilitate community interaction.
6. Public participation in the planning, assessment and development of public and community housing is a right, the exercise of which should be encouraged by planning authorities.
7. The housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be met as a matter of urgency.
8. All housing development should be based on principles of sustainable design and urban planning.
9. Existing subsidies and incentives for property investment should be reviewed with a view to guaranteeing housing affordability across all tenure types.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. The elimination of housing-related poverty.
11. A commitment to the provision of supportive housing for homelessness, which emphasises independent housing solutions in preference to temporary and emergency ones.
12. Australians who are unable to provide their own housing to be given housing assistance by the government.
13. Minimal waiting times on public housing waiting lists and urgent and sufficient funding to reduce current waiting lists for public and community housing.
14. Public housing that is accessible, affordable, secure, habitable and in locations that provide reasonable access to employment, health-care, public transport, schools and other social facilities.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Housing (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Adequate investment in public and community housing throughout the community to ensure its social and economic viability.
16. Participation by tenants and homeless persons in decisions regarding their housing services.
17. A reduction in the environmental impact of housing, both during construction and throughout the life of the building, including for new and old buildings to meet high minimum standards of durability, energy efficiency, noise insulation and water conservation.
18. Priority given in town planning to recreational, cultural and social amenities that promote healthy communities.
19. Greater diversity in housing to meet the accessibility needs of changing demographics and disadvantaged groups.
20. Increased provision of emergency accommodation and transitional housing for people in need (including women and children affected by family violence, people experiencing homelessness, refugees and asylum seekers, migrants and people released from detention) with sufficient exit options to long term housing.
21. Improved legal security of tenure and reduced discrimination.
22. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have access to adequate, secure, well-maintained, safe and culturally appropriate long-term housing, wherever they live.
23. National planning guidelines for new housing developments that require:
 - a) a social mix of public and private housing with a minimum target of 20% affordable and public housing, and housing that caters for diverse social and cultural needs;
 - b) a revised national rating system that takes into account the best international standards for efficiency and sustainability;
 - c) privacy and noise controls;
 - d) permeable road networks allowing for bus access;
 - e) segregated bicycle paths and footpaths;
 - f) landscaping, design and infrastructure for rainwater trapping, food production and wastewater recycling; and
 - g) at least 15% of the development area to be allocated to public open space in addition to community facilities.
24. National building standards that:
 - a) take account of climatic variation across the continent;
 - b) strengthen disability access provisions;
 - c) set high standards for energy and water efficiency including passive thermal heating and cooling design;
 - d) specify minimum standards for non-toxic, low environmental impact construction material;
 - e) make special provision for experimental housing that fosters innovation and the above aims.
25. National urban planning guidelines that provide for:

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Housing (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

- a) the location of high density housing and commercial buildings close to high capacity public transport; and
- b) the clustering of medium-density housing, community facilities and small-scale businesses around neighbourhood shopping centres and other social facilities (including health care and schooling) linked with public transport.

[Back to Contents](#)



Immigration and Refugees

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Australia's cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity should be celebrated for greatly enriching our society and economy, and this diversity is enhanced by the immigration of people to Australia.
2. Immigration must be non-discriminatory on the grounds of nationality, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, disability, sexuality, age or socioeconomic background.
3. Australia must enact its humanitarian and legal obligations to asylum seekers and refugees and reunite families under the international customary law and the Refugee Convention 1951 and its Protocol.
4. Seeking asylum is a humanitarian issue rather than an issue of border security or defence, and people seeking asylum must be treated with compassion and dignity.
5. As signatory to the Refugee Convention Australia must assess the applications of all asylum seekers who arrive in Australian territory, including territorial waters, irrespective of their mode of arrival.
6. Australia has additional responsibilities to refugees from countries where Australian defence personnel have been deployed in conflict situations.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. A permanent migration program for Australia that prioritises family reunion and facilitates migration or resettlement to Australia within a reasonable time.
8. The development of networks, materials and programs that increase community understanding of the causes and benefits of migration.
9. Sufficient funding for public and community sector agencies providing migrant-specific services to deliver adequate, effective and timely support.
10. Skilled migration programs that do not substitute for training or undermine wages and conditions in Australia.
11. Consistent, timely and fair processes to assess the qualifications of skilled migrants permanently settling in Australia.
12. Recognition that unaccompanied children have special needs that require a separate approach to the adult system.
13. No family unit to be forcibly separated by Australian immigration assessment processes.
14. Greater incentives for rural and regional distribution of refugees and immigrants using successful models for settlement.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Immigration and Refugees (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Incorporation of relevant international conventions in immigration law to ensure that there is an avenue for complaint when these rights are breached.
16. Any appointment to tribunals to be independently made in accordance with a predefined formula of civil society representation and legal expertise.
17. Services for new migrants and refugees that include appropriate English language classes, social security, health, legal and interpreter services, and post-trauma counselling where needed.
18. Greatly enhanced regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific to provide safer pathways for asylum seekers, with long-term planning to accommodate people displaced by on-going conflicts and climate change.
19. Australia to adopt a definition of environmental refugee in its assessment criteria and to work in the UN system for inclusion of a definition in the Refugee Convention.
20. Australia to show leadership in our region by fostering international cooperation on protecting asylum seekers and refugees, founded on shared responsibility according to capacity, and by encouraging all nations to sign and ratify the Refugee Convention.
21. Australia to adequately contribute to the funding of and work closely with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and other agencies assisting in the movement of asylum seekers, refugees and displaced people.
22. An increase in the humanitarian quota, and offshore quotas fulfilled without reference or linkage to any onshore arrivals or other programs.
23. Restoration of the Australian migration zone to match Australia's territory and acceptance of responsibility for assessing all asylum claims of people who seek Australia's protection within the migration zone.
24. Asylum seekers to be fully informed of their rights on arrival and given immediate access to legal assistance.
25. The current system of humanitarian visas (granted only by ministerial discretion) to be replaced with an open, accountable humanitarian visa assessment.
26. Assessment of applications for asylum completed in a timely and transparent manner.
27. The elimination of mandatory and/or indefinite detention and the abolition of offshore processing (where an asylum seeker or refugee is returned from Australian territory to another nation to be assessed) and other forms of punitive or discriminatory treatment of asylum seekers and refugees.
28. Once initial health, security and identity checks are completed within a maximum of 30 days, asylum seekers who arrive without a valid visa to be accommodated in the community, unless otherwise ordered by a court, with periodic judicial review thereafter.
29. All people categorised as refugees, but given negative security assessments by ASIO, to be given reasons for such assessment and the opportunity to challenge this in the appropriate forum.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Immigration and Refugees (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

30. Asylum seekers to have work rights, and access to social security, legal representation, interpreters, health services, case management, and appropriate education for the duration of their assessment.
31. Where an asylum seeker is not found to be owed protection, provision of fair and appropriate accommodation until they can be repatriated. Where a person is stateless, provision of accommodation in the community until they are issued with a visa or another durable solution is found.

[Back to Contents](#)



Older People

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Older people have the right to live with dignity.
2. The skills and life experience of older people benefit the whole community and the economy
3. Older people have an equal right to participate in social, economic and political aspects of life and to maintain their independence to whatever degree they feel able.
4. All older Australians are entitled to a decent income.
5. The federal government must play a central role in the provision, regulation and support of aged care services.
6. Older Australians, their carers and families should have the right to choose appropriate and affordable care services that meet their needs and maintain their dignity, independence and quality of life.
7. Access to high quality, appropriate health and aged care services should be on the basis of need and not the ability to pay or the place of residence.
8. A life course approach to Active Ageing should form the basis of national policy, based on World Health Organisation (WHO) Active Ageing principles including wellness, age-friendly environments, availability and accessibility of effective health care, and active participation in all aspects of community life.
9. Australia's diverse community calls for a range of ways to support older people to age in line with their beliefs, culture and their chosen support network.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

10. The federal government to introduce a mechanism to address systemic age discrimination.
11. A decent income for all older people, including an adequate age pension.
12. A range of affordable, appropriate and secure accommodation options, including public and social housing, to be available for older people, including those in regional and rural Australia.
13. A high quality aged care system characterised by quality support, nursing and personal care, with safe and comfortable surroundings for older people whether in residential, home or hospital care.
14. Appropriate aged care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
15. Appropriate support services for older people who choose to remain in their own homes, including community care programs and home modification.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Older People (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

16. Adequate support for carers of older people, including respite services, access to information, income support and tax benefits.
17. Increased funding to enhance the numbers, skills and salaries of staff in the aged care sector.
18. The needs of older persons included in urban planning and design – ranging from universal design standards for adaptable housing to accessible transport and community facilities.
19. Expansion of community based education for older people and improved mechanisms that support older workers to take up skilling and educational opportunities.
20. Improved employment outcomes for older Australians, through:
 - flexible work arrangements;
 - skills development;
 - development and implementation of older worker employment strategies;
 - embedding of age diversity within workforces; and
 - modelling best practice on attracting, developing, and retaining older workers.
21. State and territory governments to amend workers' compensation regimes (including incapacity payments) to ensure older workers are not disadvantaged.
22. Availability and affordability of insurance for senior Australians, including insurance for volunteers and travel insurance.
23. Investment in leading research and practice to minimise the impacts of dementia on older people, their families and their communities.
24. Investment in facilitating older people to plan ahead, e.g. confirming enduring guardians, enduring financial managers and advanced care directives.
25. A focus on early intervention and preventive health to help older Australians maintain their mobility, well-being and participation, and reduce demand for health services.

[Back to Contents](#)



Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity

Policy Category: **Social Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Freedom of sex, sexuality and gender identity are fundamental human rights.
2. Acceptance and celebration of diversity are essential for genuine social justice and equality.
3. People have the right to their self-identified gender which is integral to people's lived experiences as citizens and members of the community.
4. Discrimination and vilification on the basis of sex, sexuality and gender identity is a significant cause of psychological distress, mental illness and suicide.
5. The health needs of all Australians should be provided for without discrimination of any kind; everyone has the right to have their specific health needs met with equity and respect.
6. Society should be free of harassment, abuse, vilification, stigmatisation, discrimination, disadvantage or exploitation on the basis of the actual or assumed sex, sexuality or gender identity of a person or someone they are associated with.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

7. The legalisation of marriage between two consenting adults regardless of sex, sexuality or gender identity.
8. All de facto relationships to have equal status in law and government policy regardless of sex, sexuality and gender identity.
9. Equal access, regardless of sex, sexuality and gender identity and marital status, to adoption and fostering, and assisted reproductive treatment.
10. The education system to provide age-appropriate information about the diversity of sexuality.
11. Access to the full range of medical and health services required by people with needs related to their sex, sexuality and gender identity.
12. Accurate information, appropriate referrals and counselling for individuals, parents and carers of young people, in relation to issues of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity.
13. Accurate information, appropriate referrals and counselling from the intersex community for intersex people and their parents and carers.
14. To ensure that intersex and transgender people are able to alter their sex on all official documents, consistent with how they live and identify, and irrespective of their marital status.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

15. Permanent medical intervention for people born with an intersex condition to occur only when they are able to make the decision for themselves, unless it is determined to be in the best interest of the child based on cogent medical reasons.
16. Governments and their agencies to consult with communities and representative groups of people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, on the development of policies and programs relevant to them.
17. Nationally consistent age of consent laws, in which there is no distinction between heterosexual and homosexual sex.
18. The removal of convictions for homosexual acts between consenting adults from legal records. Where a person has been charged under laws in the past against homosexual acts, that are now legal, this should be removed from the criminal record.
19. Legislative action to end the incitement of offensive and indecent behaviour.
20. Adequate funding for services to support and protect young people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities; in particular, suicide prevention, peer support, coming out, counselling and housing services and programs.
21. The granting of political asylum on humanitarian grounds to people persecuted in their own countries on the basis of their sex, sexuality or gender identity.

[Back to Contents](#)



Social Services

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. A socially just, democratic and sustainable society rests on the provision of a guaranteed adequate income for all its citizens.
2. Everyone has the right to access adequate resources to allow them to fully participate in society.
3. Australian citizens should be able to access leading housing, health, education and social services and support to meet their needs.
4. The Australian community and social services sector plays a significant role in creating inclusive communities and should be appropriately resourced to deliver evidence-based social services.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

5. The eradication of poverty in Australia.
6. Development and adoption of a comprehensive set of tools to measure poverty across the range of communities in Australia.
7. A shift in community and government attitudes, to recognise the systemic causes of poverty and social services dependence, that removes the blame from those accessing support.
8. Reform of the income support system to ensure a guaranteed adequate income for all, including simplification of pensions and allowances into a universal guaranteed adequate income (GAI) scheme.
9. Equitable provision of services, at local government, state and federal levels, with particular attention to housing, health and education.
10. Adequate and secure funding for not-for-profit welfare, community service and advocacy organisations.
11. The on-going development of innovative and contemporary work creation opportunities with matched job access and training opportunities.
12. The establishment and resourcing of independent evaluation of social welfare outcomes.
13. Adoption of outcomes-based reporting on community services to reduce unnecessary red tape.



Sport and Physical Recreation

Policy Category: **Social Justice**

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Sport and physical recreation are essential elements of the culture of many Australians.
2. Sport (competitive or non-competitive) and/or physical recreation are necessary for the maintenance of good mental and physical health.
3. Participation in sport plays an important role in the development of social, organisational and communication skills.
4. Community-based sporting clubs and associations are an integral part of our society.
5. Government has a responsibility to ensure equitable access to affordable sport and physical recreation facilities and services.
6. The staging of sporting events and the building of sporting facilities must minimise ecological impacts.
7. Unregulated sports betting poses a threat to the integrity of professional sport.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

8. All schools to be funded and required to provide opportunities for appropriate sport and physical recreation for all school children up to and including year 12.
9. All sporting events of national significance to be available on free to air television or other free media, and the televising of top-level women's sport.
10. Promotion of women's sport, including where appropriate support for the professionalisation of women's competitions.
11. A drug free sporting environment.
12. Improved access to sport, including organised sport, for people with disabilities, older Australians and people of low socioeconomic status, especially children.
13. The promotion of sport and physical recreation as a key element of health policies.
14. Funding in the health, welfare and social services areas to promote participation in sport or other physical recreation.
15. Support for local government to provide accessible, well-resourced and safe sporting and physical recreation facilities to the community.
16. Real accessibility to sport and physical recreation facilities and services for people with disabilities.
17. Better promotion and resourcing of sport and physical recreation activities within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Sport and Physical Recreation (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

18. The adoption of codes of practice in sport which discourage acts of violent or antisocial behaviour, particularly directed against women.
19. Funding prioritised for community facilities that encourage active participation in physical activities.
20. To reduce deaths by drowning of Australian children by guaranteeing access to swimming lessons.

[Back to Contents](#)



Women

Policy Category: Social Justice

Adopted November 2012

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. Women have the right to:
 - equal respect, responsibilities and rewards in society;
 - equal access and participation in decision-making processes in all areas of political, social, intellectual and economic endeavour;
 - freedom from violence;
 - equal pay for work of equal value, and to have their unpaid caring responsibilities acknowledged and properly valued throughout their lifetime; and
 - informed, supported choices about all aspects of their lives, including sexual identity, health, reproductive health processes, birthing and child-bearing, and how they balance participation in paid work with caring responsibilities.
2. Social structures which disadvantage women must be changed.

Aims

The Australian Greens want:

3. All public policy and legislation to be consistent with Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
4. Equal representation of women and men in public life.
5. Women to be able to live their lives free from violence.
6. The negative effects - physical, emotional and economic - of violence against women to be addressed through adequately funded, appropriate health and education programs.
7. Equal pay for equal work that acknowledges and values women's specific interaction with the paid workforce.
8. Women to have access to safe and confidential health and wellbeing services, including reproductive health services.
9. Women to have equal access to appropriate well-resourced education services, from early childhood education through to higher education, which recognise the specific barriers women face in accessing education.
10. Women to have access to safe and secure accommodation through a comprehensive housing policy and the provision of adequate crisis housing.
11. Family-friendly workplaces and public spaces.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Women (cont'd)

www.greens.org.au/policies

12. An end to the criminalisation of consensual adult sex work.
13. All women to have access to legal, free and safe pregnancy termination services including unbiased counselling.
14. Women to have access to crisis services, including housing, especially in rural, regional and remote areas.
15. Access to culturally appropriate crisis services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
16. A comprehensive paid parental leave scheme.
17. Community-based affordable, accessible, quality childcare and incentives for on-site childcare facilities in workplaces.
18. Due weight given to the work of those involved in homemaking, child raising, caring for the elderly or disabled and working for community organisations, by including those activities in the calculation of national economic measures.
19. An equitable retirement income system that effectively and adequately provides women with financial independence when they retire.
20. Further development and support for national anti-violence public education campaigns and programs, including family violence.
21. Re-establishment of the federal Office for the Status of Women, including its position as part of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
22. To actively promote women to stand as candidates for election.
23. To promote the sexual and reproductive health rights of women both in Australia and in developing nations through the overseas aid program.

[Back to Contents](#)

Authorised and printed by Ben Spies-Butcher and Christine Cunningham, 8-10 Hobart Place Canberra 2601